# REVISIONING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
A Postmodern Analysis of Government Community Development Initiatives from 1988-1993

by

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Abstract

This study explores the political roots of community development and how postmodern critical theory illuminates lessons from government sponsored community development initiatives.

The data for this thesis was gathered for an earlier research project. The purpose of my earlier research was primarily to describe the types of government initiative that had been funded between 1988 and 1993, for what purpose and with what result. Data was collected for the study through a content analysis of government documents, community development reports and interviews. From this data consistent themes about community issues were identified along with some lessons learned. The lesson learned were reviewed though a lens of postmodern political theory.

The reanalysis revealed the importance, for community development practitioners of the postmodern concept the politics of difference where multiple voices engage in political dialogue. Key to postmodern community development practice is the idea that no voice is privileged, that all voices and representations are considered equal. This concept led me to understand how skilled community development organizers need to be to work with multiple, contested and contextual voices so as not to replicate or reinvent dominating

practices. Perspectival dialogism and negotiated settlements, along with the notion of irresolvable difference, sharpen the focus of community development practice on conflict. It suggests that working with conflict through procedural norms and guiding principles is a way to structure discussion so that individuals can determine how best to meet their needs in relation to overlapping and multiple polities. Postmodernism argues that the state is pulled between two contradictory forces; those of performativity and those of democratization. While performativity is a self legitimating system of power and knowledge, the emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness requires that the state be well informed about the needs of people its policies serves. Therefore, the state is open to community development activities through its need for information from its citizens; but only to the extent that it has enough information to reduce complexity and uncertainty through policy decisions that satisfy its contestants.

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**Chapter 1 - Introduction:**

> The polarization between the impure, inauthentic society we live in and the pure, authentic society we seek to institute, detemporalizes the process of change, because it fails to articulate how we move from one to the other. If institutional change is possible at all, it must begin from intervening in the contradictions and tensions of existing society" (Iris Marion Young, 1986).

Much has changed in the community development arena in the four years since I first began the research of government sponsored community development initiatives in 1993 on which this thesis is based. While conducting and writing up the initial research, I felt a great deal of optimism about the future prospects of community development in British Columbia and wrote

> A growing interest in B.C. in community and community development is spawning rapidly increasing numbers of community development and consultation initiatives. The interest is shared by all levels of government.

At that time there was significant co-operative activity in support of community development across several ministries within the provincial public service, with local government, as well as with the federal government and many initiatives were underway. For the first time, there was a committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers with responsibility to oversee and co-ordinate provincial government community development programs. Citizen and community participation, consensus decision making, partnership with

community, and inclusive, inter-sectoral, "bottom up planning" were concepts that players in public policy development and implementation at all levels of government were attempting to implement during the early 1990's. It turns out that these attempts were short lived.

My research was initially undertaken in order to take a look at the increasing use of participatory community processes by the provincial government during the late 1980's and early 1990's. In particular the project considered what types of initiatives had been funded, for what purpose and with what result. It was primarily a descriptive study. Of 12 government community development initiatives studied in 1993, only 2 remain in 1997; one federal, **Community Futures**, albeit in a much modified form, and the very small provincial program, **Healthy Schools** which has been transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry for Children and Families. Two of the original 12 initiatives were time limited and had already wound down as I completed the study in 1993. Others have since fallen victim to government cost cutting measures and have been cancelled, absorbed into other programs or services or turned over to local organizations with no further provincial involvement and still others have been terminated completely. All of the initiatives I originally studied provided significant opportunities for involvement of B.C. residents in decision making at the local level and influencing policy development and implementation of provincial programs. There has been little effort on the part of the provincial government to replace these participatory initiatives with other forms of participation or consultation. This

thesis is part of my struggle to come to grips with what I can learn about the potential of community development when faced with the fact that the initiatives I studied only four years ago are almost invisible today.

Recent literature on community development is pessimistic about the achievements of past community development efforts and about the future of community development, especially in achieving its goals of social change, empowerment, cultural autonomy for aboriginal populations and citizen participation in decision making. (Kenny 1996; Roberts and Pietsch, 1996; Hollinsworth, 1996; Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman, 1996; Wharf and Clague, 1997). The demise of community development within the context of state supported initiatives is largely attributed to economic rationalism[1] (Kenny 1996), the transition to the "contract"[2] state from the "welfare" state (Hoatson, Dixon and Sloman, 1996) and "global trends that exploit people and habitats far beyond the reach of even the best local efforts" (Pilisuk et al, 1996).

There is growing awareness of concentration of power (and money) in the hands of a few people who run transnational corporations and the impact this has on the sovereignty of national governments. We are

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[1] Economic rationalism is characterized by a culture promoting increasing economic efficiency, productivity and competition and reducing the scope of government intervention and the size of the public sector. According to Kenny it is a combination of "free market economics and strands of technocratic managerialism and political authoritarianism" (Kenny, 1996; p. 108).

[2] I will elaborate more fully on the significance of the contract state later in this thesis. For now, the contract state is a term used in recent Australian community development literature to describe emerging state practices in relation to community services. The contract state is characterized by "contractual exchange", privatization of government services, a market orientation and commensurate competition for funds and consumers amongst community agencies; a geographical orientation rather than locality based and an individualized, consumer choice service focus (Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996).

also, at this time, witnessing a concentration of power and control within our own provincial government here in British Columbia and, paradoxically, a simultaneous decentralization of program administration. Yeatman (1994) and others (Held, 1989; Frazer and Lacey. 1993) argue, from differing theoretical perspectives, that it is time to account for these changes in the distribution of power and control in the political theory of democracy and of the state. I agree with this agenda and propose that how community development is implicated in these changes also needs to be studied.

Community development theory and practice is grounded in the ideology of democracy and modern political theory, yet scant attention is paid to these roots in recent literature on community development[3]. "Paradoxically, since community workers often see themselves as political operators, the discourse tends to avoid direct engagement of the specific political or ideological dimensions of their work" (Mowbray, 1996; p. 179-180). I will explore these political roots in this thesis and then move on to more recent postmodern theory.

In my review of the literature a historical perspective of community development has emerged. It has become apparent to me that over time the definitions of community development have changed to reflect increased community and citizen participation and self-determination and there has been a proliferation of frameworks for

[3] Much of the recent literature is based on the work of Paulo Freire, Saul Alinsky,and Jack Rothman who do explore and articulate the relationship of community development and political theory. Marxist theory is elaborated in Freire's and Alinsky's theories and models of community action. Rothman aligns his framework of locality development, social planning and social action with differing theoretical understandings of the relationship between the citizen and the state.

"capturing" the many different strategies and foci of community development. Much of this work was based on critical perspectives originating with feminists, environmentalist, peace and anti-racism activists. However, I have found that the literature, with few exceptions (Meekosha and Mowbray, 1996; Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman, 1996) has continued to write about community development within theoretical perspectives of modernism and though some of the literature mentions postmodernism I have not uncovered a theoretical analysis of community development from that perspective. In western, post-colonial society we are witnessing the dismembering of the welfare state and a "contemporary diversity reflect(ing) the signs of the deconstruction of industrial society" (Meekosha and Mowbray, 1990; p. 337). The contemporary diversity to which Meekosha and Mowbray refer is the proliferation of identities (gender, racial, sexual orientation, age) that demand to be recognized and positively valued within a politics of difference. This postmodern concept of a politics of difference, does not assume a polity based on a common culture (i.e. locality development) that those with different identities (minorities) will share, but reconceptualizes citizenship as one that "works with and accepts difference" within a multiplicity of polities (Yeatman, 1994; p. 86). Unlike previous notions of diversity within liberalism, called pluralism, contemporary diversity recognizes the inequity and influence of resources and power amongst competing groups. Community development has its roots in participatory democratic theory; theory which does take into account the inequities of power, influence and resources. It is to this theory and its postmodern

"revisioning" (Yeatman, 1994) that I turn as a filter through which to view the findings of my earlier research in B.C.

The intent of this thesis is to re-examine the findings and the lessons of my earlier research, using postmodern concepts to determine if these concepts illuminate new ways of thinking about my original findings. I will argue that many of these lessons still hold true and point out a direction to pursue if we are to continue to challenge centralization and concentration of control in the hands of the few. This retrospective review using postmodern theory, offers new insight into the central dilemmas of the status quo and social change potential of present community development thinking and practice. I agree with Frazer and Lacey (1993) when they say

> A flawed theoretical framework cannot be used, unmodified, to engage in critical political and social thought. For such conceptual frameworks, far from being politically innocent, are in fact of the first importance in determining both what kinds of substantive political visions can be generated by political theory and what kinds of phenomena political theory can 'see' as problematic (p.214).

Postmodern theory, as presented by Anna Yeatman (1994) in Postmodern Revisionings of the Political resonates with my own recent personal experience within the bureaucracy: particularly my involvement in policy discussions and planning and implementing of participatory processes. Yeatman's presentation of the politics of voice and representation along with the concept of irresolvable differences, while not new to me, focused my attention on conflict and, as I will explain later, on how particular lessons in my original research may be

especially helpful in informing emancipatory community practice in today's world. These concepts brought home to me how hostile the current bureacracy was to collaborative, participatory processes that involve all the players in decision making and how intolerant it seemed toward differing views. In particular, I contrasted my recent bureaucratic experience with the content of the interviews with government community development program staff from four years ago when those staff were so positive about supporting diverse views because they said it made for better decisions. I remember a "community consultation" on policy and organizational directions for the new ministry and how one set of policy papers was roundly criticized by all participants who represented provincial organizations, service providers, aboriginal groups, consumers, and other ministries. This policy direction for performance managment continued and is being implemented in its unaltered state despite criticism that it would not actually capture the outcome measures the Ministry wanted. The "proceedings" from this consultation were never distributed. No one in the organization would approve them because they felt the proceedings "would just generate more critcism"; nor was another consultation session held despite the numerous plans and repeated promises to do so. The voices of these participants were considered to represent "special interests" that should be dealt with one-on-one to assess their competing needs. There was no sense from the ministry senior staff that these interests had something to contribute: "their job is to deliver the services and it is our job to tell them what services to deliver".

My recent experience also provided insight into how multiple voices of the traditionally marginalized can gain access to and contest state policy: how in fact the principle of performativity calls for the state to be open to this contestation in order to be effective and efficient. I recall, how in relation to specific issues, such services to the handicapped, special decision making processes were put in place in order to forestall a concerted public campaign to disagree with the Ministry direction. Or, in an incident I describe later in the thesis, how the issue of foster home safety resulted in a large task force to inform policy direction. Here is where I saw opportunities to learn how we can proceed with democratic struggle in communities when it seemed to me as if those opportunities had vanished along with the community development initiatives I studied four years ago.

I was struck by the how the principle of performativity, the "optimization of the global relationship between input and output" (Lyotard, 1984; p.11 cited in Yeatman, 1994; p.110) fit with administrative and policy decisions to decentralize administration and service delivery to newly created regions; to establish performance measurement systems that compare regional data to provincial data and regions to regions (internal competition); to implement "program restructuring" in order to "rationalize" service delivery and contract administration (external competition); and to demand "Regional Operating Plans" that rigorously followed specific instructions from the "Centre". I participated in some of the discussions where these administrative decisions were being reviewed and I was struck by how little it mattered that the various regions might be different and

require different parameters because of staffing or historical budget inequities: "it doesn't matter that these figures don't correspond to what your FTE allocation and program statistics suggest you should have. Make do with what you've got. We're not going to spend any more time looking for money". The competitive aspect of this process was in stark contrast to previous administrations that took pains to develop allocation formulas that were agreed to by everyone, that were beginning to include stakeholders in the resource allocation processes and that gave regions significant autonomy to develop and design services to meet the needs of their communities. Program restructuring based on objective financial and statistics and the drive for accountability for contract dollars increased tension between regions and amongst contracted service providers: "those of you who do well will be rewarded and those who do not will have to answer for it". I recall the sinking feeling I felt when I heard one senior manager question why we were funding advocacy groups: "these people need services not someone to tell us what clients need".

The secrecy and terror of the culture of performativity as described by Yeatman rang true as I thought about the endless hours of staff time spent writing and rewriting, discussing draft after draft after draft of material for distribution to staff, the general public or stakeholders. These incidents represented new experiences for me as a civil servant in the social services. I was accustomed to questions about how did we really know we were making a difference, and how did we know our money was being spent in the most effective way but I was not prepared for the more recent emphasis on reducing everything to

measurable results or outcomes. Nor was I prepared for the emphasis on individual services and the clawing back of community development and advocacy funds which were redirected to early intervention services. The down side of the population health paradigm became abundently clear when funds were redirected from one population category to another in order to satisfy political and administrative priorities. All of these experience led me to conclude that public administration, at least in the social services here in British Columbia, was increasingly responding to a market economy approach. However, I also had opportunties to work with regional staff who were masters at developing emancipatory programs that impacted positively on clients, communities and staff. These were creative people who knew how to interpret those rare performative moments and to strategically take advantage of these opportunities for democratic action.

At this point I would like to briefly outline what has happened to the 12 government sponsored initiatives in the intervening four years since I began this research. The past four years have seen significant political change in British Columbia with commensurate changes in leadership, policy, organization and administration. As well, significant budget deficits and the prevailing ethos that these deficits must be done away with have led to program and expenditure cuts within both the federal and provincial governments. As a result, government-sponsored community development initiatives have suffered. As mentioned earlier the provincial program Healthy Schools and the federal initiative Community Futures still exist. Other

programs - Economic Development Commissions and Committees, CORE, the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and Community Tourism Action Program - have had their staffing and funding cancelled. Local and Regional Child and Youth Committees, Community Initiatives Program, and Healthy Communities have faded away; and Strong Communities in the 90's, Sustainable Communities Pilot Projects, Safer Communities Strategy were concluded because they were time limited initiatives.

Not only have these community development initiatives been curbed but we have also seen a decline in community consultation and a pulling away from local governance of health services. Many of the functions or aims of initiatives such as CORE, Healthy Communities, the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy continue within a legislative or managerial framework - without the democratic participatory component. Using Pateman's (1970) descriptions of participatory and representative democracy, it has the appearance of a shift (return?) to a more representative, centralized form of governing in British Columbia.

While the absence of provincial government support for community development initiatives signals a change from a more participatory form of governance to a more representative form, some community development efforts, such as Economic Development Commissions, are continuing with local and regional government support. The regional planning functions of CORE, have been subsumed under legislated planning processes called Land and Resource Management

Plans. A few local Child and Youth Committees and local Round Tables on the Environment continue with minimal local/regional support whereas others no longer exist or have been reconstituted as advisory committees to respond to the mandate and direction of the regional administrations in their respective ministries.

Locally driven activities are also emerging to respond to community issues although, the current prevalence of local initiatives does not match the intensity of community development activity that existed during the late 1980's and early 1990's. For example, the Coastal Communities Network is a coalition of 30 small communities who are working together to address the economic and social transitions resulting from the decline of renewable natural resources in the fishing and forest sectors. The safety of women and children in the Cowichan Valley is being addressed by a partnership between the Regional District and the local Women Against Violence Society (SPARC, 1997). I will argue throughout this thesis that the withdrawal of the provincial government from initiating and supporting community development approaches to addressing community problems signals a change in approach to governance from a participatory approach to one based much more on a functional relationship between citizens and the state.

Based on this change, this thesis will pursue opportunities for emancipatory action in the following five chapters. In Chapter 2, I begin the literature review with a brief introduction to postmodern critical theory in order to clarify terms and set the stage for the

discussion of political theory in Chapter 3. Following the introduction of postmodern theory, I continue the literature review with a historical perspective of definitions and frameworks for community development and take a look at what some authors are saying about the legacies and the future of community development. Contained within the community development literature are unexamined notions of political theory, particularly liberalism and modernism; theory that is being challenged by many political theorists. I argue in this chapter that those of us with an interest in community development need to consider these challenges to political theory if we are to refine our practice and I look to postmodern critical theory to see how it can illuminate my earlier research findings.

In Chapter 3 I pursue the theoretical base of my question about what community development can learn from postmodern critical theory. A presentation of participatory democratic theory based on Carole Pateman's (1970 & 1980) work is followed by a "postmodern revisioning" of political theory as set forward by Anna Yeatman (1994). Here I will discuss the use and meaning of concepts of performativity and its relationship to what other authors refer to as the "contract state", the politics of voice and representation, "rational consensus" and the use of negotiated settlements. These concepts, arising out of postmodern political theory, are then employed in Chapter 6 in a reanalysis of the lessons developed through my earlier research.

Chapter 4 presents the strengths and limitations of the methodology used to gather the data on which this thesis is based. I employed a

case selection method combined with a thematic examination of documentary materials, including government records, funding proposals, correspondence, draft policy documents, community reports and community development guidebooks produced by community development professionals. I supplemented this information by interviewing government program staff who were involved in each of the selected community development initiatives. As well, I interviewed three community development professionals who worked in non-governmental agencies but were connected through work to some of the initiatives in this research. The findings of the initial research with regard to the program parameters for the 12 initiatives and the themes emerging from community reports are presented in Appendix B.

In Chapter 5 I submit the lessons learned through my initial analysis of these government sponsored community development initiatives and community development guidebooks to a reanalysis using postmodern critical theory. Postmodern critical theory sharpens the focus of many of these lessons particularly in understanding how to work with difference and conflict in communities. The state's use of language and communication as contemporary methods of control and oppression stands out and has important implications for those involved in democratic struggles and for those involved in partnership and contracts with the state.

The final chapter explores the possibilities for community development practice based on my reanalysis and raises questions for

further study. This exploration is presented in the spirit of a process of constantly uncovering nuances, of digging deeper, knowing that what is uncovered will lead others in different and contradictory directions.

## Chapter 2: Tensions in the Community Development Literature

Recent community development literature is concerned about future directions of community development, the entanglement of community development with state contracting and the apparent failure of community development in bringing about broad social and political change. I too wondered if there was a continuing role for community development practice as I returned to this research after a four year hiatus and tried to make sense of the "lessons" I had arrived at through my initial research. However, as I continued to catch up with more current literature it struck me that the political theory underpinning recent community development literature is submerged or often taken for granted. Recasting recent discussions about the results of community development and its future directions against a backdrop of current postmodern feminist arguments in political theory can provide direction for future democratic political action.

This is not to say that there is no critical analysis of community development. Certainly the critical perspectives and theorizing of the environmental, peace, aboriginal, anti-racist and women's movement have contributed to a critical perspective within the community development field. These movements have introduced the notion of multiple voices, the "politics of identity" or "politics of difference" and brought into question the modernist view of development, community, citizenship, and the state - all concepts bound up in community development. In the review of the literature that follows, I want to set

the context of community development theorizing and explore some of the tensions and contradictions that exist within it so that we may find continuing avenues for democratic change. I will explore definitions of community development, take a look at what some authors are saying about the legacies of community development and the future and then I will turn to Anna Yeatman (1990 and 1994) to explore postmodern theorizing of politics. This review will set the stage for the reanalysis of my initial research findings. However, a discussion of how I understand modernism and postmodernism is in order before I begin this work.

**Modernism and Postmodernism**

This thesis entails a re-analysis of my earlier research using postmodern political theory. My use of postmodern theory in this thesis is exploratory. It does not represent for me the "Truth" (which would of course, be a quintessential modern position) but I do find some of the concepts such as multiplicity of voices, opening up of "public spaces" for contestation, and the diffusion of power useful in generating a new perspective on community development practice. In the following discussion I briefly outline some key differences of modernism and postmodernism.

Modernism rejected medieval thought and feudal relations. Early modern political theory was concerned with the relationship of the individual to the state and society - citizenship, and the problems of political obligation and legitimacy. Modern political theory adheres to

a belief in some form of essential, ahistorical identity by which I mean that all men and women share similar qualities that remain constant throughout history and across cultures. Differing beliefs about how this essential identity is created distinguishes the different political theories such as liberalism, Marxism, feminism, anarchism. For example, in liberal theory the universal individual is rational and has the capacity of freedom of choice to enter into contracts or agreements (Frazer and Lacey, 1993). Radical feminists argue that the basis of identity for women was their biology which explains sexist behaviour and the continuing domination of women by men (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990). Essentialism has increasing come into question in some feminist writing (Haraway, 1990; Fraser and Nicholson, 1990; Harding, 1990) because it ignores the differences amongst women across cultures, race, class, ethnicity, age and so on.

Liberalism, the dominant political discourse in the West, believes that the individual is a unique rational individual, who has the freedom to choose who he/she is and what she/he will become. In society, in order for individuals not to interfere with one another's' natural rights and liberty, the rule of law is necessary. The legitimacy of the state depends on the consent of citizens to be governed rule of law. Marxists, socialists and feminists critique the western political tradition of liberalism by pointing out the continuing injustices and inequities in power and freedom which result from capitalism, class relations and patriarchy (Frazer and Lacey, 1993).

Modernism's beliefs about knowledge and knowledge creation also distinguish it from postmodernism. In modernism, knowledge is viewed as an external reality waiting to be discovered. Knowledge building is a progressive march toward an ultimate truth or group of truths. Feminism, has challenged the traditional androgynous or male conceptions of knowledge by asserting that the human subject of traditional science and philosophy does not include women (Nicholson, 1990; Harding 1990).

Subjectivity is a key concept for both modernism and postmodernism Subjectivity refers to "the conscious and unconscious thought and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (Weedon, 1989; p.32). Liberal, socialist and radical feminism share a modern belief in some form of essential identity. Liberalism and liberal feminism privileges the unique rational individual. For radical feminists, subjectivity is determined by women's biology and sexual relations with men, producing the universal and unique qualities of femininity. Socialist feminism believes in an embodied subject located in everyday experience (Smith, 1989, 1991) where the gendered subjectivity is based on a division of labour and where women's work is obscured by dominant, male ideology (Harding, 1990). Nancy Hartsock (1990) claims socialist feminism is distinct from both postmodernism and liberalism when she says "...our various efforts to constitute ourselves as subjects (through struggles for colonial independence, racial and sexual liberation struggles, and so on) were fundamental to creating the preconditions for the current questioning of Universalist

claims...and out of this multiplicity build an account of the world as seen from the margins" (p.171).

The postmodern concept of multiplicity, multiple voices originates with socialist feminism but that is where the commonality ends. Where socialist feminism privileges gender, race and class, in postmodernism there is no authentic voice, no essentialist qualities that create a universal subject; only a voice constructed by discursive practices and action. Some postmodernists say that the primary social unit is not the subject but the situation, as the socially constructed subject interacts in time and space with new knowledge which changes and continues to shape her as she resists or accepts this knowledge (Weedon, 1989, White and Epston, 1990). Individuals are seen as nodes or posts where webs of discursive practices intersect creating identities that are seen as being complex, heterogeneous, multiple and constantly changing (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990). While this view is similar to that of socialist feminism, postmodernism differs in its denial of a construction of a unity that socialist feminism seeks to achieve amongst women through a consciousness of their exclusion from society.

The concept of individuals as "nodes" or "posts" is closely related to postmodernism's view of knowledge. It is here that language becomes important to postmodernism for it is the "structures of language that speak through a person" (Kvale, 1996; p.43) rather than a person describing reality or expressing herself (her natural, conscious self).

Nancy Hartsock asks "Why is it that just at the moment when so many of us who have been silenced begin to demand the right to name ourselves, to act as subjects rather than objects of history, that just then the concept of subjecthood becomes problematic?" (1990; p.163). Much of feminism has been concerned with challenging the universal, totalizing and disembodied concepts of modernism and in the process arguing for multiplicity of standpoints and constructions of subjectivity (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990). Our ability to develop a consciousness about our subjugation as women has been dependent on our ability to name the experience and in many cases to develop language that generates new meanings as in the case of sexual harassment and wife abuse. My sense of myself as a feminist is different than that of my suffragette great grandmother not only because of my own set of experiences, but precisely because I have available a much more detailed, nuanced and patterned (feminist) language with which to represent that experience. Language then become important in defining who I am as a person.

Just as postmodern notions of subjectivity are similar to socialist feminist thought, so too are its views of knowledge and the close association of knowledge with power. Developing a strong theoretical base and understanding of oppression has been an important task for socialist feminists. The dilemma for the socialist feminists (Hartsock, 1990; Smith, 1989. 1991; Briskin, 1990) has been to not let the assumed shared experiences of women dominate or obscure other differences related to class, race or gender that affect women differently such that it brings into question just what is the common

experience of women. "Gender and race are not just 'identities' but systems of power as deeply embedded as class that cannot be understood in isolation from one another" (Briskin, 1990; p.105).

This overlap of knowledge and power exists in a more pronounced manner in postmodernism. Michel Foucault, a French postmodern philosopher talks about knowledge as knowledge/power.

> There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth" (Foucault, 1980, p.93; cited in White and Epston, 1990, p. 22).

Knowledge then, becomes power to control as discursive practices force acceptance of given meanings, which in turn shape social relations. An example of this would be how the concept of the family as a two parent, mom at home looking after the kids, dad working and grandma's and grandpa's visiting on occasion continues to drive social and labour policies, which in turn affects how men treat women, even when there is overwhelming evidence that "the family" no longer looks like that. What Foucault is suggesting here is power does not necessarily reside in the hands of a few who deliberately set out to subjugate the many, (although he does admit that can and does happen on occasion), that patriarchy does not reside in a conscious conspiracy by men, rather it is socially constructed and reinforced in laws, in discourse, in regulations, in academia, etc.

Foucault proposed that power is everywhere. "Since we are all caught up in a net or web of power/knowledge, it is not possible to act apart from this domain and we are simultaneously undergoing the effects of power and exercising this power in relation to others" (White and Epston, 1990; p. 22). Because power/knowledge is a constituted web there is no "enemy", no "binary" opposition of ruler and ruled (Hartsock, 1990). Michael White (1990) points out that this a contemporary form of power.

According to Foucault knowledge/power, while limiting, in the sense that it determines all that is known and can be known, e.g. the role of logical positivism in social science research in the past 50 years, it is also productive (White and Epston, 1990). When one acknowledges rules or discursive practices one also acknowledges (explicitly or implicitly) what the discourse forbids or who it silences; who is represented and who is not. This has potential to present opportunities for resistance and production of new knowledge which in turn shifts power relations as more and more people learn about it and act upon it, opening up what Yeatman (1994) refers to as "public spaces" of debate, contestation and dialogue. The feminist theories are examples of this productive aspect of power/knowledge. As knowledge of women's absence in accounts of history, Marxist theory, or in the governing bodies of society became more explicit, feminists began to explore other areas of knowledge-building to give voice to alternate ways of understanding the world and ways to organize and govern. The productive aspect of power is neutral in that it can be used to explain the development and progress of women's issues as

well as the bitter phenomena of backlash: that as women refine and expand their theory and practice so too will others uncover more and different ways to counter the knowledge. This is likely the process Foucault had in mind when he said that the unmasking of power leads to destablization not transformation; that is, it moves from one system of domination to another (Hartsock, 1990).

Power is everywhere and Foucault says that it is most visible at the local level and therefore this is the most logical site of resistance and contestation (Hartsock, 1990; White and Epston 1990). This sense of power being accessible at the local level makes postmodernism a useful perspective to review community development. In many ways too, this is what the women's movement did with consciousness raising in that it starts with the personal i.e. local/visible and connects it to the political. It is through an understanding of how we participate in our own subjugation that will lead us to resist and disrupt relations of ruling; to become political. Nancy Hartsock (1990) is critical of the idea of power being everywhere because if it is everywhere then it is nowhere. She wonders how this can be used to counter the pervasive and well orchestrated powers of patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and so on. Her point here is that if power is everywhere it becomes amorphous and we lose a means to analyse the concentration of power that leads to systemic oppression. Hartsock's concern with Foucault's account of power is that he proposes resistance to domination and a "wholesale rejection of modernity" but does not offer "a conception of what is to replace it" (p.170).

The discussion above follows but one strand of postmodern thought. Some writers, such as Pilisuk et al (1996) to whom I will refer later in the review of the literature, believe that we have moved into an new historical, postmodern era. This is sometimes construed as an anti-modernist position. "Central to this position is an emphasis on the peculiar significance of such material developments as new information technologies and, in the sphere of politics, the decline of traditional political authority and institutions and the rise of new social movements" (Fraser and Lacey, 1993; p. 30). Other postmodern strands, such as that which I will explore more specifically through Anna Yeatman's work, are characterized by "a disbelief in universal systems of thought. "There is a lack of credibility toward meta-narratives of legitimation - such as the Marxist utopia to be reached through emancipation of the working class, and the modern belief in economic growth" (Kvale, 1996; p.41), as well as liberalism's beliefs in freedom and equality. This view of postmodernism is not an anti-modernist stance nor does it take a positivist position in relation to postmodernism, i.e., try to prove that we have now entered a postmodern phase or era. It is a position that is engaged wholly with modernism.

> The 'post' in postmodernism(ity) indicates a relationship of continuity, even dependency. 'Post ' suggests that it is possible now to bound the project of modernity, to discern its features, to understand the kind of paradigm it comprises. Unlike modern critical theory and revolutionary politics, postmodern critical theory and oppositional politics call into question the fundamental premises of the project of modernity (Yeatman, 1994; p.8).

The previous presentation outlined the differences between modernism and postmodernism in general terms. In my view the

significant differences between modernism and postmodernism can be summed up in postmodernism's rejection of an inevitable march toward utopia or ultimate truth or set of truths and the postmodern reconception of power as a web rather than a set of hierarchical relationships. This sets the stage for a more in-depth look as specific concepts of postmodern theory as it relates to the performative state and community development. In this next section I turn my attention to a review of definitions and frameworks for community development in order to situate my earlier research in the community development discourse. Following that I will argue along with other authors (Pilisuk et al, 1996; Hoatson et al 1996; Meekosha and Mowbray, 1996; White, 1997) that there are signs of change in how the western state and politics are operating; changes that impact community development.

**Definitions and Models of Community Development**

Community development, community empowerment, community organizing, community action, social action, social planning, community work, emancipatory or social movements are all words used to describe processes or strategies of working with communities to effect change in the name of social and environmental justice, more equitable distribution of power and wealth, a more liveable community/society and more inclusive citizenship. Embedded in these words are notions of 'community', social theories, political values and beliefs, and implicit critiques. In the following section I will present some of the discussions and debates in the literature about the different meanings of these terms and efforts to clarify the meaning of the various terms by developing different frameworks. The point here

is not to compare and contrast (and rank) the frameworks but to identify the range of them and the struggle that exists to clarify and articulate the array of approaches used by community organizers as they respond to the increasing complexity of our society and endeavour to give voice to the many who are marginalized in so many different ways.

Frances O'Gorman (1990) identifies five phases of international community development that reflect historically differing definitions and shifting loci of control during the decades following the second World War. These shifts arose from perceived short comings and insufficient benefits from the previous definitions:

- "functional co-ordination of existing social services" to promote better living conditions in local communities. (1940's and '50's)
- "short range socio-economic improvements" promoting self help in small geographically defined communities. (1950's and '60's)
- "mobilization of all community resources for integrated planning and channelling of resources for local development" that would enable communities to participate more fully in the life of the nation. (1960's)
- increased community participation and self determination as a strategy to connect local initiatives to regional and national development work in government programs. (1970's)
- personal and social transformation through empowerment whereby "modernization and development concepts were gradually replaced by the concept of marginalization and the need for structural change in the community experiences". (1980's and '90's) (p.386-388)

Seamus O Cinneide and Jim Walsh quote the Irish Minister of Health (Woods, 1982) as saying "the term community development is

generally used as a convenient shorthand for the voluntary efforts of groups and individuals who are seeking to improve their local areas or are working to bring about improvements in the position of the underprivileged and disadvantaged members of society". In a similar vein, Ron Labonte (1993; p.33) defines community development as "the process of supporting community groups in their identification of important concerns and issues, and in their ability to plan and implement strategies to mitigate their concerns and resolve their issues". Another, more radical, definition says community development is "to challenge existing power relationships within society and to seek the restructuring of ownership and control of wealth and other resources on an equitable basis: to empower the working class and marginalized groups within society" (Community Workers Co-operative, 1988, cited in O Cinneide and Walsh, 1990; p. 332). The purpose of these actions is to increase personal and community "capacity to undertake other co-operative projects in the community" (Ross with Lappin, 1967; p. 49, cited in Wharf and Clague, 1997; p. 7).

These definitions reflect the dual purposes of community development, one of which is to promote personal change and local improvement based on volunteerism and self help. The second is to promote broad based social change. The underlying assumption of community development which stems from theory of participatory democracy, has been that the former will lead to the latter but this causal relationship is now widely questioned. Dixon (1989) identifies

the following three characteristics of community development that further elaborate on its relationship to participatory democracy:

- it is based on an egalitarian, non-elitist philosophy
- the emphasis is on process and not ends
- indigenous leadership is developed in an effort to promote self reliance and build community capacity.

While there seems to be general agreement about the definitions of and the historical evolution of community development (O'Gorman, 1990; O Cinneide and Walsh, 1990; Craig, 1989; Schuftan, 1996) the literature offers a variety of frameworks for understanding different approaches to community development practice.[4] A framework for analysis of planned social intervention developed by Rothman (1968) is widely quoted in Canadian and B.C. literature on community development. His framework includes three types of interventions: locality development, social planning and social action that reflect differing understandings of power, practitioner roles and the role of conflict and confrontation (see table on the following page). These approaches may be used in combination or at different stages in a community development process.

[4] I am indebted to Brian Wharf and Michael Clague editors of Community Organizing: Canadian Experiences, 1997, Chapter 1, for the following discussion of CD frameworks.

**Table I - Rothman's Strategies for Community Organizing**
(adapted from Rothman, 1968)

| TYPE OF PLANNED INTERVENTION | OBJECTIVES | STRATEGIES | PRACTITIONER ROLES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Locality Development** | Self-help; building community capacity. co-operation and integration | Involvement of a broad cross-section of people in determining and solving their own problems; characterized by consensus | Enabler-catalyst, co-ordinator, facilitator |
| **Social Planning** | Rational problem-solving with regard to community problems, not necessarily participatory | Objective research and approach to problems and discussions and solutions based on the most rational course of action; characterized by consensus; neutral vis a vis politics | Fact-gatherer and analyst, planner, program implementer |
| **Social Action** | Institutional change, shifting the power relationships and resources; organizing people to take action on their own behalf. | Focusing of issues and organization of people to take action; characterized by conflict or confrontation, direct action, negotiation. | Activist , advocate; agitator, broker |

Feminist critiques of this framework and the general assumption of homogeneity in the use of "community" have led to the development of other frameworks which endeavour to be more inclusive of the diversity of class, gender, race, age and abilities of people who participate/reside in a community and refer not only to community in the geographical sense but also in the sense of common interests. Dominelli (1989) proposed six models of community work: community care, community organization, community development,

class-based community action, feminist community action, and community action from a Black perspective. Class-based community action, community organizing and community development are similar to Rothman's locality development, social planning and social action respectively.

Dominelli's community care model incorporates a feminist perspective "since women are often the workers in and the organizers of paid and unpaid community care, which is an essential component and characteristic of a community that looks after its residents" (Wharf and Clague, 1997; p. 10). Gender is the focus of community action in the feminist community action approach to community work and challenges "fundamentally the nature of capitalist patriarchal social relations between men and women, women and the state, and adults and children through action which begins in the routine activities of daily life" (Dominelli, 1989; p.12 cited in Wharf and Clague, 1997; p. 10). Race and the interplay with class and gender is central to the last model in Dominelli's framework, social action from a Black perspective. Callahan (1997) argues that another distinguishing feature of feminist, class and black community action approaches is their connection to social movements and "its (feminist community organizing) attempt to connect local efforts to those taking place in other jurisdictions and at other levels" (p. 183).

Dominelli's framework is one attempt to address the deeper understanding of community based on experiences of traditionally marginalized groups and the critical perspective of women and

minorities. Miller, Rein and Levitt (1990) propose another framework that also reflects the broader range of issues that face community organizers. This framework is comprised of seven strategies or forms of community organizing: organization of organizations, grass roots organizing, organizing around consumption, organization of identity, advocacy organizing, self help and mutual aid organizing, mixed approaches. These approaches resemble in many ways those of Rothman and Dominelli yet it is difficult to line them up exactly. For example identity organizing is similar to Dominelli's class-based, feminist community action and black community action, and organizing organizations is similar to community organization. What we see however, are a delineation of increasing numbers of approaches that challenge the status quo of social relationships (gender, race, etc.) and which challenge the state rather than serve it (advocacy, mutual aid, organizing organizations[5] (White, 1997).

These frameworks outlined above also include approaches that neither challenge the status quo nor the state. Social planning, coordination of social service, community organization, community based programming and potentially organizing organizations, all approaches favoured by professionals, tend to reinforce the status quo or at least have the potential to reinforce the status quo. Thus current

[5].Dena White (1997) describes how the "organization of organizations" "seem to be prepared to move towards partnership(with the state), but from a position of 'cooperative conflict', implementing strategies of oppositional participation. Collective representation of the community sector, in a quasi-corporatist vein, seems, to them, to hold promise for sustained political clout and maintenance of the sector's distinct identity" (p. 80). Of course there is potential for organization of organizations to take on a much more corporatist flavour and become a "third sector" vying for control and funds.

conceptualizations of community development contain within them the basic contradiction of both its status quo and change potential.

This delineation of frameworks and definitions in community development is important work because it exposes the complexity of the work and enunciates the differing, often contradictory dynamics of power in differing contexts. However, it is important to caution that the proliferation of categories of strategies or approaches can serve to fragment and thus deny the overlapping and interconnectedness of the experiences of marginalization that community development activities attempt to address (Ng, Muller and Walker, 1990).

**"Community" and "Development" as Problematic**

Implicit in the definitions and frameworks is a philosophy or ideology of community development, "that it is something distinctive and valuable. There is a sense in which they (community development workers) are all propagandists or evangelists for it" (O Cinneide and Walsh, 1990; p. 332). As a movement, community development is "a crusade, a cause to which people become committed. It is dedicated to progress, as a philosophic and not a scientific concept, since progress must be viewed with reference to values and goals which differ under different political and social systems" (Saunders, 1958, cited in Dixon, 1989; p. 87). Community development is believed "to heal anomie and create egalitarian relationships" (Callahan, 1997; p. 183) and is characterized by an "ethic of solidarity, of wanting to belong to and be supported by a group" (Wharf and Clague, 1997; p. 311). In other words there is considerable idealism attached to

community development; an idealism that helps sustain optimism but which needs to be constantly held up to question and reflection in order to remain practical.

This idealism and the proliferation of frameworks to clarify the meaning and approaches to community development suggest that the use of these two words is not unproblematic. For feminists, the concept of "community" is problematic because it excludes women and ignores class, gender, race, age, and sexual orientation, and obscures social relations that perpetuate dominance. "Its seeming neutrality discloses, as elsewhere, a male perspective." (Walker, 1990; p. 42). Feminists ask, can "community" realistically address social, economic and environmental problems when women, people with disabilities, the young and elderly, and minorities who sit on boards and committees with government, community and business representatives often report an implicit hierarchy based on status and power -- gender, race, class (Hume and Isaac, 1992). We need to examine who counts as "community" and who is doing the work.

The ideal of community, often expressed as communitarianism which has become increasingly popular in the past fifteen years, comes under the critical gaze of feminists and postmodern writers. Communitarianism holds that the community should be the focus of analysis and our value system rather than the state, the individual or nation (Frazer and Lacey, 1993). The ideal of community is set up as an antidote to liberalism's values of "individualism - self-sufficiency, competition, separation [of state, society and individual], the formal

equality of rights", and adheres to values of "affective relations of care, mutual aid, and co-operation" (Young, 1995; p.238). Communitarians, in common with many feminists, believe in the embedded and embodied status of individuals in contrast to the objective and disembodied individual of modern liberalism (Frazer and Lacey, 1993).

"Community" is portrayed as homogeneous, small locales where face to face relationships enable shared understandings and kinship. In this view, difference and heterogeneity are denied in a manner similar to liberalism's denial of gender, race, class age and sexual preferences. Liberalism's "formalistic ethic of rights denies difference by levelling all such separated individuals under a common measure of rights. Community, on the other hand, denies difference by positing fusion rather than separation as the social ideal" (Young, 1995; p. 239). Fusion evokes the sense of "other", of those who do not share the same views, traditions or history which shows up as racism, sexism, or ethnic chauvinism or which submerges disagreements and differences in political groups or movements which in turn leads to factions and splinter groups (Young, 1995; Frazer and Lacey, 1993). Community development practice founded on participation and inclusiveness must pay attention to how diversity and difference are attended to and how multiple, contradictory voices can be heard, particularly in processes and programs initiated by the state, in order not replicate oppressive, exclusionary practices.

The use of the word "development" has also been scrutinized and found wanting by feminists, environmentalists, First Nations people

and Third World activists. Development implies underdevelopment or non-development so that when a community is involved in a community development initiative there is the implication that it is inferior to the society, sponsoring organization, community, or government which sets the standard for "developed". For the First Nations people in Canada "community development models from the past create images of 'outsiders' coming into a community and voyeuristically engaging in some form of community manipulation" (Absolon and Herbert, 1997). The sense here is that First Nations have not been the subjects of their own participatory efforts but were being directed toward goals established by the dominant community. Community development in this sense is or has been used as a tool of oppression and colonization of First Nations people in Canada and other western countries.

Within the environmental movement "development" and progress have been equated with destruction of environment and natural resources for use of large corporations and the benefit of the few. The environmental movement also includes the critique of ecofeminists, in which modernist discourse is seen to promote domination of nature by man in a manner similar to the domination of women; they reject the notion that nature, like women, is unpredictable and must be controlled and used for the benefit of man. So for environmentalists, "development" contains within it a sense of control and exploitation of nature and natural resources.

Community development has been used in a more positive sense as a corrective measure to immediate and underlying "causes of maldevelopment" (Schuftan, 1996). This usage assumes that the impacts of development are not always positive and can be subject to remedial action. Used in this sense there is no implied hierarchy of opposition - developed/underdeveloped, but recognition that the consequences of development are multiple and not always positive. It also suggests development exists everywhere, that the world, nation, community is not simply divided into two camps of developed and underdeveloped. Although the Schuftan does not say so, the use of "maldevelopment" appears to attempt to modify the discourse of community development by "reconstruction" of oppressive language (Frazer and Lacey, 1993).

As a result of these critiques many have chosen to move away from the use of "community development", and use instead other labels such as community organizing (Wharf and Clague, 1997), community mobilization (O'Gorman, 1990), community action (Absolon and Herbert, 1997), community work ( O Cinneide and Walsh, 1990) or to suggest that we move away from the use of "community" altogether and refer to a "politics of difference" (Young, 1995). Throughout this thesis I will use the labels of community development, community action and community organizing interchangeably in their traditional but now contested meanings. In the final chapter of this thesis I will argue in support of Young (1995) and Yeatman (1994) that we move toward a politics of affinity ("affinity - related not by blood but by choice": Haraway, 1990; p. 196), of difference.

**Community Development and Social Change**

While the previous discussion outlined some of the conceptual aspects of community development that have emerged over the years, the following section will review what is being said about the practical results of community development. The end of the 1980's and the early 1990's saw a plethora of articles and some books reviewing the history and success of community development on a country by country basis. These articles and books take stock and present outstanding issues, shifts in focus and challenges or barriers to progress as we reach the end of the twentieth century. The authors are united in their views that "claims, often grand and sweeping, about the transformatory nature or mission of community work are not supported in the programs reported" (Mowbray, 1996; p.179). Despite this apparent unanimity regarding community development's failure, the authors acknowledge localized successes and propose questions, solutions, or revised or narrowed definitions in order to overcome community development's apparent practical inability to effect fundamental social change. A few of the more recent articles suggest that the origins of the failure to effect fundamental social change lie not with community development or the "state" but with "modernity and contemporary society" (Hawkins, 1993; p.20 cited in Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996).

In reviewing community development in Ireland since the 1960's, O Cinneide and Walsh (1990) conclude that by 1990, community development was more widespread and "vigorous" than it was in the

'60's and second, that "it is far more complex: the simplicities and barely questioned assumptions of the early years have been replaced by uncertainties, conflicts and debates that are still inconclusive" (p. 331).

In many ways their discussion parallels that of Australian Jane Dixon (1989) who argues that "community development is useful in the promotion of personal and planned social change and has little to do with fundamental social change" (p.83). O Cinneide and Walsh and Dixon share a view that community self-determination and self reliance are difficult to achieve when the state is the major sponsor of local community development initiatives. It is this last point that leads Dixon (1989) to conclude that community development has a much more limited role and can succeed only if narrowed to specific "planned social change as a result of a partnership between elements of the community and bureaucracy ... if history is any guide" (p.90). O Cinneide and Walsh (1990) offer another view about how to sustain community development's limited role and suggest that community development be entrenched as an official, comprehensive funding policy and thus give community development a legitimacy within the state similar to schools, public parks and so on. Their point is that, longer term, dedicated, stable funding would allow greater autonomy to community groups. In both cases the authors see the future (and past successes) of community organizing as being articulated to the state and given that articulation community development can make more limited (as opposed to grand) claims to being "valuable for enhancing local democracy, for encouraging collective action, for

building community identity and structures" (O Cinneide and Walsh, 1990; p. 333). Its role in promoting fundamental social change is seen as negligible.

In the Canadian context, the authors of an anthology and analysis of community development case studies (Wharf and Clague, 1997) arrive at a similar conclusion.

> Community development activities have been and can be effective in advocating and developing new arrangements in community care. They can challenge accepted norms and values, which requires commitment, resources, and imagination over a long period. However, community development activities have failed to alter the grand issues of social policy on the distribution of power and income (p. 314).

However, these same authors point out that this optimism about local level community development is countered by others who argue that community development has been paternalistic, patriarchal, racist and classist. Other writers (Kotze, 1987) also highlight its western ethnocentric bias.

The basis for the disillusionment makes sense to me on the one hand but on the other, we have seen broader changes in society as a result of community organizing and social movements. We have a network of women's transition homes and changes to national criminal laws resulting from local, regional, provincial and national community efforts on the part of women to address violence against women. We have restored environmental damage to neighbourhoods, rivers, lakes and developed waste disposal practices based on recycling and reuse of materials. Citizens are challenging the rights of government and

corporations to exploit, unilaterally, natural resources and pollute the environment in the name of efficiency, competition and the bottom line. City and community landscapes have been retained as a result of citizen action in planning and development decisions. These successes are cumulative (not in any linear sense), taking place over many years based on local, regional, provincial, national and international community development and political efforts. These efforts have challenged the status quo of relations of gender, race, production and reproduction, and have worked both in opposition to and in conjunction with the state. The successes are significant, albeit not complete, and continually subject to change, institutionalization and critique. The arena where we have witnessed the least change is in economic equality. In fact there is a widening gap between the rich and poor nationally and throughout the world. We have not achieved utopia, nor will we, through the various community development processes but significant positive changes have occurred over the longer term.

During this last decade there has been marked change in the relationship of the state to community organizing. I am mindful that the Dixon and O Cinneide and Walsh articles referred to above were written in 1989 and 1990, within the same time period of the programs under review in this thesis. It was a period of great activity in community-state partnerships - in participatory, community based decision making, planning and administration of community services in countries such as Britain, Canada, Australia, Ireland and the USA[6].

[6] Britain, Canada, Australia, Ireland and the USA while different in many respects are western liberal democratic states where similar changes are occuring in the economy and polity and

More recently a series of Australian articles were published that are much less optimistic about the relationship of community development to the state (Roberts and Pietsch, 1996; Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996) and they point to the changing nature of the state and the process of globalization. The shifting nature of state operations has led to a situation where "instead of a concern with building and with change, community work has become integrated within a contracting and increasingly conservative welfare state"[7] (Meekosha and Mowbray, 1990; p. 337). In a situation similar to British Columbia, these Australian writers report that state funding, increasingly based on individualized service provision to "customers" is narrowing the ability of community organizations to respond to the community self determination, support local leadership and community development activities. This represents a change that is articulated in community development literature the last few years; a change from the period of time when I first began the research and the time that O Cinneide and Walsh and Dixon write about in the articles referred to above.

Practically, the recent Australian articles document evidence of what seems to be a losing struggle against the emerging "contract state" to sustain community development with its emphasis on participation, egalitarian, reciprocal relationships, empowerment and change in the name of democracy. Conceptually, they conclude, that "Victoria's

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therefore we can learn from other.

[7] While there is evidence that the welfare state is becoming more conservative, we need to recognize the significant accomplishments of the welfare state. In those countries with well developed social programs the disparity in social wellbeing and health amongst the population is less than in those countries with less well developed programs.

[Australia] community services are now operating within a mandatory, individual-centred contract model, which promotes the civil right to enter contracts and denies taken-for-granted and basic political and citizenship opportunities" (Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996; p.133). Resistance through social action is still possible and a case study in one community suggests success can be achieved in an environment where a "combination of critical ideology, close community relationships, collective decision-making, and strategic political thinking, combined with a structure which encourages participation" exists (Roberts and Pietsch, 1996; p. 150). I will discuss in further detail the similarities between the contract state and the principles of performativity in the next chapter.

Closer to home, American writers Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman (1996) argue that "conditions of the postmodern era have changed the setting for grassroots community organizing" (p.19). They point out that the conceptual frameworks, discussed earlier in this chapter do not adequately address the strategies needed for social change in contemporary society. Advanced technology, information and communications systems, and modern transportation systems are cited as enabling the global organization of capital with a commensurate centralization of "unaccountable power", specialization of knowledge and functions, disruption and social fragmentation of communities, domination of symbols of authority, transnational control of media, remoteness and control of information by corporate and political elite, and local problems that originate elsewhere. All of these conditions contribute to a concentration of wealth and power in

the hands of a few and to the social construction (social relations that depend on historical, structured relations among people (Haraway, 1990)) of non-participation by the many. While the "state" does not figure as strongly in the argument there are similarities with those of the Australian authors in their proposals for community organizing in the face of significant societal change. Pilisuk et al (1996) advocate for new community organizing practices based on a theory that

- power, typically hidden in the design of systems, can be revealed
- empowering interpersonal dialogues are essential
- local participation produces highly diverse solutions
- coalitions are needed because local needs cannot be met with only local resources
- participation in local dialogues and broader social movements must be connected for either to succeed (p.32).

In a addition to creating opportunities for discussion and participation in local planning and decision making, writers advocate and demonstrate the success of newer strategies of developing coalitions across geographic and interest boundaries; strategically connecting local issues to a broader context (White, 1997; Roberts and Pietsch, 1996; Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996). They are advocating more strategic use of these approaches in the face of "the most significant of current political issues: the restructuring of the relations between the state and civil society" (White, 1997; p.82) where "citizens" become worker, consumers or service providers but not participants (Hoatson et al, 1996). Pilisuk et al (1996) suggest that community organizing practice is becoming more specialized and expert driven than in previous times because community practice requires greater emphasis on new skills and roles; "skills in uncovering hidden information and

sensitivity in applying expert knowledge are now requisites for successful social activism" (p.26). I will pursue this emphasis on accessing information and decision making processes in the reanalysis of the lessons.

These new skills highlight the importance of control and access to information in today's world. It is a world in "which control of information is a form of power, and concealment a means of control" (Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman, 1996; p. 27). This is a distinctly postmodern view which emphasizes the relationship of power and knowledge and "the operativity of information". I will pursue this in more detail in my later discussion of performativity. Information in this case is not limited to textual materials and research but also includes "how decisions are made and how dialogue is averted" (Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman, 1996; p. 27). Nor are the practices of control and concealment restricted to the corporate sector. Freedom of Information legislation had been enacted by many governments as one of several mechanisms to democratize state administration (Yeatman, 1990) by removing officials' discretion about who owns government information and who has access to it. Those of us with recent experience within bureaucracies however, appreciate how even these measures are circumvented and resisted in the interests of both administrative and political power and control.

These recent articles frame my puzzlement of what happened to the seemingly intense community development activity in British Columbia and they situate the experience in a broader historical and even

international context. According to the authors reviewed above the increasing social fragmentation, and awareness of diversity and competing needs within communities (Pilisuk et al, 1996); the process of globalization of corporate power with a corresponding declining power of governments to adequately address resource distribution (Roberts and Pietsch, 1996); the power of information; and the advent of the contract state all contribute to marginalizing the practice and impact of community development in an increasingly complex society.

Many authors have documented the failure of community development to bring about fundamental social change and they reason that we need to define community development more narrowly and reduce our expectations of what it may accomplish. Yet without exception writers contributing to the community development literature remain advocates for community organizing, as a means to counter increasing oppressive political and social practices; they maintain a commitment to emancipatory democracy. I count myself amongst those writers. However, implicit in the community development literature are unexamined notions of political theory, specifically the theory of participatory democracy with its notions of citizenship, dialogue, consensual politics and the relationship between individual and community empowerment. Just as Pilisuk et al (1996) propose "new practice innovations" in response to the changes in power relations within western society, many political theorists are challenging the dominance of liberalism and modernism in the discourse of political

theory (Frazer and Lacey, 1993; Yeatman, 1994; Young 1996) in order to

> offer a bridge from a modern to postmodern democratic politics. Only then ... can our reflection on emergent practice permit us to develop and refine our strategic interventions (p.122).

In the next chapter I will present a brief overview of "modern" theory of participatory democracy as the step onto the "bridge". Following this I will explore Anna Yeatman's (1994) argument that "we cannot and should not evade the postmodern moment, a moment which poses important challenges for emancipatory social movements and their understanding of the business of politics" (p. vii).

## Chapter 3: Participatory Democracy and Postmodernism

Political theory is contested ground. There are many versions and debates within the political theory tradition of liberalism and in particular, participatory democracy (Frazer and Lacey, 1993). For the purposes of this thesis I will rely on Carol Pateman's work (1970) on participation and democracy. I have chosen to use Participation and Democratic Theory because it speaks to the political roots of community development and the dilemmas of participation and representation that we face today. In 1970, when Pateman published this work, there was an upsurge in demand for broader participation in social and political life from many sectors of western society. Her exploration and call for a revised theory of democracy - participatory democracy - stems from her observation that "not only has it (participation) a minimal role but a prominent feature of recent theories of democracy is the emphasis placed on the dangers inherent in wide popular participation in politics" (p. 1). As I will argue later, this concern about the dangers of popular participation has resurfaced in the current period but for different reasons.

### Representative and Participatory Democracy

The theories to which Pateman refers are often called the theories of representative democracy which dominated discussion during the post war period. These theories were concerned with stability of the political system and with bringing theory into line with the "reality" of the situation as it existed at the time. It was "grounded in the facts of present-day political attitudes as revealed by sociological investigation"

(Pateman, 1970; p. 14). Presented as a descriptive, empirical, and therefore objective theory, representative democracy "refers to a political method or set of institutional arrangements at national level" (Pateman, 1970; p. 14). Free elections of competing elites is the primary democratic method by which the majority control their leaders. Leaders' decisions are influenced through possible loss of office and by the activities of competing groups who lobby governments between elections. Political equality is achieved through universal suffrage and refers also to "the existence of equality of opportunity of access to channels of influence over leaders" (Pateman, 1970; p. 14).

Participation was limited to voting in national or local elections "and thus had a purely protective function, it ensured that the private interests of each citizen were protected (the universal interest being merely a sum of individual interests)" (Pateman, 1970; p. 20). Theorists of representative democracy, relying on "scientific" studies of voting behaviour, asserted that participation beyond voting was not necessary nor desirable. "The fact that non-democratic attitudes are relatively more common among the inactive means that any increase in participation by the apathetic would weaken the consensus on the norms of the democratic method, which is a further necessary condition" to retain the stability of the democratic system (Pateman, 1970; p. 14). These same studies indicated that there were sharp divisions in who was active, (educated upper class white men) and who was not participating (women, lower socio-economic groups,

blacks and other minorities) in the civic society of the post war years (Pateman, 1980).

Pateman offers a competing theory of democracy based on participation. Drawing upon the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill and G.D.H. Cole she says that

> the theory of participatory democracy is built around the central assertion that individuals and their institutions cannot be considered in isolation from one another. The existence of representative institutions at national level is not sufficient for democracy; for maximum participation by all people at that level socialisation, or 'social training' for democracy must take place in other spheres in order that the necessary individual attitudes and psychological qualities can be developed. This development takes place through the process of participation itself (Pateman, 1970; p. 42).

According to this theory, participation serves two functions: first to educate the population and second, to promote societal integration and acceptance of collective decisions. Participation is "educative in the widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures" (Pateman, 1970; p. 42). It is integrative because through the process of participation in decision making an individual "finds that he has to take into account wider matters than his own immediate private interests if he is to gain co-operation form others, and he learns that the public and private interest are linked" (Pateman, 1970; p. 25). And from this connection of private and public comes a sense of empowerment, or in the words of Rousseau "freedom". "The individual's actual, as well as his sense of, freedom is increased through participation in decision making because it gives him a very

real degree of control over the course of his life and the structure of his environment" (Pateman, 1970; p. 26). Lastly the experience of participation in decision making "attaches the individual to his society and is instrumental in developing it into a true community" (Pateman, 1970; p. 27).

In contrast to the theory of representative democracy, participation in participatory democracy means participation in decision making, and political equality "refers to equality of power in determining the outcome of decisions" (Pateman, 1970; p. 43). Participatory democracy also takes a wider view of the meaning of the political, extending beyond national representative institutions to include other systems in society such as schools, industry, voluntary associations and so on, where people can gain the individual benefits and skills of democracy. In other words the ideal of participatory democracy requires a participatory society (Pateman, 1970).

It is easy to see the similarity between Pateman's presentation of participatory democracy theory and the ideal of community development. They share an emphasis on participation as a process rather than as an end in itself; equality in decision making; the connections between personal and community benefits of participation through empowerment and building community capacity; and the cumulative and transferable quality of participatory experiences. They also are subject to similar criticisms - that as theories or ideals they are "unrealistic and outmoded" (Pateman, 1970; p. 43). Pateman's (1970) analysis makes clear the importance of participation in

political decision making as a means of connecting the "citizen" to the state and society. Her work (1980, 1988) also demonstrates how liberal political theory excludes women, blacks, members of lower socio-economic groups minorities and so on form citizenship. However, given the broad changes in society and politics I argue we need to take into account not just who is excluded from theories' conception of citizenship but also how the concept of citizenship and the relation of the individual to the state is changing.

The criticisms of, and struggles to redefine, community development are recent and are based on the apparent failure of community development efforts to bring about broad social change. These criticisms and struggles are situated within the modernist tradition of participatory democracy. They take issue with the failure of the rational individual citizenship and the *res publica* of liberalism, the rational consensus of the New Left's participatory democracy (republicanism) and the social citizenship of the welfare state (Yeatman, 1994; Fraser and Lacey, 1993) to achieve equality and justice in western society. As I have argued in the previous chapter, changes are occurring in the relationship between community development and the state, changes that seem to suggest a different conception of citizenship and politics. However, little attention has been paid to recent postmodern critical theory as it relates to community development: a body of thought that is attempting to understand and theorize the changes. In this next section, following Anna Yeatman(1994), I will explore some of the key points of postmodern politics as they apply to community development. I do so

in order to clarify the major conceptual elements of perspectival dialogism and negotiated settlements, politics of voice and representation, and performativity that I will use in the re-analysis of the lessons learned from my earlier research and to point out how postmodern thought differs from modernism.

**Perspectival Dialogism and Negotiated Settlements**

Yeatman rejects what she calls to the dominant discourses of modern citizenship; liberal discourse, participatory democracy discourse and the welfare state discourse. She rejects them on the grounds that each systematically excludes women, children, the elderly, and disabled; where the substantive, embodied features of everyday life are bracketed out or defined as special needs. "They all identify the model citizen with formal individuality of a rationally-oriented, freely contracting subject" (p. 85). She argues instead for "an alternative vision of citizenship, one that works with and accepts difference" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 86).

In some respects this citizenship based on difference is similar to the arguments made by CORE to develop a shared decision making process that included all sectors who had a stake in land use planning within a region and all those who might disagree with any decisions. Citizenship based on difference assumes that perspectives are different, irresolvably so, and based on experiences of oppression and dominance along a variety of axes of race, gender, ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation and so on (Young, 1996). This creates heterogeneous and differentiated communities that

> generate distinct perspectives on what justice should look like and how it might operate. All then that is possible is for differently positioned groups or individuals to come together to offer their different perspectives on how they should decide and manage their shared life conditions. This is a perspectival dialogism, one which indicates that what justice is conceived to be is an historically moveable feast subject to the ongoing negotiation of these different perspectives and provisional settlements they achieve (Yeatman, 1994; p.87).

This perspectival dialogism and the negotiated settlements arrived at differ from the rational consensus of participatory democracy discourse in that they are not based on a "rational" process that brackets out the substantive, embodied peculiarities of everyday life to arrive at a common good. Perspectival dialogism and negotiated settlements are predicated on substantive difference and not on "minorities" who may be heard from but not included. "As the very term 'minorities' indicates, the dominant discourse of citizenship is still predicated on the idea of a common culture/civilization which, in order to be a citizen, individuals and groups must share"(Yeatman 1994; p. 86). The irresolvable differences differ too from those posited by some feminists and Marxists for there is no privileged voice or position or axis of conflict. These are not solely or primarily irresolvable differences between genders or classes but those that exist across multiple and changing perspectives of gender, ethnicity, race, age and so on.

Irresolvable differences introduces the centrality of conflict and therefore, conflict resolution as primary functions of the state and society. Yeatman (1994) says that political environment that

recognizes and values difference requires elaboration of procedures to guide the dialogic process. This necessarily entails that contestants must "subordinate the bare assertion of their respective differences to some shared political norms" (Yeatman, 1994; p.89). These norms however, differ from transcendent norms of modern political theory e.g. natural rights, in that a postmodern view regards the shared political norms as "creatures of discourse", contestable by nature and therefore subject to change (Yeatman, 1994). The rights of a postmodern political culture would be the rights to talk and to be listened to within a decision making process: "rights are understood as dialectical and relational in respect of opening debate and discussion about how to positively alter relationships of oppression" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 90). In this way a political culture of difference would be similar to participatory democracy because it recognizes that these dialogic processes must be "valued, developed and resourced".

Yeatman is quite clear that these dialogic rights do not replace the rights of liberalism or the welfare state but enter into a relationship with them. She argues that postmodernism's view of subjectivity as "multiple, contradictory and historically" changing leads to differing positions or practices in different political arenas. Therefore,

> It follows that rights talk with the politics of difference will be different from the rights talk of natural law in liberal and republican discourse, where individuality is assumed to be given in respect of the polity. The polity either respects or does not respect this individuality. .... These rights are also distinct from those associated with welfare state citizenship in which the state makes a positive conferral of rights (e.g. the rights of women and children to enjoy protection from harmful assertion of natural individuality) (Yeatman, 1994; p. 90).

It is through public political processes of dialogue that individual subjectivity is created and decisions are made about how to meet the needs of individuals and groups. Since the provincial government has pulled back on funding community development initiatives I take this as an indication that there is a lack of support at that level for participation and dialogic opportunities. There is a move toward contracting for specific services rather than resourcing community agencies to determine community needs and priorities and then to develop solutions to addressing the needs.

**Politics of Representation, Difference, and Voice**

As discussed earlier, for postmodernism, knowledge is perspectival: socially constructed within a specific historical discourse and dependent on the position of the "knowing subject" . Reality then can only be known "via our representations of reality" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 30); a view that differs from modernism where reality is external and "determine(s) the representations that communicate(d) it" ( p. 13). Postmodernism shares the view with feminism that multiple voices arise from "differences in the positioning of knowing subjects in relation to the historicity of interconnected relationships of domination and contestation" (p.30). Due to the political nature of difference and representation it becomes crucial to ask of all discourses: whose voice is heard, who is authorized to represent reality, who is silenced in order for certain representations to prevail? Yeatman (1994) goes on to say "this is a politics of representation which insists on the material effects of discursive power" (p. 31). In other words Yeatman is saying that discursive power affects how

people live their day to day lives, that some benefit and others are excluded from the physical and material benefits.

The politics of difference and representation are integral to community development, although not necessarily explicit within the discourse. Community development attempts to engage the maginalized (those who have been silenced, not authorized) to represent themselves in improving the material aspects of their lives, whether it be through economic development, providing child care services, organizing communal kitchens, opposing development that removes affordable housing, or restoring polluted waterways and so on. Each of these activities implicitly or explicitly (depending on the orientation of those involved) challenges the dominant social, cultural, economic and political regime. This does not necessarily mark them as postmodern activities. For that designation to hold there would have to be an insistence of not just adding in the marginalized to the existing dominant order, e.g. provide so many housing units for low income families or ensure advisory committees or task forces mirror population categories, but an insistence on "the interconnections between the ways national, class, gender, race and ethnic differences are produced and reinvented in order to maintain and expand a globally integrated network of relationships of domination" (Yeatman, 1994; p.31). Unlike feminist and Marxist approaches neither gender nor class is given a privileged voice.

The politics of difference also takes the position that the individual, knowing subject is a heterogeneous, complex individuality rather than a "natural essence".

> Among other things this means the individual as a political actor may assume a non-coherent, or a non-'party', identity. Indeed, the individual may practice different aspects of his/her selfhood in different kinds of political arena and struggle" (Yeatman, 1994; p.90).

We often refer to heterogeneous selfhood when we identify the different "hats" that we are wearing at the moment, e.g. wearing my taxpayer hat or my student hat, or, to indicate that we have within ourselves differing and perhaps conflicting views about a topic depending on our position. We all come to community processes with multiple roles/selves. We often wear several different hats or speak with different voices when we participate in community processes - as a consumer of mental health services, as a member of a Mental Health Task Force and as a government employee; as a band member and community social worker on the self government negotiating committee and on the Healthy Communities Steering Committee; as a local economic development officer and as a member of the local social planning council and as a mother active in the school; or as a politician involved in pro-choice or pro-life groups or in the environmental or women's movement; as a neighbour and as a steering committee member or trustee of a local governance body. Each of these situations has the potential to create dissonance not only for the individual but also the groups in which she or he is involved, particularly if there are concerns about conflict of interest or divided

loyalties. On the other hand these multiple roles or hats, if given a positive valuation, enable different perspectives to be present in community processes and serve to enrich and highlight the differing needs of community residents. Donna Haraway (1990) puts it eloquently when she says:

> From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point. Single vision produces worse illusions than double vision or many-headed monsters (p. 196).

For me this statement reflects the useful part of recognition of our multiple and often contradictory selves/identities. I think about the creative uses that women make of this double vision when we are in management and cannot completely control how the organization is structured but can influence how our own staff work together and structure their work environment. We call upon our own experiences as mothers, daughters and care givers to structure more flexible work hours and locations so that children or elderly parents may be cared for. It is not so much a matter of which hat has priority (although some certainly have more social status and power within a traditionally dominant culture) but how one self informs the other.

Just as I have argued in the preceding section that there are indications of reduced government support for participation and dialogue and more emphasis on contracting out, we also are witnessing in 1997, less tolerance in a politics of representation and

difference as environmentalists have been tagged as "enemies" of the province. Those who "represent" the public good of the province and therefore those whose voices should be listened to are those who promote jobs or are working; who function as contributors to society. There is no room in these representations to be both a contributor and an environmentalist, to have a multiple standpoint that might usefully inform the debate. I interpret this atmosphere in British Columbia as an indicator of the principle of performativity which Yeatman (1994) and others argue now operates within western bureaucracies. I turn now to an explanation of performativity.

**Performativity**

Several writers (Yeatman, 1994; Hoatson et al, 1996; Young; 1996; White, 1997) discuss how the politics of voice and representation as acted out by feminists, environmentalists, anti-racists, gay and lesbian activists etc., has been introduced into contemporary politics and destabilized and delegitimized the paternalism of the welfare state. The welfare state is understood as substituting for the paternalism of the private, patriarchal household of earlier modern liberalism. Many within these movements argue that, despite many of benefits, the welfare state has not protected them but continues to subjugate them; the promise of equality and justice under the welfare state have not been achieved.

> For paternalism, the state substitutes performativity as the principle which legitimizes both its control function, and the way in which those functions operate to contain the influence of the horizontally integrated, democratic politics of social movements and their claims on the state (Yeatman, 1994; p. 110).

Postmodern theorists recognize that in postmodern society there is a "tendency to universalize instrumental reason, to subject all discursive practices indiscriminately to the single criterion of efficiency, or performativity" (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990) It now provides what Yeatman (1994) calls "a meta-discourse for public policy" (p.110); a discourse that bears much resemblance to the discourse of the market economy. The emphasis in both discourses is on criteria of efficiency and effectiveness.

Performativity is derived from systems theory and organizational ideals of behaving like a computer based on control, efficiency and effectiveness through functions of input, throughput and output. However, performativity adds an understanding of power to systems theory. Performativity conceives of society (and organizations) as a "functional whole" where knowledge is power and power determines knowledge. Knowledge/information is controlled and power to access knowledge is controlled as a basis of legitimacy. Performativity strives to reduce complexity and "fragility intrinsic to the legitimation of power by minimizing risk (and) unpredictability" (Benhabib, 1990; p.108).

> Power legitimates science and the law on the basis of their efficiency, and legitimates this efficiency on the basis of science and law. Thus the growth of power, and its self-legitimation, are now taking the route of data storage and accessibility, and operativity of information" (Lyotard cited in Benhabib, 1990; p. 108).

Secrecy is a characteristic of a state operating within a culture of performativity, rendering much of the business of the state to the private rather than the public sphere: access to information in the hands of the state is controlled. Information is used by politicians and senior bureaucrats as a source of power and control, to be shared only as it meets the needs of policies and political direction or to control the "social management of the actors" within the state. However, these controlled representations (e.g. the provincial budget presentation in 1996 shortly after the NDP were re-elected) of the state are questioned by opposition elected representatives and by oppositional groups and individuals. Yeatman (1994) says this drags the issues out into the open - into "public spaces".

> By turning the techno(econo)cratic representations of state policy into openly contested political issues, they convert performative decisions into rhetorical praxis. Democratic struggle is centred on attempting and effecting this conversion (p.111).

Two issues arise from the concept of converting performative decisions to rhetorical praxis. Communications and public relations have now become significant departments in state bureaucracies and political parties as they attempt to control the public dialogue and debate on government representations/actions through controlling what representations are made through media outlets. This task is made somewhat easier by the increasing concentration of media capital and control over the symbols of legitimacy in the western world.

This has implications for all groups who wish to contest public policy because these public representations then become the private representations within the bureaucracy and become like currency in policy decisions. In British Columbia an example of government representations that will illustrate this point is almost a mantra whereby all expenditure and resource reductions are done to "preserve our health and education systems". The use of this mantra is meant to close off discussion. However, the very statement opens up the topic for debate where users and providers contest just how well or badly the government is doing with its job of preservation. It also is used as a tool of persuasion where those who want to contest state action in these sectors attempt to demonstrate to the state where improvements should be made. This mantra becomes like currency within the bureaucracy because those who demonstrate (or say) their programs are saving funds or operating more efficiently to preserve health and education "purchase" leeway in other policy areas. Yeatman (1994) cites Lyotard (1984) and Melucci (1988, 1989) as arguing that

> the steering capacity of the system is improved by allowing performativity to be substituted for by the politicization of particular issue areas. With the kind of complexity that the contemporary state has to deal with, and where policy decisions serve to effectively reduce this complexity by making provisional commitments, this reduction needs to be well informed" (Yeatmam, 1994; p.113).

In other words, the principle of performativity relies on this conversion to democratic "rhetorical praxis" in order to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, to ensure that the state is knowledgeable about their market. The state, as I have suggested above, subsumes

these contestations in public policy, negotiated settlements "which take up as well as neutralize the challenge" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 115).

A recent example of how this steering capacity is improved by rhetorical praxis arose with the severe injuries inflicted on two infant foster children during the spring of 1997. These separate but temporally close events engendered much public discussion and debate about how safe or unsafe children were in government care. The provincial government took up the issue and appointed a large task force that represented the various players involved in foster care, including former children in care, to report on policy direction for state care of children. No longer is it adequate for state officials to draft policy for approval by politicians. The issues in foster care are complex and multi-faceted and require the input of a variety of perspectives. While the task force can be seen on the one hand as government's attempt to co-opt the players, it will also generate useful information that will inform the policy and allow the government to "make provisional commitments" that will reduce complexity for the time being. This in turn creates opportunities for members of the task force to challenge or contest any policy decisions that arise from the task force work and thus convert the policy decisions to open, democratic debate and possible further changes.

Yeatman argues that social movements, such as the women's movement, disabled community, environmentalists, gays and lesbian that contest public policy "enjoy a resilience" because of their grounding in everyday life. There are two aspects to this. First,

"Kitchen table conversation can become a public space, not because those using it are planning their next political action, but because their discussion and debate are politicizing their interaction and relationships" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 114). And second, the embodied everyday life does not go away. "If the state substitutes performative criteria for the movement's presence within substantive policy, it (the movement) is still developing and experimenting with what Melucci terms the latency of everyday life" (Yeatman, 1994; p.115). The best known example of this would be feminists' efforts to eradicate violence against women and how this has moved from self help organizations to institutionalizing women's transitions houses as government programs, to changing rape legislation, to recognition of violence in the workplace, to sexual harassment, to systemic violence in the justice and medical systems and so on. As each issue receives recognition and is absorbed as a government funded program or into policy in order to preserve the "fragile" legitimacy of the state, another issue related to the embodiment of violence against women surfaces. Other examples would include the success of the community living movement for the physically and mentally disabled and the Aids movement.

The performative state relies on these contestations in order to be efficient and effective and thus is always embroiled in politics of voice and representation. As such "it maintains rhetorical continuity with the traditions of liberal/republican democracy and with social democracy (as well as, Pateman's participatory democracy) as a way of

both signalling and explaining its perviousness to social movements (Yeatman, 1994; p.115).

> Performativity is a principle of governance which establishes strictly functional relations between a state and its inside and outside environments. Democracy and social welfare are operationalized in terms of these functional relations (Yeatman, 1994; p. 111).

Several writers (Hoatson et al 1996; Roberts and Peitsch, 1996; Meeksha and Mowbray, 1990) are now observing what they call a shift from a "Welfare State paradigm" to a "Contract State paradigm" in Australia and their arguments elaborate Yeatman's thesis about the functional relations of the performative state. The contract state is a term used in recent Australian community development literature to describe emerging state practices in relation to community services. The contract state is characterized by "contractual exchange", privatization of government services, a market orientation and commensurate competition for funds and consumers amongst community agencies; a geographical orientation rather than locality based and an individualized, consumer choice service focus (Hoatson, Dixon, and Sloman, 1996).

I think it is fair to say that we are also beginning to see a move in this direction in British Columbia. Signs that are appearing in B.C. health and social services sectors include a move to providing services almost exclusively to individuals rather than providing a range of funding and service types. Health care organizations' boards have been amalgamated at the regional level and locally elected non-profit

community boards are being replaced by government appointees. There is an increasing emphasis on management and accountability in the current emphasis on contracting, outcome measures and evaluation reports now being pursued by the provincial government with community agencies. Hoatson et al (1996) argue that these are all signs of the disappearance of community where the legitimacy of gift exchange relationships is now being replaced by market exchange relationships. Gift exchange relationships are "the basis of much community development practice, reciprocity is 'indirect, implicit, often acknowledged with quite a different benefit' (Muetzelfeldt, 1994; p. 141)" (cited in Hoatson et al, 1996; p.132). Market exchange relationships are characterized by functional relations where "the opportunity to contribute as a community member is almost non-existent: one can either be a service deliverer or a customer, but not a participant" (Hoatson et al, 1996; p.132).

Citizenship then, becomes defined differently: from the social citizen of the welfare state[8] to that of "actual or potential contributors to the performativity of the competition[9] state". Just as the citizen-as-participant no longer has a role in the contract state, Yeatman (1994) says the trend is to "define out of existence non-contributors" (p.111), for example those not involved in the labour market, those in jail, and

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[8] Embedded within the concept of the social citizen of the welfare state are notions of recipients of social programs as deserving, i.e., as contributors, and undeserving, i.e., non contributors. Needs tests and income tests, social insurance programs are all predicated on determining who are worthy recipients of the services..

[9] At an international level, in a manner similar to the national contract state , Cerny (1990, cited in Yeatman, 1994) refers to the "competition state": "as the world economy is characterized by increasing interpenetration and the crystallization of transnational markets and structures, the state itself is having to act more and more like market player, that shapes its policies to promote, control and maximize returns from market forces in an international setting" (p.230).

street youth. Some might argue that the role of citizen as participant was never very large and certainly this is central to Pateman's critique of representative democracy (1970, 1980). However, there was a brief period of time, during the 1970's through to the early 1990's, when we talked about an increased level of participation in society, especially at the local level and in community health and social services.

In this review of community development and political theory I have outlined the basic differences and continuities between modernism and postmodernism and presented an historical overview of definitions and frameworks for community development that reflect an increasingly complex societal and political context. Much of the community development literature written during the 1990's, while acknowledging community development's success in local change initiatives, is concerned with the apparent failure of community development to effect fundamental social change. There have been some recent attempts to describe and theorize the shifting context of contemporary community development practice in terms of the replacement of the welfare state with the contract state. However, the political theory underlying this replacement has not been explicated. Postmodern theory suggests that transformative shifts and fundamental social change do not occur, that through exposing how power and domination work, power is then destabilized only to reveal another form of domination to be destabilized again in a continuing process of uncovering domination. I have turned to postmodern political theory, as a contemporary critical theory, and found some

useful concepts that I will apply in a reanalysis of the community development lessons generated by my research: perspectival dialogism and negotiated settlements, politics of voice and representation, and performativity. In the next chapter I will describe the methodology of the research.

## Chapter 4 - Methodology

This research is based on work I undertook several years ago on behalf of the SPARC-University of Victoria Social Development Research Program. My goal was to explore trends in government sponsored community development activity, particularly initiatives sponsored by the British Columbia government. Two documents were produced for the Social Development Research Program. The first is an inventory of communities where community development programs were active and the time span of those programs in each community. The second is a description of the programs and lessons learned. It is the research material from the second document that forms the basis of this thesis. In this chapter I describe how I undertook the research and the issues related to the investigation and the reanalysis.

The initial focus of the earlier research was on community development initiatives sponsored by the provincial government and two federal initiatives which were taken up by B.C. communities. Information about these major initiatives was collected from November of 1992 to April 1993 with follow up on the status of the initiatives taking place in April of 1997. The initial study was really a snapshot in time and includes 12 initiatives. These initiatives range from time limited programs such as Stronger Communities in the 90's to what were on-going ones such as the Economic Development Commissions and Healthy Communities and they cover the period from 1988 to 1993. Descriptions of each initiative are contained in Appendix A.

The 12 initiatives include:

Healthy Communities
Healthy Schools
Economic Development Commissions and Committees
Strong Communities in the 90's
Sustainable Communities Initiatives
Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE)
Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
Community Initiatives Program (M. of Women's Equality)
Community Tourism Action Program
Local and Regional Child and Youth Committees (CYC's)
Safer Communities Strategy (Federal)
Community Futures (Federal)

As mentioned in the introduction only two of these initiatives continue to exist; Healthy Schools and to a limited extent Community Futures.

The intent of the earlier research was to develop an inventory and map of government community development initiatives, to describe their characteristics and then to distill some lessons from the experience with these initiatives. Each of these components required accessing data through different methods. The inventory (over 700 entries), listing the initiatives in each community of B.C. between 1988 and 1993, required that criteria be established to determine which government programs would be included in the study. I conducted a content analysis of government documents and a sample of the community reports produced for or by these initiatives in order to define the characteristics of the initiatives and to identify common themes that had been raised by communities as issues to be dealt with through the community development initiatives. Information in these reports was elaborated through interviews with the key program staff

involved in the initiatives both to benefit from their hindsight and experience and to clarify information in program documents.

At the time of this research, I was a board member of a new community organization that was using a community development approach to policy and organizational development. I was able to draw upon my knowledge and experience as a participant on the board of directors, particularly in the interviews, to establish trust and credibility. My participation in planning community development activities as a board member was central in the analysis of the data particularly in developing the lessons. I was able to reflect on my own experience and involvement with community development. As a board we were self consciously operating from an inclusive, participatory paradigm that conflicted with the traditional health sector management of organizations that were soon to come under our jurisdiction. There was much discussion and ongoing analysis about our policies and practices in community development. This ongoing critical analysis with the board coincided with this research and it helped me to verify similar experiences or issues that I uncovered in the research.

More recently my work within the provincial government has sensitized me to the issues of community participation in public policy decision making and to the changes that have occurred in relation to the bureaucracy's readiness to engage in participatory processes. It was made abundantly clear in my recent work that participation in decision making by consumers and stakeholders was out but we would

"consult" with them about the policies and organization of the new ministry because after all "it is our money they are spending and we are accountable for it". It was through my reflexivity of that involvement that I was able to take a second look at the data from which the original lessons were derived and set them within the context of postmodern political theory.

Missing in this research project are the voices of the community participants in these government processes. It is one of the dilemmas of the intensive interest in communities that residents sometimes feel "consulted to death". I was warned over and over, by community development workers and community development program staff not to bother approaching community participants because they were tired of being consulted and studied, that their desire was to be left alone to get on with the work. In smaller communities the problem of being over consulted, studied or "committee'd to death" was even more acute as the same pool of people was drawn upon to participate in community activities. I will come back to this subject later in the paper. Also missing are documentation of community development activity in and the voices of the aboriginal communities. There was a tremendous amount of exciting community work going on in these communities but time but resources did not permit exploration of their work.

**Criteria for Selection of Initiatives**

Community development initiatives are the focus of this research. How and where to draw the line between community development,

community based programming and consultation can be difficult and at times arbitrary especially when we are talking about government initiated and funded processes. At the heart of the differences between community based programming and community development is who holds the power to set directions and to determine the process, timing and outcome of the community process. Ron Labonte (1993) defines community development as "the process of supporting community groups in their identification of important concerns and issues, and in their ability to plan and implement strategies to mitigate their concerns and resolve their issues" (p.33). The different characteristics of community based programming and community development as presented by Labonte (1993, p.33) are shown in the following table.

**TABLE 2.- CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

| COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMING |
|---|---|
| • the work is often longer term, and without time-limits.<br>• a general increase in the group's capacities to act effectively in its social world is the desired outcome.<br>• power relations are constantly negotiated.<br>• the problem name starts with that of the community group then is negotiated strategically, i.e. to a problem-naming that most advances the shared interests of the group and institution. | • there are defined program time lines.<br>• changes in specific behaviours or problems are the desired outcome.<br>• decision-making power rests principally in the institution.<br>• the problem name is given. |

Citizen participation is an essential characteristic of community development, community based services and consultations. However, as the community development literature points out citizen participation can range up "the ladder" from "manipulation" to "full managerial control" (Arnstein, 1969). Others such as Pateman characterize the relationship between power and participation as "pseudo participation", "partial participation" and "full participation".

> In the first instance, participation might be used to persuade the powerless to accept decisions that may be made by the powerful in any case. In the second, joint decision-making may take place but the final power to make a decision still rests with only one party. When 'full participation is involved, each interest has an equal chance to determine the outcome (Cassidy, 1991, p.23).

These differing relationships parallel the distinctions between consultation (pseudo), community based (partial), and community development (full) initiatives.

This discussion of the characteristics of community development, community-based programming and consultation set the stage for selecting the initiatives for the research project. I was looking for initiatives that most closely reflected the characteristics of community development. These definitions represent pure types. In reality the community development programs and initiatives in this study vary in the degree to which they represent the "ideal". The players involved, the stage of implementation in each community and the individual communities' histories and resources as well as the initiatives' histories within the provincial or federal government combine to influence the differing rates of evolution toward community development approaches in each community. This study also

recognizes that community based programming can turn into a community development process in the hands of committed individuals or groups. What may be a community based program in one community will look more like a community development process in another. Community consultation processes, too, can serve as community development processes or strongly support community development when local people participate in the planning, coordination, facilitation and decision making of consultation processes within their own communities.

The initiatives included in this research have several characteristics in common which place them within a community development framework. First they are directed to geographically defined areas whether these be neighbourhoods, municipalities, towns, villages, or regions. Within those geographical communities some of the initiatives addressed "communities of interest", e.g. the business community, women, street people, tourism, and "experiential communities" which are diverse in interests and values and which reflect our experience of our day to day lives (Hoffmeyer, 1991; p.2; Labonte, 1993). Second, they required, at minimum, citizen participation through broad based community committees and most required demonstration of, or at least encouraged more wide spread, community involvement. Third, communities were required to initiate the involvement. And, lastly the communities had autonomy to determine the issues or problems they wished to address and how they would address them.

Not all of the initiatives selected for study performed in a community development fashion in all communities but they were included because they had a mandate to move in that direction if the community or the players so desired. The best examples of this are the Child and Youth Committees which existed at both the local and regional levels throughout the province. Some of these committees operated within a narrowly defined case management function with an exclusive membership of government employees, whereas others were initiated or operated within more broadly based local social planning groups with inclusive membership and that looked beyond the individual problems of one youth and his or her family to more systemic, community solutions. Linda Christiansen-Ruffman (1990) found a similar result in the evaluation of the government sponsored Community Employment Strategy during the mid 1970's whereby the experience of community participation and control in Nova Scotia was significantly greater than in PEI and Newfoundland. The difference in experience was dependent on the values and the players involved both in the community and within the federal and provincial bureaucracies.

Community based programming initiatives such as the "Community Partnership Program - Hospital Services" and "Partners in Tourism" or employment programs sponsored by the former Ministry of Social Services were not included in the research. While these programs may have supported local plans which resulted from community development activities, they were designed primarily to meet Ministry or government specified outcomes and/or they served as administrative decentralization mechanisms. On-going advisory

boardsor committees were not included because they may have been subject to patronage appointments; membership does not necessarily mean accountability to the citizens one is supposed to represent, and the terms and conditions of appointment were set by the government not by constituency groups or members. These community based programs and advisory boards and committees did not meet the research criteria established to study the community development initiatives; namely they were time limited, not open ended processes; final authority or decision making rested with government officials not within the community; community involvement was predetermined and often based on restrictive notions of representation rather than participation of broad interests; and lastly, they were initiated to meet government needs, priorities and outcomes not necessarily those identified by the communities.[10]

The purpose of the study was two-fold; to describe the initiatives and to elaborate lessons for community development practitioners and citizens who may participate in future community development initiatives. In keeping with community development practice which emphasizes the process of community engagement, I did not specifically address the outcomes or results of the community initiatives in my findings but attempted to extract the process issues. It is from these that we can learn about effective strategies for contestation and change. This is not to say that outcomes or results

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[10] Given the discussion of Yeatman's (1994) postmodern political theory in Chapter 3 of this thesis, if I were selecting initiatives for study today some of these community/government partnership programs may have been included because of their potential for opening up 'public spaces' for contestation.

were not discussed in a few reports and certainly positive and negative experiences with the results of various community initiatives informed the assessments of the staff I interviewed.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

I employed content analysis of documents as the primary approach to data collection and analysis. These documents included community reports, annual reports, government correspondence, policy documents, program proposals and budget reports. This method was supplemented by face to face and telephone interviews with people who were working either in the field as community development practitioners or as government employees with responsibilities for the initiatives included in the study. I kept detailed notes summarizing information from the documents and the details of my interviews. I also kept a file of personal reflections and questions.

I attended two meetings with the provincial government Interministry Ad Hoc Committee on Community Development. The Interministry Ad Hoc Committee on Community Development was just that, ad hoc. As the volume of community development, consultations and community based service delivery increased civil servants with responsibilities for program development in the communities formed the Interministry Ad Hoc Committee on Community Development. Members came from the Ministries of Health, Social Services, Economic Development, Municipal Affairs, Tourism, CORE, Environment, Education and the Child and Youth Secretariat. They were responding to their own embarrassment of continually bumping into one another in the

communities, creating confusion and receiving criticism from community residents about duplication of effort. Members of this committee felt that there was a need for them to be informed about the work of their colleagues government-wide and to begin coordinating their community activities.

The first meeting I attended in December, 1992 was to introduce the research project to the members and verify that the selection criteria made sense to those working in the field. The meeting also provided me with an introduction to many of the people I would interview throughout the research. Toward the end of the research I attended another committee meeting in April, 1993 to present the initial findings and to confirm the factual content as well as to seek feed back on the themes and lessons generated by the analysis. I was able to verify the analysis by checking that it reflected their experience.

The data collection and data analysis processes occurred simultaneously. I worked my way through the list of initiatives, reviewing the documents that were made available and interviewing staff involved in each program. As themes and issues emerged or new questions came to light, I went back to some of the documents and earlier interviewees to answer the questions. In this way the analysis informed the data collection, just as the data informed the analysis.

The content analysis of the government documents and community reports yielded much of the information regarding characteristics and themes of the community development initiatives. With the exception

of CORE, Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and Healthy Communities, the government documents revealed little about the process and experience with implementing community development programs. The government documents pertaining to these initiatives reported goals, objectives, results of community needs assessments, occasionally the methodology of the needs assessments, budgets and statistics. They were summary reports of lengthy community processes. In order to gather data and conduct the analysis related to the lessons I expanded the document review to include papers and how-to manuals written by community development practitioners. I also interviewed three community practitioners who were authors of some of the papers and how-to manuals and involved in the Sustainable Communities projects. These interviews and documents supplemented the analysis of the interviews with staff involved in government sponsored community development initiatives.

My reanalysis of the lessons is situated within the context of significant changes in the way the provincial government works with communities. For this thesis I return to the lessons and the original data and look at them through a filter of postmodern critical theory. In the case of CORE, new data from the time period under study has become available and it has informed the secondary analysis (Thorne, (1994). I also draw upon my experiences and reflections from the earlier research as a comparison to my recent experience in government.

In summary then, the principal method of inquiry is a content analysis of documents, supplemented by interviews with community development practitioners. Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously, each informing the other in a reflexive fashion. The reanalysis of the lessons uses the same data with more recent additions as I explore what postmodern theory has to offer the field of community development..

## Chapter 5: Reanalyzing "Lessons Learned" from My Original Study

In this chapter I will present a summary of the "lessons learned" and submit each one to an analysis from the perspective of postmodern political theory, relying primarily on Yeatman's Postmodern Revisionings of the Political (1994).

The original lessons are situated in a historical moment when there was considerable interest from all sectors, including governing elites, in promoting community self-determination and broader participation in planning and decision making. The disappearance of government-sponsored community development initiatives signals a change, a move away from participatory approaches. Following Yeatman, this has not been an abrupt change but one built on the circumstances of and intimately related to the past. The temptation is to throw out these lessons I wrote about in 1993 because they no longer fit. However, as I revisited the original lessons I saw some similarities with the approaches these lessons offered and those suggested by postmodern critical theory as discussed in Chapter three of this thesis. This reanalysis yields practical information for those of us with an interest in opening "public spaces" for democratic action. Each lesson is presented in its orginal form and following the reanalysis based on postmodern critical theory I reframe the lesson to highight its implications for community development practice.

**LESSON 1 - ESTABLISHING A SET OF VALUES AND PRINCIPLES PROMOTES FLEXIBILITY AND ALLOWS FOR COMMUNITY SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS**

In the following discussion I look at the use of guiding principles in participatory community processes. Data supporting this analysis was collected during a period when community processes were guided by an implicit belief in the value of participatory democracy. Postmodern political theorist, Anna Yeatman argues that a rational consensus as conceived of by participatory democracy is not longer possible and that negotiated settlements in relation to the politics of multiple differences must be guided by principles or political norms. These political norms are contestable and subject to change over time. As I reviewed the earlier lesson on principles from a postmodern perspective, I came to understand that there was much about this lesson that continues to be useful.

By 1993 a trend in government sponsored community and social development initiatives such as CORE, Healthy Communities, New Directions, and the Capital Health Board, was to develop a set of clearly articulated principles that would guide all activities in the organization or program. A draft discussion paper (no date) produced for the Interministry Ad Hoc Community Development Committee also proposed a set of guiding principles "for provincial dealings with communities throughout British Columbia" (p.1). Once an initial group of participants or board members is pulled together, arriving at a clearly articulated set of value and principles is promoted as one of the first tasks to be accomplished. At the time I was conducting the

research, this step of establishing guiding values and principles was not explicit in the data except in the interviews with Healthy Communities staff. A month after the legislation creating CORE was enacted, CORE released its first publication containing a set of guiding principles for a Land Use Charter (1992) that was to guide CORE's work and provincial policy. New Directions (1993), Healthy Communities and the Capital Health Board followed a similar pattern. A later guide for Regional and Community Health Boards and Councils, published by New Directions (1995) said "as a first step you must develop your own mission, vision, values and principles as a basis for your work" (Part II, p. 6) The principles suggested in these documents were established to guide not only the work of the "parent" organization, e.g. Capital Health Board, but also their subsidiaries, e.g. Community Health Planning Groups. In this way the principles acted as executive level policy direction. I will return to a discussion of this later in this section on principles.

Drawing from my own experience with the Capital Health Board, establishing a set of guiding principles provided a forum for participants to talk with one another about the why's and wherefores of their involvement. The process of developing and agreeing to a set of principles also forced us as participants to talk about our own values and beliefs, which in turn helped us get to know one another. This step explicitly recognizes that "community" is not homogeneous and despite the fact that as participants we may be faced with a similar situation (e.g. poor housing, mental health planning which is being

addressed through community development efforts) we may have little else in common.

Many involved in the Capital Health Board process, commented on how difficult this part of the process is. However, exploring the diversity of values and beliefs and having them "out on the table" appeared to assist in decision making down the road because people had a better understanding of each others' perspectives and they committed to operate from the overarching principles. This does not mean that the principles are cast in stone or that conflict does not arise over their meaning but they do serve as a strong foundation for further work. As CORE put it "an agreement on process also builds confidence, commitment and cooperation" (1992; p. 28): it connects the individual to the institutions in society (Pateman, 1970).

From conversations with people who were working from a set of principles in Healthy Communities, CORE and from my experience with the Capital Health Board, I learned that this approach requires a new way of thinking about and acting in community processes. The role of decision makers shifts from that of arbitrator of the public interest to facilitator in explicating multiple perspectives (CORE, 1995b). It means there is no one way to structure processes, services or outcomes. In the absence of pre-planned targets or objectives but within the context of the principles, communities can develop a wide range of creative responses to their particular problems. It requires that every action, proposal, report, model or structure be examined in light of how it furthers the principles rather than achieving a

predetermined outcome. This does not mean that "results" are not desirable or sought after but that results are not sought at the expense of the principles - that the process determines the goals.

Working in a facilitated process means reassessing "expertise" and who possesses it and, that taking risks is inherent in good community work as we incorporate ideas and suggestions from a broad cross section of the community. Reassessing expertise has further implications for the skills and experience of those who facilitate community processes. An important component of hashing through the diversity of values is for community development facilitators or workers to be explicit about their own interests, agendas and goals and to distinguish these from the residents or community participants (Croft and Beresford, 1988): all voices are privileged as opposed to only those of the facilitators or community leaders. We cannot always assume that participants and community development professionals or even volunteers hold similar values or have the same goals in mind.

The inclusion of, or emphasis on, working from a set of guiding principles is also found corporate management theory from this same period (Block, 1993; Peters & Waterman, 1984). Exemplar management practice based on team work relies on the use of guiding principles for the same reasons given here for community development, that is to increase creativity, flexibility and improved products which meet consumer (community) needs. These parallel practices in public and private management reflect public service adoption of the dominant management paradigm of private industry

(Yeatman, 1990). In many ways this makes sense as both public and private organizations have become increasingly large and complex. Decision making can no longer be done in a routine, hands-on manner. Principles can be used as executive policy decisions that allow flexibility and adaptability by those who are implementing programs and services at the field level (Yeatman, 1990).

The process of working within a framework of guiding principles fits within both a participatory democracy theoretical orientation and a postmodern orientation. Participatory processes working with values and principles generates the educative and integrative aspects of participatory democracy whereby participants learn about values and concerns of others and in the process of participating in decision making develop some sense of control over their lives (Pateman, 1970).

Establishing a set of guiding principles also articulates a postmodern view of citizenship. Postmodern theory postulates a politics of differences, reflecting the belief that we live in a society of multiple, irresolvable differences. Rational consensus, a foundation of liberalism, is impossible to achieve under these conditions so we must turn to some kind of negotiated settlement in relation to these differences. "If contestants have to extend to each other enough good will and belief in the ongoing nature of their co-existence to make dialogue possible, this extension depends on their agreement to subordinate the bare assertion of their respective differences to some shared political norms" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 89). In the cases I am

examining the principles that guide the community process can be seen as Yeatman's political norms. Yeatman (1994) goes on to say that "the proceduralism which characterizes a polity oriented to difference is one which fosters more organic styles of decision-making"; is "context-responsive", local, and decentralized and that "positively values discretion"(p.89). Within the broader framework established by the principles, subsidiaries such as local groups, regional boards or community councils interpret and implement programs, services or policies that reflect their particular local situations.

The Healthy Schools Initiative lists seven guiding principles "and these are what make the process work" (Healthy Schools, 1996; p. 7). These principles include

- Student Voice and Ownership
- Inclusiveness
- Empowerment
- A Process Orientation
- Partnership and Participation
- A Holistic Perspective
- A Simple, Concrete and Fun Approach.

Following these principles students, schools and school districts developed a wide range of participatory initiatives, from personal safety programs to skill development in decision making and problem solving to community interaction days and community wellness events that responded to their local contexts (Interview Notes, 1997).

Principles have another role at a broader level by contributing to the effectiveness of the performative state. They act as guidelines for all parties for evaluating the differing perspectives of stakeholders on what the need is that the state should be responding to and how to meet that need. Using the example of community health services which has adopted a principle of user or consumer rights, Yeatman (1994) says that the use of guiding principles does not resolve tension between the differing perspectives but it does serve to regulate the "politics of need formation" (p.107).

> Once there is an open and legitimate difference of perspectives on needs formation the rhetoric of rational consensus is no longer operable. It is supplanted by a rhetoric of negotiated needs settlement where the principle of user rights provides guidance toward achievement of an effective and practical compromise between these perspectives. Each perspective is necessary because it provides a basic piece of information about the context which informs the needs concerned (Yeatman 1994; p. 107).

CORE (1995b) describes a situation in one of their pilot projects that illustrates how the politics of needs formation works. This pilot project had articulated a set of guiding principles that incorporated the principles of the CORE Land Use Planning process which stressed inclusive participation.

> While some sectors supported the idea of a multi-sector planning process, others were dubious that the pilot project could bring about changes that served their interests and were not fully committed to participating. Two months after the Table was convened, the two sectors that substantially comprised the 'environmental interest' withdrew from the process in response to the provincial government's Clayoquot Sound Land Use Decision. They submitted a list of conditions that would have to be met before they would return. While some of the remaining sectors wanted to proceed with the Table's

> work, after extensive discussion there was recognition that the Table could not develop an agreement which had broad community support unless environmental as well as social and economic interests were included. During a six-week break, members of different sectors worked informally to encourage the two departed sectors to return, and slowly the tide turned. At the next meeting, the sectors still at the Table reached agreement on some of the conditions outlined by the environmental sectors, which led the two sectors to rejoin the Table (CORE, 1995b; p. 134).

At a more fundamental level, the dialogue required to establish the principles that will guide the negotiation of settlements speaks to a different conception of citizenship. It is not citizenship as conferred in liberal discourse as a "natural right", which women quickly discovered omitted them, nor is it the protected citizenship conferred by the welfare state, where various minority rights are given to protect the marginalized from exploitation, "from harmful assertion of natural individuality" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 90).

> In the politics of difference, rights are understood as dialectical and relational in respect of opening debate and discussion about how to positively alter relationships of oppression. They are dialogical rights, predicated fundamentally on a right to give voice and be listened to within the dialogical processes of decision making (Yeatman, 1994; p. 90).

This is a politics that assumes interdependence rather than individuality and multiple layers of conflict rather than consensus. The reports from community development initiatives bear this out, as discussed in Lesson #2.

The reanalysis of this first lesson using postmodern critical theory suggests the lesson be reframed to read as follows:

**Guiding principles operate as political norms for decision making processes that involve multiple irresolvable perspectives.**

## LESSON 2 - DEVELOP AND AGREE TO MEANS TO RESOLVE CONFLICT AND MAKE DECISIONS EARLY IN THE PROCESS.

Conflict is an inevitable part of community processes and many publications (Lundy, 1992a) and initiatives (CORE, the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy) promoted consensus decision-making as a way of dealing with conflict (CORE, 1995b; Round Table, 1994). Consensus decision making in this instance refers to method of decision making not to the theoretical concept of rational consensus. Other approaches (Safer Communities) suggested that clarity about principles, theory and philosophy of the approach and balancing this with "hard" information about actions and results is needed to succeed in building a common vision. SPARC used a framework of "Ethical Standards for the Planning Process" designed to help participants work through conflict as it arose and to guide decision-making and the participatory process.

While the consensus decision-making model was in vogue in B.C. whilst this research was conducted, some of the people I interviewed were sceptical about how realistic an approach it was for all circumstances. The sense was that there seem to be some substantive issues and values that are irreconcilable at the community level and that some form of formal dispute resolution system or process need to be in place to support consensus decision making.

The comments about the need for dispute resolution systems in the previous paragraph coincide with a postmodern view of irresolvable differences and the need for a procedural and dialogical approach to building the *res publica* (Yeatman, 1994). Although the community reports that I read and the interview data in this research recognized the importance of conflict resolution and gaining agreement to the necessary process, there was little reference about how to do this.

The exception is the CORE process. The Commissioner and his staff, while coming from a variety of backgrounds, had extensive experience in public administration, administrative law and the resolution of conflicts arising from use of discretion in administration and law (CORE, 1992). The CORE staff deliberately developed and used a process of interest based negotiation in working with the multiple stakeholders, who themselves had, varying degrees of power, to arrive at regionally based land use plans. Interest based negotiation is based on "the realization that the parties goals are interdependent" (CORE, 1995a; p. 49); they are relational.

While CORE referred to this as building consensus, unlike the others to whom I spoke about consensus decision making, CORE understood the fleeting nature of many decisions and developed elaborate procedures for documentation and accountability of stakeholder representatives to their various constituencies in the hopes of producing some longer term decisions (CORE, 1995b).

> Experience suggests that the time and energy required of all concerned at the outset of a shared decision-making process is

> justified by the quality of the outcome - that is, a solution which is more fair, efficient and stable than might be expected from any of the alternatives to a negotiated agreement such as litigation, political lobbying, civil disobedience or continued disagreement and uncertainty.

These are what Yeatman (1994) refers to as the "negotiated settlements" which "have to be redefined continually and rapidly because the differences change, the conflicts shift, the agreements cease to satisfy and new forms of domination are constantly emerging" (Melucci, 1988; p. 251 cited in Yeatman, 1994; p. 115). While I do not think CORE had in mind the same issues of domination that Yeatman and Melucci refer to in the previous quote, CORE did recognize that "the passage of time and development of the process itself will have a bearing on the parties' perception of the problem, requiring a return to earlier stages" (CORE, 1992; p. 30). These decisions or settlements are temporally local for this reason just as they are designed to be local in relation to the larger system (Yeatman, 1994). I would rephrase this lesson, in light of postmodern theory to say:

> **Conflict is inevitable in community development work and requires the need for procedural and dialogic approaches to decision making. Be prepared to revisit earlier decisions throughout the process.**

**LESSON 3 - SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF A FACILITATOR OR CO-ORDINATOR IS IMPORTANT IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES.**

Resourcing and supporting public participation and discussion fits within participatory democratic framework as well as within

postmodern political theory however, for different reasons. The rational consensus of participatory democracy and support for participation in the welfare state is designed to build a common culture - the politics of equality. It is inherently "assimilationist", "where the goal is to normalize those who have marginal relationships to the dominant culture" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 86). In a postmodern view of politics of difference, difference is valued and recognized (Young, 1990). Groups or parties to a process are supported through training, access to funding and information so that they may be accountable to one another for their part in the relationship. No one voice or position is dominant - 'privileged'. This lesson speaks to the pro's and con's of the use of consultants and the issues of professional control.

All the reports reviewed for this paper suggested that communities need additional support in the form of community development workers, facilitators or co-ordinators to encourage community involvement, particularly in the beginning stages. If support was unavailable the work might not get done as volunteers become overworked, discouraged and leave. In the words of one community development worker when speaking about the community for whom he worked, "they have concluded that volunteerism is not dead. It just needs a secretary" (Ron Hood, cited in Office of Health Promotion, 1993, p.32). Others found that it was not only the involvement of time that necessitates the use of a facilitator but also the increasing complexity of organizations and knowledge required to interact with and critique the issues facing communities (Interview notes).

Community development initiatives sponsored by the provincial government, assigned staff to assist all communities to develop their requests for assistance whether it was for funding or staff resources. Very few requests were turned down because staff worked with community groups to ensure their proposals met the requirements (Interview Notes).

Consultants were often used in community development processes. They were retained to do initial assessments of community needs in the Community Initiatives Program; to survey residents regarding priority issues to help establish participatory processes in Community Futures, Healthy Communities, and so on. The Healthy Communities 1991 Year Book (Ministry of Health) provided a useful discussion of the pro's and con's of using consultants. On the positive side consultants,

- possess specific skills
- require little time to orient themselves
- have clearly defined time lines
- can produce a large amount of work in a short period of time
- can draw on experience working in other communities
- are likely to have established connections which may facilitate community projects.

On the negative side

- the knowledge gained stays with the consultant and not with the community

- use of consultants risks loss of ownership and involvement by the community

- results of consultants work may not be expressed in a way that the community can understand

- volunteers working with or supervising a consultant may find it difficult to establish their own priorities

- the consultant may carry out his or her work in a way that not necessarily gather the most information or maximize the involvement to residents.

The Strong Communities for the 90's initiative successfully used consultants in a different way. In a number of communities consultants were retained by the former Ministry of Economic Development to explore the feasibility of specific economic development projects which had been identified through economic development strategies, community visioning exercises and the resultant action plans. Known industry experts were hired to appraise the potential for success. In the Prince Rupert area this process resolved long standing conflicts about the potential for a major ship building industry in the community by demonstrating the financial and logistical problems with such a project. This appraisal finally put that conflict to rest and allowed the community to direct their energies to implementing more feasible projects. In Port Alberni a consultant was engaged to review a project which also turned out to be unfeasible but other small manufacturers in the community, struggling for survival,

were able to access the advise of the consultant which resulted in significant positive changes for those small businesses. In yet another region, the Strong Communities initiative kick-started an ongoing, successful community development initiative. The facilitator of the "Gold Country" visioning sessions stayed on to work in the communities as a community development worker and all the government program staff I interviewed spoke highly of the achievements of this area (Interview Notes).

CORE recognized that community processes required a variety of supports and based on their experience with the pilot projects they suggested support could be provided at different stages and could fulfil different functions. "To complement this local democratic energy, CORE recommended that implementing community resources boards might be encouraged by providing them with the support necessary to function successfully" (1995b; p. 84). CORE identified the potential need for administrative support, facilitation support when community processes are being established, mediation to assist with conflict resolution, orientation and training, communications, and technical support (CORE, 1995b).

In her research on Healthy Community projects, Hoffmeyer (1991) suggested that initiating connections between established organizations and bureaucracies was easier than linking with grassroots activities. Common hours of work, language and professional standards of practice and processes facilitate this linking. This is not to say that such work is unproblematic; mandates, turf

issues, professional language and differing philosophies create obstacles for professionals, as well. Yeatman raises a very interesting point when she speaks about accountability of professionals working with those who are traditionally marginalized. She argues that professionals need to be "bilingual" or "multilingual" so that they use language appropriate to their profession and work place and speak a "plain language" in the community. The ability to speak to multiple audiences in a way that each understands is a matter of accountability. More importantly, this accountability acknowledges and adds a reflexive quality when engaged in working with differences in an emancipatory way because we must think through what it is we know and how we are going to convey that information (1994).

Professional control of community development processes can create barriers for broader community participation. Reluctance to give up or share power, assumptions that the issues are too technical or complicated for citizens, or that citizens do not know what is in their own best interests are some of the obstacles mentioned in the reports and by those I interviewed. Also, professionals sometimes have difficulty accepting or dealing with holistic community endeavours because they view them as being too complicated or ill defined. The Municipality of Burnaby had difficulty with "the abstract nature of the Healthy Community concept" and with reaching "a common definition of a 'healthy community' and a common vision and mission statement of our component of 'Burnaby - Well into the Future' " (Burnaby, 1992, p.2). Even practical, taken-for-granted practices of the work world, such as holding meetings or conferences during regular work hours,

structuring them in formal ways (Robert's Rules, panel presentations, lecture room format) and not providing child care or transportation allowances present insurmountable barriers to participation for many community residents (Core, 1995b; Interview Notes).

Yeatman (1994) refers to her own use of a partnership model in a community care service which is similar to CORE's community process of negotiation and dialogue to reach agreement about regional land use plans. In both these processes, training, information and procedures to guide dialogue, decisions and accountability of the parties to one another and their respective constituencies were established in order to ensure a democratic process without homogenizing the relationships. It is through this process that Yeatman recognized that there was a tendency on the part of the state bureaucrats to "invert the usual relationship of professional domination by making the consumer, rather than the professional, top dog". She goes on to say

> we should be wary of contemporary governmental policy which is making the consumer sovereign. By a relative marginalization of professional knowledge (and a relative deprofessionalization of human services), governments are achieving a cheapening of services but are depriving consumers and carers of the contribution of expert knowledge to the process of defining and meeting their needs (p.52).

When we overlay this postmodern (and feminist) analysis on this lesson, the skill level of a community facilitator becomes very important, especially in recognizing the multiple voices in the community and also in perceiving the implications of privileging one voice/sector over another even in the name of cost efficiencies.

Procedural norms and guidelines such as those developed by CORE and SPARC for each of their local and regional processes were used by skilled facilitators to make explicit the inclusion of the multiple perspectives and to define how differences would be accommodated.

In a community planning process facilitated by SPARC three of the guidelines specifically address inclusion of multiple voices:

> 1. All individuals viewpoints are to be considered and respected.
> 2. Processes will be developed to allow input from all stake holders.
> 3. While all parties have quite different resource capabilities, all participate equally in the planning process. (Meeting Notes, September 1992)

My postmodern reanalysis suggests that while this lesson still holds true, the ability to work with diverse perspectives without privileging any one voice, and the demands of an increasingly complex society require a high level of knowledge and skill on the part of a facilitator. As well, training and access to information are important ingredients for participants. This revised lesson, then, reads as follows:

> **Facilitators and participants need support and training to work within a decision making process that does not privilege any one voice.**

The CORE process with the community round tables included training and ongoing facilitation and mediation support from CORE:

> The process framework used in the Slocan Valley consisted of five phases: preparation, assessment, process design, building agreement, and implementation and monitoring. Considerable time was spent on building working relationships among

> sectors, developing the procedural framework and carrying out the planning steps in a way that would foster understanding (CORE, 1995b; p. 133).

It is apparent from this data that working with multiple perspectives is a detailed and time consuming process. The issue of time is addressed in the next lesson.

**LESSON 4- THINGS TAKE LONGER THAN ANTICIPATED.**

Many of the participatory initiatives in this study were designed to follow a linear or phased progression, of community needs assessment, developing an action plan, implementing the plan or pilot project. As this lesson recognizes, it takes time for the various players in a community to pull together and build an understanding and agreement about how to proceed. Inherent in this lesson is an assumption of difference that must be worked with in order to proceed. The data suggest that working in this way takes longer than is assumed by government initiated initiatives.

Pam Devito (1993) cautioned about expectations to get things off the ground quickly. She reported that it took 2 to 3 times longer than expected to involve community participants and organizations in the initial phases of the Sustainable Communities projects and to get a committee operating; 6 to 10 months seems to be a realistic time frame (Interview Notes). Community Futures had a similar experience and extended their community funding for an additional five years in recognition of the long term nature of community development

processes. They referred to this as Second Generation funding. The community based, Downtown Revitalization and Village Square programs funded through the Ministry of Municipal affairs shared this experience and found that phased processes over longer periods tended to be more successful in garnering broad based support and generating community pride as well as increasing business revenues. For CORE,

> the Table found it challenging to negotiate agreement on a plan in the time available. CORE's commitment to supporting the pilot project for one year stretched to almost two years. CORE extended the pilot project , but there was still not enough time to negotiate the remaining guidelines and strategies (CORE, 1995b; p.137).

Once a community group is formed and working together, accessing funding to facilitate community development is usually the next step - another time consuming process which is dependent of senior government funding schedules. All the government initiatives reviewed in this research required some sort of needs assessment (Women's Equality Community Grants), priority identification (Healthy Communities) or inventory of community assets (Tourism Action Program) as the first phase for any funding or assistance. In the case of many Healthy Community projects, communities or neighbourhoods received funding to initiate a local, broad based consultation processes to determine priority health issues for residents. Action to address those issues followed. Regardless of how the priority issues or needs are selected, the methods were scrutinized for their potential to expand participation in the evolving process.

A postmodern view of the performative state poses dilemmas for those working in communities to develop "negotiated settlements". First, time impacts directly on performative criteria of efficiency and effectiveness. If community processes take too long they risk losing or missing funding because they are not efficient, they are wasting valuable time and therefore money. Second, they also risk losing the attention of provincial decision makers as they induce the principle of "selective closure in respect to information overload and social complexity" (Yeatman, 1994; p.117).

Information overload and social complexity may have contributed to the winding down of CORE and Healthy Communities, both of which were designed to directly address public policy at a local and provincial level. Both initiatives engendered and worked with significant conflict (social complexity), particularly amongst the traditionally dominant professional groups and between the professional groups and local citizens as represented by "workers", "small business", patients, local government and so on. In the process, considerable research and information was brought to bear on the topics. As well, greater numbers of groups and perspectives were included in the discussions (information overload).

Developing this level of involvement was a lengthy process which in turn generated considerable political activity that, in the case of CORE, led to legislative changes: an illustration of how "the decision-makers absorb this contestation within policies which take up as well as neutralize the challenge" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 115). "Now the (Forest

Practices) Code, including baseline requirements for community watershed management and forest ecosystem networks, the Environmental Assessment Act, and policy direction provided by Cabinet's decision on land use in the West Kootenays will provide a baseline for many contentious matters" (CORE, 1995b; p. 139). With Healthy Communities the program was subsumed under a framework of population health where "population groups (are) defined in terms of market segments" (Hoatson et al, 1996; p.130) and thus, for the time being depoliticized.

These last two examples of CORE and Healthy Communities being subsumed by legislation and a new policy direction demonstrate the province enacting the principle of performativity as it moves to reduce complexity. Other more subtle and recent ways are also engaged as management techniques within the bureaucracy and indeed by those who determine when elected representatives sit in the legislature. In my recent experience within the bureaucracy I heard several times that committees or consultation exercises that included broad based representation would not take place because "you just get a bunch of people sitting around creating more problems and more work for us to deal with. We don't have time, we just want to keep things simple around here". And I read recently in the Globe and Mail newspaper that Alberta was not going to hold a fall sitting of the legislature for the same reason - the legislative debates generated more problems and work for the government. Whereas the post war political theorists did not want to encourage widespread participation in politics because it would weaken the rational consensus, bureaucrats and governing

politicians now seem to be discouraging participation and discussion because, in their minds, it is inefficient and ineffective. The issue of complexity, with its implications of time, uncertainty, and costs are not dealt with in participatory democratic theory although the problem is acknowledged in the sense that there is a recognition that everyone cannot be involved in all political decisions that affect them and so the struggle is to devise effective and meaningful ways of participating. How to engage people in participatory processes is addressed in the next lesson.

This lesson about the amount of time it takes to realistically conduct participatory community development initiatives remains the same however, I would add to it:

> **Things take longer than anticipated but if participatory processes take too long, they may be seen as inefficient and risk losing the attention of key decision makers.**

**LESSON 5 - BEING INCLUSIVE MEANS GOING OUT TO WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE, NOT EXPECTING THEM TO COME TO YOU.**

This lesson shows the relationship of the concepts of citizenship to the kinds of processes used to involve people in community decision making. Earlier notions of participation were based on inclusivity and the educative and integrative values of participatory democracy; now the citizen is becoming one whose relationship to the state is defined in economic or consumerist terms and this suggests a reduction in opportunities to involve people in decision making.

I found widespread agreement in the academic literature and community development how-to practice documents that collaboration, co-operation, co-ordination, team effort, inclusivity, and participatory methods should characterize community development processes. Words such as stakeholder, key players, sectoral interests, citizens, the public and the marginalized describe the participants in the process. Who the participants are, and how and when they become linked to the process depends to a large extent on the values and assumptions of those guiding the community based process (Hoffmeyer, 1991). CORE (1992) stipulated that "the shared decision-making process depends on the representation of all parties with a key interest or stake in the outcome including:

- those who have the authority to make a decision
- those directly affected by the decision, and
- those who could delay or block the decision" (p. 30).

The Tourism Action Program staff have found they were more successful in helping communities achieve results once they took steps to broaden community participation to include those not directly involved in the tourism industry. Women, seniors, youth, local artists, environmental groups and even those opposed to tourism development were encouraged to participate. This led to creative new projects which had much broader support from the community and it served to educate the community about tourism and to educate tourism operators about the needs and desires of their communities.

> One small community that had suffered economically because a resource industry had pulled out was becoming very successful

> in attracting tourists. The local Tourism Association wanted to build a large hotel to accommodate the influx of tourists. When we met to talk about developing a strategy we asked them to pull together a group that represented a broader cross section of the town. We asked that they invite seniors, students, local artists, farmers, small business owners and so on. We found out when we met, that people in the community were worried about having large numbers of strangers in their town and about the seasonal quality of tourism. People were worried that a hotel was not the answer and that it might end up being a white elephant because it would be empty in the winter. They also questioned whether a hotel would really provide the stable employment base the community needed. So what came out of that meeting were ideas about developing smaller more personal accommodation for tourists and as well, the participants generated some really solid ideas about how to incorporate more of the arts and theatre talents in the community. (Interview Notes, January 1993)

Healthy Communities Initiatives and the Safer Communities Strategy found similar outcomes when they have included arts groups, transportation industry representatives and so on.

Participatory democracy as well as postmodern approaches to difference and representation were evident as some initiatives struggled to come to grips with inclusive participation. For Healthy Communities activists, inclusiveness meant asking who is not involved, whose values are not represented; and recognizing that the most vulnerable members of our society are often invisible, making efforts to reach them. Many communities participating in the Healthy Communities Initiative found that going to "food banks, ESL classes, kitchen table discussions, tenants' associations, native friendship centres" provided ways to reach marginalized groups (Healthy Communities Network, correspondence June 1993). Neighbourhood potluck, street corner conversation, and community picnics are other

suggestions for forums to reach those who normally might not participate in community initiatives. "Acknowledging the need to go where people feel comfortable (e.g. their homes, schools, or cultural associations) and realizing that many cannot write well enough to answer questionnaires and would never come to public meetings, let alone speak at them" (Healthy Communities 1992 Yearbook, p.17) affected the methods used by many healthy communities projects. In essence Healthy Communities (and others) was taking politics into the "private" sphere of the home, the street and community picnic. It is recognizing that the polity or civil society is multiple, not singular or univocal, nor is it neatly divided into public and private spheres.

Healthy Communities attempted to develop an alternate meaning of health which challenged the traditional definition of health as illness care and prevention. By drawing in diverse groups within the community in a participatory framework, they laid the groundwork for discussion and debate where the "potential of conflicts between competing value-creating communities is bound to be an important source of political consciousness, as subjects reflect upon and try to make some sense of their multiple experiences" (Frazer and Lacey, 1993; p. 202).

Jane Hoffmeyer said "professional methods of working in the community will need to adjust to accommodate the barriers that citizens face to become partners in creating healthier communities" (1991, p. ii) As some found out, these barriers can be erected by the process or the professionals themselves. The Quesnel Women's

Resource Centre (1991) discovered that their written and telephone surveys limited access to input primarily to middle-class, white women in their community. The report by the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre (1991) also stated that

> the survey results reinforce a cultural model of women as separate individuals with unique rather than common problems. It reinforces the separation of women who may share similar concerns.

The report also recommended using existing "affinity groups" in the community where women could come together in workshops to

> develop an articulate statement of their needs in the community. Such an approach would reinforce women's affiliations and connections in the process rather than their isolation (p.11).

This last example speaks directly to one of the aims of participatory democracy whereby the experience of participation is believed to attach the individual to her society which in turn creates community (Pateman, 1970). It also speaks to the postmodern and feminist notions of multiple experiences and positions with respect to oppression. The "affinity groups" suggests that within Quesnel there are many different groups of women which share different sets of experiences and these groups of women should be brought together to talk in a structured way about their needs in the community. Bringing women together to participate and talk about their shared (and differing) needs politicizes the interactions in a manner similar to that of the Healthy Communities example above.

The reflexive quality and critical evaluation of their own process in the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre's discussion was unique in the reports that I examined. Interviews with Ministry of Women's Equality staff revealed a similar critical consciousness related to the participation and involvement of women in the Community Initiatives Program.

The Ministry of Women's Equality found that the community steering committee approach used in the Community Initiative Program for all communities was not necessarily the best way to go. The experience of requiring steering committees was not entirely successful for a number of reasons (Interview Notes, March 1993).

1. The program focused on needs for women's services. The steering committees by-passed or superseded existing women's organizations in some communities, organizations who had the knowledge, research skills and networks already in place. This decision to work outside the women's movement was a deliberate policy decision; women's organizations were seen to represent special interests groups and government could not be seen to be supporting one group over another and still retain its image of arbitrator of public interests.

2. In other communities the steering committees were not active because committee members were too busy with other activities, work and volunteer.

3. In some communities steering committee involvement in the needs assessment process was limited because of lack of expertise in research skills and women's issues.

These problems identified by MWE staff signify conflicts or confusion within the bureaucracy about participatory and representative democracy. The women's movement would have been seen within government as but one player/representative of women in communities and therefore viewed as a special interest. Special interest groups were (and still are) more likely to be seen as creating problems (I have heard them referred to as "the disease of the week", or more recently "flavour of the day") for policy makers and service providers because they are not viewed as being representative of the "community" - the implication being that "community" is neutral, representative and homogeneous. Anna Yeatman discusses this phenomenon in relation to social movements in Australia during the 1980's. Her analysis rings true for B.C. when she says

> there has been a sustained tendency to marginalise the new social movements and democratising forces that they represent. This has been done principally through denying their universal significance and making them appear vehicles of particular sectoral interests. The other form of marginalisation has been to constitute the new social movements as lying on the outer limits of the norm: they become (where this is an appropriate attribution) disadvantaged groups for whom special provision is to be made (Yeatman, 1990; p.131).

If for some reason a sectoral interest, such as the environmental movement, does not fit the special needs designation, it is considered as an interest group, often called a stakeholder; one with a legitimate

claim to citizenship. The role of the state is then to act as a broker or arbitrator amongst competing claims rather as a paternalistic protector and provider of specially targeted programs and services.

In some senses the steering committees required by the Community Initiatives Program could be considered to be the brokers of the competing claims of women in the communities even though the program design considered the steering committees to be evidence of a participatory process. The steering committee and the needs assessment methodology of the Community Initiatives Program promoted individualistic and representative approaches; approaches that did not seek out difference, that were different from the relational and participatory approaches that the Quesnel Women's Resources Centre suggested, in hindsight, would be more appropriate.

Overwork of community members was another problem for the steering committees process and it is a legitimate concern for those of us who want to promote participatory processes, especially in small communities. Postmodernism theory helps here by pointing out that the dialogic process does not have the intent of creating the unified public of participatory democracy nor does it privilege the face to face dialogues of communitarianism. Postmodernism postulates smaller, multiple, overlapping and contestable publics or "polities". "These polities are not given but struggled for" (Yeatman, 1994; p. 108): they arise out of the challenges to existing domination; out of the openings of public spaces referred to earlier. With this in mind then, community organizers or facilitators can focus strategic attention on

how best to achieve involvement in decision making. Again, the Quesnel Women's Resources Centre assessment of the best approach would be through women's affinity groups in a structured workshops. CORE developed a highly structured process to guide the dialogue and decision making with representatives' accountabilities to their constituents clearly spelled out (CORE, 1995b). Health Communities and Healthy Schools suggested visioning exercises that could then be taken out to a wider audience for refinement (Healthy Schools Resource Guide, 1996).

Lack of expertise in research skills and women's issues was identified as a third problem by MWE staff. CORE found the same difficulty. However, the CORE process was well resourced to provide training and to acquire technical information required for land use decisions. CORE identified as a strength from the planning processes "an understanding and appreciation of land use planning processes and the information and analysis required to support decision making" (CORE, 1995b; p. 72). As mentioned earlier the theoretical perspectives of both participatory democracy and postmodern critical theory call for state support and resources for participation and dialogue.

The theory of participatory democracy also suggests that those with training and experience in democratic participatory processes seem better able to proceed with further participatory endeavours (Pateman, 1970, 1980). Anna Yeatman argues in a similar vein about working within the postmodern politics of difference when she says

> There is no easy acceptance of this politics from the professionals at this stage: they hang onto the older culture of needs formation with which their expertise was accorded a virtual monopoly in the representation of needs to governments.
>
> The current resistance of professionals is likely to give way over time, and, with the next generation of professionals, become a more accommodating and more subtle assertion of professional-know-best (1994; p. 108).

Many of the government community development initiatives adhered to similar beliefs that experience counts when it comes to community participation and success of future efforts. A common selection criteria for program funding asked for evidence of community vision, cooperation, or a recognition of the need to work together. For example the Safer Communities program (1990) selected communities according to the following criteria:

- existing efforts to encourage greater involvement
- evidence of community involvement
- active involvement of key participants in relevant national organizations

The government programs sought out and encouraged those communities with experience in participation, cooperation and who had connections to a broader community of interest in "relevant national organizations". Professional associations and networks for urban planners, nurses and municipalities were instrumental in the Healthy Communities movement through education initiatives, advocacy, and by providing legitimacy for local players (Interview Notes, January, 1993). Similar to social movements, postmodern writers (Pilisuk et al, 1996; Yeatman, 1994) stress the importance of linkages with a larger "community of interest" or coalitions in order to

increase opportunities for dialogue and because local issues increasingly originate or are controlled from sources outside the community.

Postmodern analysis suggests that promotion of participatory experiences fits within the paternalism of the welfare state where funds are made available to communities and their citizens to address issues that arise because of gaps in or harms caused by patriarchal, private and economic systems e.g. women's needs assessments, land use planning, community economic development, tourism development. Postmodernism takes us away from this paternalistic selection of suitable communities and the promotion of social citizenship through participatory experiences. Postmodern analysis says that "performativity as a principle of governance depends on the existence of jurisdictional boundaries of the state which permit it to be thought of as a discrete system" (p. 110) and by extension to establish discrete subsystems within the larger whole. These boundaries determine who are legitimate members of the state or region; who is entitled to receive services. "Their shared identity is not that of the social citizens of the welfare state, but that of actual or potential contributors to the performativity of the competition state (Yeatman, 1994; p. 111).

> The identity of the individual has been increasingly determined by his/her marketability. Acquisitive or competitive success has become the measure of security against being left out of the benefits of living. People with little market value - children, elders, the poorly educated, the chronically ill, and mentally disabled - are neglected. The increasing number of people who have fallen between the cracks...have been recategorized in the public dialogue as nonpersons (Pilisuk et al, 1996; p.20).

Contributors have a functional relationship to the state. Those who do not or cannot contribute are "define(d) out of existence" or put differently "one can be a service deliverer or a customer, but not a participant" (Hoatson et al, 1996; p.132). There is however, a close link between participation and the principle of performativity as I have identified earlier on, particularly because "user" knowledge is needed to ensure decisions are efficient and effective. Although I would not necessarily characterize the CORE process as a performative process, there are strong hints of liberal economic thought in the writings. The following quote characterizes the link between participation and performative criteria of efficiency and effectiveness.

> Well-managed public participation processes can also contribute to government efficiency. While public participation takes time and places demands on government staff, who may view it as a nuisance or even a significant problem when faced with a short time-line or personnel constraints, the expense of involving the public in complex decisions can avoid the more significant cost of continued conflict and the need to change or amend decisions that prove to be inadequately informed and unstable (CORE, 1995b; p. 19).

Communities are no longer selected according to criteria of participation and involvement but are designated according to their functional relationship to the state. However, the state is open to challenge and contestation of its policies. As I have discussed earlier in this thesis the challenging and conversion of performative decisions into dialogue - "rhetorical praxis" - is central to democratic struggle. The new form of citizenship requires a proactive stance on the part of those within marginalized groups to question policy decisions and

ferret out information which is closely guarded by the state. Opposition politicians and the media may be helpful allies in gaining information that challenges state policies just as they were promoted as important sources of support for participatory processes.

Based on the forgoing reanalysis, I would reframe this last lesson to read as follows:

> **Inclusiveness brings politics into everyday life which offers substantial opportunities for democratic contestation of oppressive practices.**

In this chapter I have re-viewed the lessons derived from my earlier research and found that some concepts from postmodern theory suggest practical strategies for community development practitioners in a time when the state seems to be withdrawing from or curtailing community development processes.

Guiding principles are useful in setting the stage and guiding multiple perspectives in a decision making process. The discussion or "perspectival dialogism" to arrive at the principles binds people together in agreement about shared political norms. However it is understood, at the same time that these norms are subject to change as knowledge about how they work and do not work to overcome domination emerges. These principles or political norms are context specific thus requiring many different arenas through which difference can be negotiated in polycentric polities.

I have also argued that postmodern politics of difference and representation highlights the central role of conflict and the need for procedural and dialogic approaches to decision making. This postmodern perspective sharpens the focus of this lesson from my earlier research. In British Columbia we have a good example in CORE of how such procedural "negotiated settlements" and dialogic process might work. Acknowledging irresolvable differences paradoxically suggests the relational aspects, or interdependence, of the postmodern conception of the polity as citizens need to work out shared agreements about how to live together in society. These shared agreement do not develop a unified homogeneous or "rational" consensus of participatory democracy but reflect multiple realities that change over time as we add information and experience. Changing contexts and historicity suggests that we will need to revisit earlier decisions. This will likely be exasperating to those who view decision making from a rationalist, "rule of law" perspective who act as if decision making were an end in itself and not a process.

Accepting and working with conflict is closely linked to the importance of facilitation skills and professional accountability needed to work with multiple voices and perspectives. Data from my earlier research identified the need for and availability of resources and support in community development initiatives. I go on to argue that while this lesson remains useful, postmodern theory suggests that increasingly complex organizations, which includes the state, require increasing technical knowledge as well as knowledge about how

decisions are made. Increasing complexity and working to include multiple voices also means participatory processes take longer than expected. The issue of time poses dilemmas for community facilitators because performative criteria of efficiency and effectiveness may push state officials to bring closure to decisions before all aspects are resolved.

Inclusiveness and going to where people are to engage them in discussion and decision making breaks down the conceptual barriers of public and private issues and brings politics into everyday experience. Upon review of this lesson I argue that the earlier notions of participatory democracy theory of developing an educated public through participatory processes shifts under a postmodern analysis whereby the relationship of the citizen to the state is increasingly defined in economic and consumerist terms. Although this aspect of citizenship suggests a rather bleak future with fewer opportunities for personal involvement in political decision making, the terror engendered by the principle of performativity is mediated to some extent by its criteria of efficiency and effectiveness. These criteria signal that the state is open, in however a small way, to challenge and contestation. However, this principle is not guided by any sort of value about "greater public good" but by system requirements to reduce complexity by subsuming and neutralizing the democratic challenges through incorporating them into policy as I illustrated with examples from CORE.

## Chapter 7 - Conclusion

In this thesis, I have recast my earlier research on government sponsored community development initiatives in light of the political theory of participatory democracy and postmodernism. I have argued that my personal recent experience in government and the demise of ten out of the twelve community development initiatives signalled a change in how the state is going about the business of governing. Literature from other countries with similar contexts of economic and political discourses such as Australia, Britain, Ireland and the U.S. suggests similar changes are occurring there as well. What seems to be occurring is a changing conception of citizenship from the social citizen of the welfare state to a notion of citizen as defined according to a functional relationship with the state; citizens as contributors or non contributors from whom full citizenship rights are withheld.

I was disturbed by this analysis and the reality of what seemed like fewer opportunities to challenge the domination of a liberal economic perpective of smaller government, privatization, performance measurement and competition. Postmodern theory which postulates a politics of difference and never ending struggle to uncover the ever more subtle processes of domination suggested a way to continue the kinds of democratic struggles that are at the heart of community development.

It is clear from the literature that postmodernism depends on the analysis of socialist feminism and standpoint theory for its

understanding of multiple perspectives and on participatory democracy for its notions of politics and dialogue as relational. The literature on community development, as I reflect on it in light of my reanalysis, does not address adequately the skills need by community development workers who must work with multiple differences in communities. Pilisuk, McAllister and Rothman (1996) do discuss briefly that "the organizer will require strong analytic skills to notice such differences" (p.27) but they do no pursue how to go about this. The concept of privileging all voices, suggests a need for community development workers to possess knowledge about how domination, in its many guises, shows up in social relations and how to intervene in a ways that do not replicate or reinvent domination in another form. This thesis, therefore contributes to the community development literature a greater understanding of the skills needed by community development workers and suggests some procedures that may guide respectful interactions.

My reading and interpretation of postmodernism is considered by some to be overly generous but what I have gained from this thesis is a much clearer idea of how to position myself as a proactive force in emancipatory efforts. The importance of conflict as expressed through perspectival dialogism; the concept of multiple voices and not privileging any of them; and structuring negotiated settlement, beginning with guiding principles will be the legacies I take to my practice from this thesis and the reanalysis of earlier lessons using postmodern theory.

In the future I will use the development of principles to guide and serve as a reference point for multiple perspective as a starting point for discussions and I will do so with the understanding that these principles are subject to change as new information comes to light. As I look back on my community development experience on the Capital Health Board, I would now do things differently, based on my understanding of the postmodern concepts of the politics of difference, perspectival dialogism and negotiated settlements.

I think, as a board, we made a mistake about not being clearer with the Ministry of Health officials about how we were going to work with them and the health sector management in the region. We had an "inclusive" participatory process that did not deal head on with differences in power (i.e. health professionals and provincial officials) and that explicitly privileged "community and consumers" over all others. If I were to be involved in a similar process again, I would start the process with all parties by jointly negotiating principles for the organization. Next, I would develop an "agreement in principle" that included all parties and did not privilege one set of voices over another. The agreement in principle would spell out how the process of decision making would work, what was included in the scope of decision making and what were the respective responsibilities of all the parties - to one another and to their constituents as appropriate. This is similar to the process used in land claim negotiations as a strategy to balance the disparity in power between aboriginal groups and the provincial and federal governments. CORE also used an similar approach by developing "Codes of Conduct" for each of the pilot

project round tables and by establishing agreement for well defined "process" guidelines.

I have been asked a question about what I would do if people could not agree to guiding principles. It is difficult to answer this question without the context of a real situation but there are a variety of procedural techniques that community development practitioners could use to engage contestants in dialogic processes. Yeatman (1994) suggests the use of change management techniques such as visioning exercises or a "futures conference" that allow disparate perspectives (knowledges) to exist side by side as groups work to reach an understanding of how they want to live together. If disagreement continues to exist, then it might mean that the "polity" is not going to exist based on any specific substantive issue.

I will now look for those opportunities to contest policy decisions in light of the principle of performativity rather than feel as if all hope is lost. It will mean a more rigorous attention to gathering information and particularly accessing information held back by the government. At the same time I have a renewed appreciation for the place of professional knowledge and expertise within a politics of difference and will be wary of government or organizational attempts to privilege only client knowledge. Within a politics of difference, the knowledge of client and professional must exist side by side and together those involved must reach agreement about how each knowledge and set of accountabilities will inform the decision making process. As a facilitator in such a process, I understand more clearly that knowledge

of how domination works and power concentrates in a systemic ways becomes vital in order not to replicate dominating practices.

Working with client and professionals in decision making processes in a way that does not privilege one voice over another runs counter to current thinking and practice. The past few years have seen a trend toward the client voice dominating. As I said earlier in this thesis, privileging the client voice can result in marginalizing the voice and expertise of professionals and a cheapening of services. I have learned over the years in policy making, we need to ensure all those with a role in program and service development and implementation are involved in the decision making process; including caregivers, consumers, professionals, managers, and financial and human resource personnel ( the latter two groups for their perspectives on how to address the ever present administrative implications). However, once assembled it is often difficult to see how to resolve the dilemmas that arise from the many different and conflicting perspectives.

Establishing a set of guiding principles as a reference point is usually a good beginning. Everyone involved also needs to be clear about why they are involved, what they bring to the process and what is expected of them both within the process but also from any outside affiliations such as professional associations, or from their department, in the case of administrators. These expectations need to be explicit, discussed as part of the process, with agreements and understandings written down. Client knowledge and professional knowledge rely on different sets of experiences; the former the lived experience of the

need and the latter the technical knowledge of professional research and experiences in working with a variety of consumers and situations. Obviously there are many situations where these sets of knowledge are blurred or combined where consumers have extensive technical knowledge based on reading and research and professionals have the lived experience as a caregiver or as a person in need of the service or policy. These different knowledge bases also need to be explicit.

As I write this I am conscious of those groups whose voices are not invited to participate in decision making processes, the non-contributors, non-citizens, such as women whose children are in the care of the state, drug addicts and street youth to mention a few. The struggle to include these voices is beginning, primarily through feminist academic research, where policy research reports include quotes, either verbal or journal entries, from very marginalized people. My guess (and hope) is that over time these voices that now speak through academic and professional literature will be at the table speaking directly to the process.

Anticipating and working with conflict that inevitably emerges requires, in most cases, training or a refresher in conflict resolution approaches. I have found that making explicit the steps and issues that arise in decision making process and documenting agreements about how the process will work when conflict arises clears the way for debate and discussion about the substance and technical issues of the policy or program. As I gain more experience in the policy development field the more I see the need for education of

professionals to include working with different perspectives and negotiation and conflict resolution skills.

While the reanalysis of the lessons renews my sense of hope about opportunities for political struggles, postmodernism does not lead me to a utopian vision of change. Instead it presses me to address the contradictions inherent in community development and see them for what they are, not failures but tensions and paradoxes that shift and change with time. This view also suggests to me that acknowledgement of the contradictions can lead to strategies and practices that more successfully exploit the emancipatory potential of community development instead of the tendencies toward the status quo. And lastly postmodernism leads me to take the long view (or maybe I'm just getting old), to understand how in fact, at least in the western world, we have made some progress in overcoming oppression. It is not progress of a transformative nature but one which destablizes existing hegemony bit by bit.

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# APPENDIX A

# APPENDIX A

## Descriptions Of Community Development Initiatives

### 1. Commission On Resources and the Environment (CORE)

Background: CORE was established in July 1992 in response recommendations from a variety of consultation initiatives such as the Dunsmuir Agreements I & II, Old Growth Strategy, Parks and Wilderness, the Round Table etc. to develop a coordinated land use planning system for B.C. and in response to growing dissatisfaction from the public about access to land use decision making processes. The Commissioner on Resources and Environment Act recognized the need to broaden the involvement of the public in decision making and gave the Commission the mandate to establish a dispute resolution system for land use. CORE was intended to be a permanent body, independent of provincial ministries with the powers to report directly to the public on matters within its mandate. It was disbanded on April 1, 1996 as part of large scale budget cuts. Land use planning decision processes were established under Forest Practices Act.

Its mandate was to

1. develop a province wide land use strategy and related resource and environmental management.

2. develop, implement and monitor regional planning in land use, community participation in land use and related resource and

environmental management issues and a dispute resolution system for land use matters

3. ensure integrated management of resources and the environment by coordinating provincial government initiatives and encouraging participation of Aboriginal peoples and ensuring linkages with Aboriginal treaty negotiations.

Funding: Funding to participants was an issue for the Commission from its inception. Funding was available for the regional and community processes and included administrative and logistical support to participants, funding a mediator, paying travel and accommodation costs of participants who required it, and supporting technical data collection and analysis when required for the negotiation processes. The difficulties arose due to disparities in resources between unions, forest companies and volunteer environmental groups and small communities who participated at regional and community negotiating tables.

Reporting: On-going summaries of each negotiating table. Monthly news updates were published for public distribution. Recommendations regarding land use decisions, need for legislation, policies and practices, coordination issues etc. were submitted to the Provincial Cabinet. The Commissioner reported annually to the legislature and was able to report directly to the public on these matters if it was considered to be in the public interest to do so.

Issues:

- Time pressures to produce land use designations. Planning time was too short to honour participatory processes.
- Sectoral representation placed financial burdens on less well off sectors as they wished to consult back with constituents regarding directions and decisions
- Consensus decision-making processes required time, skilled leadership/facilitation and a lengthy start up period to allow time for preconceived "positions" to be worked through.
- Land use designations had much broader impact than on resource based industry and resource based communities. Issues were tied to economic transition with all the attending social policy questions and recognition of the role and impact on urban centres was not clear.

## 2. Community Futures (Federal)

Background: Community Futures was introduced in 1986 as part of the Canadian Job Strategy. The role of Community Futures was to recognize the community or groups of communities as essential in community economic development. Other parts of the Strategy focused on individual workers, employers and businesses. Community Futures Committees (CFC) were established as non-profit societies with broad based membership based on knowledge, expertise and geographical representation. Sectoral representation is discouraged. The committees were expected to facilitate community input into a strategic plan which addressed long and short term community labour market problems. They maintained a close relationship with the local

Employment and Immigration Centres which are expected to respond to the CFC's strategic plans. This program is available to "non-metropolitan and smaller communities in crisis" and is intended to have a "complementary and facilitative role" in the communities. A federal budge review reduced funding to Community Futures committees are now integrated with Community Business Development Corporations which provide business loans, encourage self employment programmes, and training. As well Community Futures program has been moved from the the federal Ministry for Human Resource Development to Western Development Diversification where the emphasis is on economic development.

Funding: Funding for Community Futures Committees was for 5 year periods subject to annual review of achievement of goals based on the longer term strategic plan. The Community Futures Program was extended for a second 5 year period in recognition of the long term nature of community development processes. This "second generation" funding was based on need (e.g. levels of unemployment and social assistance, educational levels, workforce participation) and a measure of success in achieving goals of previous strategic plan. The maximum annual funding for any committee in B.C. was $80.000 but because the committees were non-profit societies they could raise additional funds on their own and in fact were encouraged to enter cost sharing endeavours with other community groups.

Reporting: Committees were required to have an approved 5 year strategic plan developed in concert with the community(ies) they

represented. Annual financial accounting and activity plans were submitted to justify continued funding for each year of the 5 year period. CFC's were encouraged to be accountable to their communities through developing and reporting their plans and achievements through community meetings, newspapers, municipal councils, etc.

Issues: Community Futures Program assumed communities knew what they needed and seed money would assist to get community economic development started. As the program progressed they found that a non-political process seemed to work best. CFC's worked best when they had people who could think beyond a single project, who could see the whole and articulate a process to involve the community. They found a need to develop the leadership and process skills of local participants. At a national level, evaluating the 'softer', process sides of community economic development was recognized as difficult and efforts were being directed to develop a "Goals and Measures" system in conjunction
with local CFC's.

### 3. Community Initiatives Program (Ministry of Women's Equality)

Background: This program involved a three stage community grants program developed in response to the Report of the Advisory Council on Community Based Programs for Women (1990). Funding was provided in 3 phases to increase community involvement in the delivery of women's services across the province and to provide a way to identify service needs, eliminate duplication of services and develop

long-term strategy for community based program delivery and to launch pilot or demonstration projects.

Funding: Funding was based on proposals which demonstrated community support and for which a steering committee had been put together. The funding was project oriented and limited to a maximum of $10,000 per community per phase. In several cases communities worked together on projects and increased funding reflected the collaboration.

Reporting: Needs Assessment reports and action planning documents were expected to filed with the Ministry upon completion of the project along with financial statements accounting for the funds.

Issues:

- Very few communities took the opportunity to go on to the pilot or demonstration phase largely because the funds available were not sufficient to launch a program. As well, women's groups in the communities were reluctant to take on time limited projects when they were still fighting for the survival of Women's Resource Centres whose funding had been cut by the Federal government.
- The steering committee structure was not always successful in all of the communities. In some communities the steering committee became inactive because of overwork of members leaving the sponsoring agency with the bulk of the work.
- The needs assessment format which emphasized survey research methodology was difficult in some communities because of lack of

expertise. Others noted in their reports that survey methodology tends to isolate women and not allow them to see that their circumstances are similar to other women.

- The funding did not reflect community size, intensity of need, nor resources available to do the work. Also there was not consideration in the funding of administrative costs for the sponsoring agencies.

**4. Community Tourism Action Program (Ministry of Tourism)**

Background: This program was originally part of the "Partnerships in Enterprise" umbrella strategy that included programs from the ministries of Municipal Affairs, Economic Development and Tourism. Recognizing the role of communities in generating economic growth, the program encouraged communities to look at tourism as a business and pursue tourism as a supplement to the local economic base. This program was specifically designed to help communities identify and implement tourism related projects. The emphasis was on developing a process to promote cooperation and understanding of common concerns rather than competition. The program required municipal government support and a broadly based local committee who would oversee the development of a local strategy. The focus evolved to more concentrated community development type work with communities in order to assist diverse groups within the community to participate and to ensure follow through in completing the objectives. The provincial government has removed itself almost entirely from involvement in local tourism initiatives and any

provincial tourism development is now done under the auspices of a semi-independent special operating agency.

Funding: There was no direct funding for this program however action plans and workshop report were written up, published and distributed by the staff of the Community Tourism Action Program. Tourism staff also worked with the communities to access other local, provincial and federal government funding to develop local tourism resources and completed objectives as set out in their action strategies.

Reporting: The process was initiated by a request from a community who were then asked to submit a detailed accounting of community infrastructure strengths and weaknesses as they pertained to tourism and to prepare an inventory of tourism resources in the community. Write-ups of the workshops and action plans were completed by Ministry staff.

Issues: The numbers of communities involved was reduced over the years to allow more intensive work in a few communities each year. This improved the ability of the communities to achieve their goals and complete projects. Much of the work to develop plans and coordinate the community process was done by volunteers. The additional time of Ministry staff to trouble-shoot within the government around funding and planning issues and to keep track of the community process allowed community people to concentrate on completing projects.

## 5. Economic Development Commissions and Committees

Background: Community Economic Development Commissions had their origins in the federal-provincial Industrial Development Subsidiary Agreement (IDSA) signed in 1977. When this agreement ran out the Economic and Regional Development agreement was signed and allowed continuing funding for Regional Economic Development Commissions. In 1985 the province introduced Community Organizations for Economic Development (COED's) as part of a municipal-provincial partnership initiative, "Partnerships in Enterprise". Previous economic development commissions existed only at the regional level and this initiative was an attempt to aid the process of local, community based economic development. Under this initiative only municipal governments or groups of municipal governments could receive funding. In 1991 the "Partners" initiative was dispersed and economic development organizations were brought under the Community Economic Development Program in the Ministry of Economic Development. Funding for the Community Economic Development Program was not renewed in the 1997/1998 fiscal year. The Ministry for Economic Development was disbanded in the winter of 1995 and all provinival staff involved in the Community Economic Development Program have been laid off or transferred to other program areas.

- Economic Development Commissions and Committees operated on a full time, part time and volunteer basis throughout the province.

They were joint ventures with local governments and community organizations. Their purpose is to encourage municipalities and regional districts to become actively involved in their own economic development including promotion and marketing of local opportunities. In 1992, 78 full time, part time and volunteer commissions and committees received support. These regional commissions and community committees received their last provinical level funding in 1996/97. Former staff expect that many of regional commissions will continue to exist through the partnerships with business, Regional Districts and municipalities.

- The Community Economic Development Program supported these local endeavors through capacity building initiatives, special projects funding and the Mayors Institutes which provided locally elected leaders a rare opportunity for networking and education.

Funding: Base funding was provided annually on an ongoing basis to all commissions and committees up to a maximum of $40,000 for regional commissions, $30,000 for municipal commissions and $2,500 for volunteer committees. Local government and community funding matched the provincial contribution in a minimum 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 split.

Reporting: Initially 2-5 year strategic plans were submitted. Annual updates in the form of work plans and progress on the previous years work accompanied annual financial statements. Strategic plans were updated every 3-5 years.

Issues:

- Community Economic Development programs recognized the varying needs of communities and supported communities at differing stages in the process of community development.
- Competition between communities and duplication of development activities were discouraged through regional or multi community processes
- Capacity building was recognized as an ongoing need for community development. This referred to strengthening the ability of local decision-makers and community residents to improve economic and social conditions. Sustainable Communities projects were one example of how this was attempted.
- Cooperation within ministries and between ministries was crucial for local economic development

**6. Healthy Communities (Ministry of Health)**

Background: This initiative arose out of the Federal government"s Healthy Communities and the Strengthening Community Health Projects of the late 1980's. The health promotion emphasis on creating healthy public policy at the local level and strengthening community autonomy and participation in dealing with health issues were brought together in 1990 in the Health Promotions Branch of the Ministry of Health. The Healthy Communities initiative was but one initiative in a set of interrelated and mutually supportive efforts. The Health Promotion Branch and its staff were disbanded in a

Ministry reorganization in 1994. For a while Healthy Communities programming was carried out in the Population Health Branch. Since 1994 Health Communities programming has disappeared at the provincial level due to expectations that the new Health Regions and Community Health Societies would pick this up as part of their community health functions.

Funding: Funding was available to local governments on an annual basis for up to approximately 3 years. In the 1st year up to $30,000 was available to a community with subsequent annual grant maximums of $15,000. Communities could reapply for 2nd and 3rd year funding but were required to demonstrate contributions matching or exceeding their request. Very few applications were turned down. Health Promotion staff worked with applicants to ensure their initiative and application met the funding criteria.

Reporting: Healthy Communities Initiative was one of the few initiatives that viewed the reporting requirements as more than an individual community planning, monitoring and accountability process. The interim and final reporting from all the communities included process concerns (e.g. what are the barriers) as well as outcome statements. They were summarized, published and sent back to all the communities and made available to the general public. In this way the experiences, both positive and negative, of others were made readily available to everyone as information and as learning materials and as a means to facilitate networking.

Issues: The tension in health promotion between the need for services to individuals and the need for structural change and community empowerment was ongoing within the provincial bureaucracy and in the communities.

- What happened for those communities who accessed funding for 3 years. Ongoing community processes required additional resources in personnel and funds - all of which could not be expected to be provided by volunteers.
- The holistic concept of healthy communities was difficult for many communities and organizations to grasp. In fact some Health Regions have changed the name of their health promotion activities back to "Preventative Services".

## 7. Healthy Schools

Background: The Healthy Schools initiative was launched in 1990 to promote the active involvement of school aged children and youth in learning and practicing skills for decision making for health. It is one of two CD programs studied in this thesis that remain active. Health Schools is now part of the Ministry for Children and Families. The Healthy Schools process focuses on the school as an important environment in which children and youth are informed about factors that affect their health. As "communities in themselves schools provide a focal point for action that involves many individuals".

Funding: Small grants are available to schools and school boards on an annual bases. Funding is available for subsequent years.

Reporting: Schools receiving funding submit a report documenting the project successes and barriers. As with the Healthy Communities reports, the information from all the school initiatives is summarized in the annual Healthy Schools Updates and made available to the public.

Issues:

- There is a delicate 'political' balance to maintain between the education mandate and health promotion mandate within the school, particularly when the aim is to include students, teachers, parents, staff and administrators as members of the school community.
- Health promotion concepts and practices support the values and philosophy of the Ministry of Education's "Year 2000" and the provincial guidance program, "Learning for Living" yet these holistic approaches present on-going difficulties for people to grasp in much the same way Healthy Communities does.

**8. Local and Regional Child and Youth Committees (CYC's)**

Background: The Child and Youth Secretariat was created in early 1991 "to focus responsibility for coordination integration and implementation of inter-ministry policies and programs for youth". The Secretariat was formed in response to the recommendations in the Ombudsman's Public Report No. 22, (1990) which focused on the need for greater coordination of services, the findings of Deputy

Minister's Committee on Social Policy Task Force on children's issues and the Assistant Deputy Minister's Committee on Social Policy review of the existing Inter-Ministry Children's Committees. The Ministries of Social Service, Health, Attorney General, and Education were the targets of the reports and recommendations. Under the policy direction of the Secretariat local CYC's were established to consider issues of quality of service, the kinds of services and the improvement of service for children and youth at the local level. They were expected to respond to emergent case management issues and longer term planning in an informed, cooperative and integrated manner. Regional CYC members were responsible for ensuring that the Ministry they represented was informed of the issues arising from the local level and that opportunities for inter-ministry planning or program development are noted and considered.

In February 1996, the provincial government appointed a Transition Commissioner to oversee the planning and and development of services for children and their families. The Commissioner took over the staff of the Child and Youth Secretariat and subsumed the mandate of theSecretariat under her mandate. That left the role and function of the Regional andLocal Child and Youth Committees up in the air. Many of these committees continued to meet and plan and provided an informal regional forum for discussion and input into the Commissioners work. With the creation of the new Ministry for Children and Families (MCF) in September 1996, these committees no longer have a formal function although some continue to meet and receive funding from their Regional Operating Agencies under MCF

Funding: No funding was available directly to the regional or local CYC's from the Child and Youth Secretariat. The Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Health, Mental Health Branch dispensed funds through their regional operations for specific projects or community initiatives such as integrated mental health services in Prince George, community consultations sponsored by the South Island Regional CYC and the Planning Forum in Quesnel.

Reporting: Annual reports from the Local CYC's were submitted to the Regional CYC's and contained information about activities in the areas of case management, local service delivery issues and policy-planning issues. Regional CYC's submitted annual reports to the Child and Youth Secretariat and included information regarding major initiatives, service gaps and overlaps, policy proposals which address integrated service delivery, use of resources to meet changing needs, issues referred to the Secretariat and priorities and future plans.

Issues:

- Coordination and integration issues and training were to be addressed within existing resources at all levels.
- The community development aspect of this initiatives was left up to each community and varied dramatically across the province, from case management only to co-location of services to community engagement processes.
- The commitment to improving services for children and youth was tied to budget requirements to the extent that some ministry staff

felt they can not contribute much to the committees because of lack of staff and funds.

- -here were questions about the future of the role of local and regional CYC's with the implementation of local governance in health and employment of community development workers by the Ministry of Social Services.

## 9. Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

Background: The Round Table was created in 1990 to "develop a strategy for sustainable development in B.C., to propose better ways of resolving conflicts over the environment and the economy, and to increase public understanding of sustainable issues". In December, 1992 its mandate was revised to take into account the role of CORE. The strengthened mandate statedthe Round Table was to

- provide advice to the provincial government through development of options and recommendations on sustainability issues
- undertake public consultation on sustainability initiatives
- act as a consensus building forum and centre for the exchange of information and ideas between the public and provincial government,
- provide advice to the provincial government on ways to increase the public's knowledge and understanding of sustainability
- monitor and publicly report on B.C.'s progress towards sustainability

The Round Table supported the development of local and regional round tables by providing them with information and educational materials.

The Round Table was disbanded in March 1996 due to budget cuts and reorganization of forest sector.

Funding: No funding was available to local and regional round tables.

Reporting: The Round Table produced an number of reports and technical reports regarding sustainable development in B.C. They released a number of draft documents for discussion, comment and further input from B.C. residents.

Issues:

- The Round Tables advisory role to the provincial government may have compromised its ability to advocate for its recommendations on behalf of B.C. residents.
- The lack of funds and dedicated staff to support local or regional initiatives made it difficult for these volunteer committees to remain active.
- The multitude of structures and processes regarding the environment and the economy was confusing to many citizens.

**10. Safer Communities Strategy (Federal)**

Background: These consultations were designed to help selected communities develop a greater appreciation for the comprehensive approach to crime prevention. They were also intended to inform the communities about various methods of applying such an approach to

their communities, taking into account the organization and coordination of each community's existing policies, programs and services. The Canadian Council on Social Development (1990) documents the evolution, in Canada and internationally of crime prevention through law enforcement and corrections strategies to the social development approaches advocated by the Safer Communities strategy. The Safer Communities approach to crime prevention was sponsored by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities with funding from the federal government. "The cornerstone of these strategies is to establish interagency networks and increased community collaboration". The program was meant to provide support to initiatives generated in communities and was founded on the belief that "municipal leaders are well positioned to assess the early effects of federal or provincial policies". Social Development approaches to crime prevention include accessing social services programs, income security, health, education, social housing and employment readiness and training services. The Healthy Communities Project and community based policing were two trends identified as reinforcing the social development approach of the Safer Communities initiative.

Issues:

- Information sharing and collaboration amongst community agencies can clarify gaps and overlaps in service but does not necessarily provide remedies for these situations.
- Communities cannot necessarily handle more than one major community initiative at a time.

- Conveying the social development approach can be difficult particularly when communities are focused on 'needing' services.
- Social planning or other structures to increase coordination and integration of services "should focus solely on solving problems, rather than evaluating or auditing activities underway in the community".

## 11. Strong Communities in the 90's

Background: The Strong Communities program which operated during 1989 to 1991 was really an enhancement to the Community Organizations for Economic Development. The idea of the program came out of a series of conferences on small business which identified the need to improve the implementation of economic development plans. The program was implemented in two phases with communities or group of communities from the eight development regions being selected in each of the two years. Proposals from communities were reviewed according to a set of established selection criteria. The program's multi-faceted approach included,

-facilitators who were hired to conduct community visioning exercises and forums and to assist local authorities with the Strong Communities process.

-existing economic development plans were reviewed by a team of technical experts.

-review of existing federal and provincial funding programs to determine the best fit between funding and services and needs identified in each strategy.

-known industry and technical expert assistance was provided to examine specific projects or problems.

-visits to communities by teams of senior federal and provincial program managers.

Funding: The program was paid for by the Ministry of Economic Development for selected communities.

Reporting: Reports were produced for each community regarding all aspect of the Strong Communities program and where there were regional implications the information was shared with communities who had not participated in the program.

Issues: As one person said the legacy of this program was the process it established in participating communities.

-This is an expensive process suitable to a "one-shot-deal" or a "kick-start" approach in communities that were carefully selected based on their past performance and cooperative relationships within the community but it had potential in other sectors such as the social and health fields.

-Choosing facilitators who live in the communities within which they work can have lasting benefits for that community.

-There was a risk in disempowering the community participants by taking over their projects and process although this does not appear to have happened. The infusion of technical expertise and matching of funding and programs appears to have had significant benefits.

## 12. Sustainable Communities Initiatives

Background: The sustainable communities pilot projects were designed to explore different ways of doing community economic development in communities with varying needs. Kimberley and Creston were chosen as sights for piloting an approach to sustainable community developed by the Rural and Small Town Research and Studies Programme at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick. Merritt was selected to pilot an approach developed by SPARC of Vancouver, B.C. Project objectives were different in each of the communities reflecting the differences between the communities and of the community development consultant/researchers who were involved in these projects.

Funding: Funding from the government was for 2 years and based on a 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 contribution from the Ministry of Economic Development, the community and the municipal council. In-kind contributions such as administration of the program and volunteer work were considered as part of the contributions.

Issues: -It took much longer in all the communities for the community groups to coalesce and begin working together on their community strategies.

-The communities attempted to use consensus decision making processes but there were issues that needed to be resolved in other ways. Merritt developed a terms of reference which guides the decision making process for their group.

-The notions of partnership and in-kind contribution were a recognition by the government that bureaucrats need to be challenged to let go of power and that provincial initiatives create additional work for communities and other organizations and they should receive recognition for that work.

-There were undercurrents of issues regarding employment equity that had not been expected. There was an awareness that these issues needed to be made more explicit right from the beginning in future projects. One checklist on rural community survival suggests that you look for acceptance of women in leadership positions. As one person I interviewed said, that was a sign to him that the community has entered the 20th century! As we move into the 21st century, perhaps signs of survival will include an even greater diversity within the leadership of our communities.

# APPENDIX B

# APPENDIX B

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SELECTED GOVERNMENT SPONSORED INITIATIVES

### Characteristics of Community Development Initiatives.

In this appemdix I will present the findings regarding program characteristics set by government for the community initiatives: citizen participation, local government involvement, professional support, funding and reporting requirements. These parameters or funding/approval criteria all influenced the nature of the community development initiatives selected for study. These findings are presented with the full understanding of the irony of a more senior level of government outlining for communities how their community development processes should be structured.

### 1. Citizen Participation

A broad based community steering committee with responsibility for the local process was a requirement for all the initiatives. There does not seem to be any pattern for how inclusive or exclusive these committees were. It was very dependent on the community and to some extent the focus of the initiative. For example the Healthy Communities Initiatives criteria required that applicants demonstrate how they were going to achieve broad resident participation, including vulnerable and traditionally excluded groups before funding was approved. The Safer Communities strategy placed more emphasis on broad based support from local government, non-profit and service

organizations. Others, such as the CORE process, established regional round tables where only representatives of key stakeholders were at the table. Considerable work and negotiations went on during the CORE process within the various communities of interest e.g. forest companies, unions, environmental groups, to decide who would represent each sector at the table. Only on Vancouver Island did an outside group - youth - demand a place at the table. With the exception of Healthy Communities, none of the program descriptions or application procedures addressed issues of gender, race, age, physical ability and so on when speaking about citizen or client/consumer membership on community steering committees. In other words there was no explicit recognition of "difference" and the power issues inherent in gender, race, age, religion, physical and mental ability and so on in program documents. The "citizen" and/or "consumer" to be involved is the universal citizen of modern liberalism.

This is curious (although not surprising) particularly when these issues are highlighted in many of the consultation reports (at least the social policy ones) that had been completed for the provincial government: The Royal Commission of Education (1988), the Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs(1991), British Columbia Task Force on Family Violence, Is Anyone Listening? (1992) and the Report of the Community Panel Family and Children's Services Legislation Review in British Columbia (1992), to name a few. A sample quote from the Task Force on Family Violence (1992) will serve as an illustration of the way these issues have been raised.

> The Task Force also believes that the "community" must include those groups which are often invisible in our social structures - immigrants, refugees, people of colour, elderly people, people with physical or mental disabilities, lesbians and gay men, people who are poor and people who live in rural and isolated areas (p.54).

I interpret the absence of explicit referral to difference in the government community development programs in light of these consultation reports to the performative actions of government officials and the dominant policy paradigm which views the civil service and civil servants as neutral, objective and rational. These consultation reports are normally lead by people with authority and status in their respective professions and are not necessarily tied to the same demands for legitimation and reduction of control than is required of public servants. Yeatman also suggests that the protected status under the welfare state for those who are often "invisible" in our society leads to a view that these people require special needs to be addressed through targeted funding rather than as citizens who should be consulted about their needs: they are less than, not able to freely contract for services they might require (1994 and 1990).

**2. Local Government Involvement**

Most of the initiatives required at minimum an expression of local government support. In the cases of the Economic Development Commissions, Sustainable Communities, Strong Communities in the 90's and Healthy Communities funding went through the local government and in these cases cost sharing, if not with the local government then with community groups, was required. The Child and Youth Committees, Community Initiatives Program and

Community Futures did not have any criteria regarding local government involvement, financial or otherwise. Others such as CORE, the local Round Tables, and Community Tourism Action Programme stressed the importance of local government participation although there was no direct funding available to them from these provincial government programs.

Initiatives such as Safer Communities, Healthy Communities, Healthy Schools, Sustainable Communities, CORE and local Round Tables on the Environment and the Economy were directed toward making changes in public policy at both the local and provincial level and in most cases required the support of the local bureaucracies and politicians before applications for funding were approved by provincial officials.

The insistence on regional and local government involvement is unique to government sponsored community development programs. This insistence may have been motivated by political sensitivities e.g. not wanting to step on the toes of fellow politicians or be perceived to be interfering in what are local issues but it was also borne out by the experience of the provincial government program staff that those initiatives which include local government are more successful.

**3. Professional Support**

The community development initiatives reviewed in this research project dealt with the issue of professional support to community groups in a number of different ways.

Healthy Communities, Community Futures and Economic Development initiatives provided funding directly to communities to hire their own consultants/co-ordinators/community development workers, if they chose. Programs such as the Tourism Action Program, B.C. Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and Strong Communities in the 90's provided their own staff or consultants to fulfil that role. In the case of Strong Communities in the '90's community facilitators and technical and professional advice was paid for by the Ministry of Economic Development on a project by project basis.

Other initiatives, such as the Sustainable Communities pilot projects and some of the Child and Youth Committees were a blend, whereby government employees and community development consultants work within a community in the initial stages of a process. Once a local steering committee, social planning council or non-profit society was up and running, funding became available (or was patched together from a variety of sources) for that group to hire their own co-ordinator or community development worker. Implicit in these different arrangements were values about community autonomy and control yet they all reflected the need to provide resources either financially, through staff time or a combination of both to ensure additional dedicated staff time was allotted to facilitating community processes. In this manner the provincial government supported and resourced participation and dialogue in communities (Yeatman, 1994; Pateman, 1970).

**4. Funding**

In a manner similar to professional support, funding patterns varied from initiative to initiative. The Economic Development Commissions and Committees were funded to three different levels with

- Regional commissions receiving up to $40,000;
- Municipal commissions up to $30,000; and
- Volunteer committees receive up to $2500.00 annually.

This funding was expected to be matched or exceeded by local government and by the business community in a three way split. The commissions represented the only initiatives in this study that received ongoing core funding. However the funding was reviewed on an annual basis.

The other community engagement processes included in this study received funds in a phased, usually time limited process. In the first year the largest amount was made available for needs assessments, determining community priorities, conducting visioning exercises or establishing social planning processes. Second and third year funding were at reduced levels, with the expectation that local government or private funds would match the provincial contribution and after the 3rd year further funding was not available.

For example, initiatives such as the Sustainable Communities projects and Community Futures were funded for a limited period of time, two years and five years respectively, with the objective that during that time the community capacity would be developed sufficiently to allow the community to generate its own resources for ongoing community

development. In the case of Community Futures, program funding was extended for another five years and referred to as "Second Generation Funding", in recognition of the time it takes for community development processes to coalesce. Community Futures was unique in that regard. The three Sustainable Communities Projects were considered as pilot projects with partnership arrangements with the provincial government contributing 1/3, the local government contributing 1/3 and the community the remaining 1/3. The local contributions could be calculated in "in kind" services so that local administrative and volunteer efforts were reflected.

Some initiatives, such as CORE, the Round Table, Tourism Action program and the Child and Youth Committees did not fund community initiatives directly. Some funds from CORE went to various sectors to support technical research that would aid in the regional land use planning issues. The Round Table had no funds to allocate to communities but assisted Local Round Tables to access funds from other government ministries and other levels of government. Tourism staff assisted communities to access funding to carry out their action plans. And the Child and Youth Committees could apply for funding through the regional offices of the former Ministry of Social Services and the Mental Health Branch of the Ministry of Health. It is also important to add that all provincial program staff assisted communities to access additional funding from any number of sources, e.g. community based programs.

**5. Reporting**

Each of the initiatives required some form of reporting and accountability to the funding body. The reporting back was designed to address the criteria, objectives and principles of the various initiatives as well as any financial accountability. Thus, Healthy Communities reporting was framed within the context of community health priorities, partnership and learning, community capacity (i.e. community strengths and barriers), and the community plans for the next time period. As well, Healthy Communities projects completed a "Healthy Communities Yearbook Entry" report which provided information for the Initiative's annual report. Considerable thought was given by provincial Health Promotion staff to tie this reporting to the principles and objectives of the Healthy Communities Initiative and to make the reporting a helpful evaluation process for each of the communities.

Economic Development Commissions and Committees and Community Futures reports were presented in the form of 5 year strategies. Community work plans and activity reports on progress toward completing previous year work plans were submitted annually along with financial statements. In 1993, Community Futures headquarters staff began emphasizing the need for the community committees to address their accountability to their communities and not just to their funders. Community Futures committees were being encouraged to present their strategies, work plans , activity reports and financial statements to local councils, the local newspaper, Chamber of Commerce, service clubs and so on.

The public reporting encouraged by Community Futures and Healthy Communities and Health Schools seems to indicate a value placed on the educative aspects of participation in community decision making. There is a clear sense of these initiatives wanting to share the information and experiences of participants so that others in the community (and province) may learn from it and also become interested in joining in. It fits with Pateman's (1970) notions of a participatory society discussed earlier.

Community Tourism Action program reports were two phased. The first, which was prepared by a locally established group, was an inventory of tourism related strengths and weakness, and community resources and assets available for tourism. The second report resulted from a workshop facilitated by Ministry staff where goals, objectives and action plan were developed. This was then written up and printed by ministry staff and given to the community as a plan to implement. A follow up workshop and subsequent report of progress in achieving the tourism plans was then completed by some of the communities.

The reports generated as a result of the Community Initiatives Program (Women's Equality) took the form of needs assessments which were based on many forms of community input as well as a financial statement accounting for expenditure of funds. For those communities that received planning funding, a report outlining the

action plans for that community were submitted along with a financial statement.

The quality of the style and content of the reports in all the programs varied dramatically and it was not always the larger communities that produced the best work, although the packaging of the urban reports was often more sophisticated. While the language is different e.g. Healthy communities, sustainable development, community economic development, social development, the reports made clear that communities saw themselves as integrated wholes, where economic, social, health and environmental issues were inextricably linked. For example the Burnaby Economic Development Commission report linked economic development to the community plan, to sustainable development, to education, seniors, "liveability", the arts, child care, and diversity and so on. In the "Gold Country" communities "economic and social well-being were interdependent" (Healthy Communities Yearbook, 1992, p.31). On the Sunshine Coast people "want a clean, caring and co-operative place to live" (p.18). The "Lake Cowichan Economic Development Strategy" (Smith, 1991) identified the existence of joint projects between the local municipal council, School Board, and community based organizations as a strength from both a social and economic development point of view.

The Healthy Communities and the Healthy Schools initiatives were the only initiatives to publish a summary document of all the participating communities' activities and plans. These "Yearbooks" as they were called, identify common healthy community/school themes and issues

of every participating community in B.C. and served to inform and educate others. The Healthy Schools program continues this practice. While other initiatives produced a very brief summary, usually as highlights or at the program level for Ministry Annual Reports, the Health Promotion Branch's documents were highly readable and directed at and distributed to community volunteers, residents and leaders.

The focus of the required reports was on outputs, needs identification and financial accountability to funding bodies. Very few reports addressed process issues - problems, obstacles or serendipitous events of the experience of participation in community development processes. The one exception to this was the Healthy Communities initiatives but even in this case the reporting requirements were set by the government. With the exception of Community Futures, reporting requirements did not stress accountability to the community. Participant experiences of these community initiatives are also missing. Healthy Communities Reports did contain brief one line quotes form some participants.

One of the assumptions of structuring and funding greater participation of communities in decision-making and governance is that more senior governments would have a better reading or a denser, more complex picture of the issues and problems requiring attention. One way this information was conveyed to government was through the involvement of government staff in communities as they helped communities work through funding application processes and

facilitated or attended community meetings. Another way was through the reports generated by each of the communities as they participated in the various government community processes. As part of my original research a selection of these community reports were reviewed to see what themes might exist. These themes are considered in the following section.

**Themes Emerging From The Community Reports.**

Perhaps the most surprising thing to come from this research is the commonalty of themes and concerns arising across the province as reported in the community reports. On the surface this seems paradoxical: the very essence of community development is the assumption that each community is unique and requires unique, self determined solutions. Communities may well have differed in assigning priorities to, and in proposing ways of resolving, these issues. I return however, to the principle of performativity which exerts a pan-local influence: "it is the only principle available which permits some degree of commensurability across different contexts of pressure for complexity-reducing decisions" (Yeatman, 1994; p.116. I interpret the commonalty of themes to derive from this principle. These reports were all written to comply with government instructions. The categories of the themes are "indigenous typologies": "those created and expressed by participants (documents) and are generated through analysis of the local use of language" Marshall and Rossman, 1995; p.114.). Others might attribute the similarity of themes to the homogenizing influence of transnational

corporate capitalism (desire for local control of economy) and patriarchy (women's common perception of safety issues, need for child care).

However, there is evidence of a contradictory conclusion to my original assessment that we see the principle of performativity operating in the commonalty of themes. The headings for the themes were originally taken from the reports as categories that captured the issues facing communities that they in turn wished to address through community development activities. As I read through the themes another way to summarize them became apparent: I could have looked for differences in themes across different groups (women, environmental, economic development) rather than similarities across communities. If I had done this I would have noticed that issues of transportation were different for women, than for tourism and economic development; personal safety for women and children was different than the safety issues brought up by tourism initiatives; and so on. This would lead me to think differently as a community facilitator about how to work within "politics of difference" within each community to address the multiple perceptions of the need for transportation, community awareness and so on, instead of homogenizing a community need to develop better transportation systems.

Transportation and traffic safety showed up in just about every report as a need or area of development to assist in social, environmental and economic spheres. Lack of public transportation services affects rural

women, seniors and disabled, for example, as a barrier to accessing services, both social and economic. In urban and rural areas transportation is highlighted as a safety issue (truck routes and traffic deaths) and an environmental concern because of pollution and noise. Bicycle paths and safe, attractive pedestrian walkways were often mentioned by communities as alternative means of transportation that promote community health, encourage tourism and environmentally sound planning. Increased or alternate highway routes to and from communities were also seen as promoting economic growth and diversity.

Personal Safety in public places was an issue raised in nearly all the reports. For women, it arose as a concern about violence against women and the need for services, programs and education as well as changes in the justice system. For children and youth in urban areas it was identified as a significant problem and many healthy communities and schools projects addressed this. It showed up in the tourism reports regarding safe camp grounds, river and hiking trails, and the implications of attracting "strangers" to your community. In economic development reports it related to the liveability of the community.

Co-ordination and integration of services was a theme reflected mainly in relation to social services and primarily from groups comprised of service providers. It remained important because the child and youth committees were directed to address this issue in their communities and at the time it appeared to be increasingly important with the regionalization of health care as communities and regions worked to

assume control of governance and planning. In the economic development sphere the issues of co-ordination and integration regarding labour force adjustment and the supports required from the social policy areas were beginning to be addressed particularly through processes such as CORE, the B.C. Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and in the former Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology.

It was difficult to get a sense of what this issue meant for community residents who may have been consumers of these services. In one community development process in Victoria, co-ordination and integration for mental health consumers and their families meant a "seamless web" of service from childhood to old age rather than co-ordinated services by age category or illness category. A similar trend was noted in the community reports in the widespread call for general, accessible counselling services rather than a call for specific forms of counselling for particular diagnoses or populations.

Community awareness of services and programs was an concern for the social services sector and the economic and tourism sectors as well. This appeared to be a long standing issue in many communities and on the face of it a relatively simple concern to address by developing directories of services and using community cable TV. However, maintaining and publishing such a directory is costly and time consuming and no on-going funding seemed to be available for this task. It is interesting to note that the availability of information about community resources is one of the few items research indicates

makes a positive difference to client outcomes when they engage with the social and health systems.

For women in the province the needs assessments were striking in their similarity of identified needs for women. Based on my content analysis of community reports, almost without exception the reports identified as the top 5 priorities (the order varied from community to community) the need for

1. increased educational and training opportunities
2. employment opportunities - resource based economy in smaller communities excludes women or creates a "pink ghetto"
3. child care services - flexible, 24 hour and located at colleges
4. transportation - lack of adequate public transportation acts as a barrier to accessing services
5. counselling services - 24 hour, general, accessible services

All of these "needs" speak to gaining access to the skills or supports necessary to allow one to participate in the workforce/economy and according to Pateman's (1988) critique, to becoming citizens.

Closer to home theme shows up in tourism and economic development in the form of value added forestry and promoting local shopping as well as in health care and social services where emphasis is to move away from institutionalized care to planning and provision of services in the home and community. This theme reflected community interest in building (in some cases, sustaining) community

capacity by bringing decision making, governance and the care of family and fellow community members to the community and region. On the economic side it meant returning the decisions about and benefits of economic development to the community from remote corporate headquarters and responding to competition from U.S. cross-border shopping (i.e. Canadians shopping in the U.S.) which was at its peak at the time these reports were written.

Sustainable development was referred to in many reports and was most clearly expressed in relation to protecting natural resources for long term use and maximizing employment over the long haul. Also, water ways were considered key to the economic and aesthetic life of most B.C. communities and there was constant reference to protecting lakes, rivers, streams and oceans from pollution and damage so that community physical and economic health could be maintained. Sustainable development literature always refers to sustaining the social as well as the economic and environmental aspects of the community but I found the local literature permeated with the discourse of economics with social health being predicated on the market economy. As a social worker I am distressed at the seeming lack of awareness of any critique of market economy principles as applied to social policy.

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Title of Thesis

REVISIONING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
A Postmodern Analysis of Government Community Development Initiatives from 1988-1993

by

SHARON HUME

Author: [redacted]

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