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Community Consultation and Environmental Justice in the Regent Park Revitalization

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Community Consultation and Environmental Justice in the Regent Park Revitalization

by

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Abstract

The neighbourhood of Regent Park, located in the east end of downtown Toronto, Ontario, is the oldest and largest public housing development in Canada. In 2002, under its new management by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, the development was announced to undergo a total redevelopment to be completed over 12 years. The revitalization of Regent Park has involved, among other things, an extensive and uniquely designed community consultation process, as well as a redesign for its green space. The community consultation process is examined through a case study method, wherein the use of archival documents, interviews with community staff, and focus groups with residents of the neighbourhood form the data. The revitalization is analyzed according to its context within ecological levels, and situated within the framework of environmental justice.

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Introduction

Green space in urban areas has increasingly become a topic of interest in urban planning and related fields for its expected positive effects on community health and well-being (Savelsberg, 1984; Davis, 1992; Kaplan, 1995; Kuo, Sullivan, Coley & Brunson, 1998; Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Kuo, 2001). For example, green space has been found to restore cognitive and emotional resources (Hartig & Evans, 1993; Kaplan, 1995; Bell, Greene, Fisher, & Baum, 2001; Kuo, 2001), increase social ties (Kuo, Sullivan, Coley & Brunson, 1998) and increase feelings of safety and sense of community within neighbourhoods (Riger, LeBailly, & Gordon, 1981). Important questions are the what, why, and how of the inclusion of green space in a redesigned and redeveloped urban neighbourhood. These are the types of questions I explored in this thesis project. Regent Park, a Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) neighbourhood in the South East end of Toronto, serves as an excellent case study for these considerations.

Begun in 2002, when ownership of the neighbourhood was transferred from the provincial to the municipal government, Regent Park is currently in Phase 2 in their 10 Phase Revitalization. Under TCHC, a social housing corporation created and owned by Toronto's City Council, the neighbourhood is undergoing significant structural changes – most notably the conscious planning for social infrastructure and green space. Regent Park is one of the oldest community housing neighbourhoods in Canada. Constructed in 1948, the area is of particular interest for the study of how the development of green spaces affect an urban neighbourhood, because it is currently characterized by its row houses lining the blocks of the neighbourhoods and minimal open space, green space, and community infrastructure (Regent Park History, (n.d.), para. 2).

The redevelopment process currently taking place in the neighbourhood, specifically as it involves a community consultation process, is an inviting, complex case of how an inner-city low-income community is structurally attempting to improve itself. My thesis – a case study on Regent Park as an example of the role of green space in individual and community health and well-being – reflects the voice of the residents in comparison to the priorities set by the city and the TCHC. I hypothesized that, although the residents have been consulted by researchers with the TCHC, those consultations are still wrought with power differentials that effect the representation of the residents. I assume that the meaning the residents give to green space in their neighbourhood has not been fully reflected in this consultation process. I intended, particularly through the use of a hermeneutical focus on meaning making, to reflect the resident voices that have and have not been heard. The study of the role of resident input – i.e. were they solicited for an opinion, or was there a power sharing process throughout the planning – informs the way in which the priorities have been set for revitalization. This analysis can play a large part in understanding in real terms the power dynamics involved in the process of revitalizing an urban public housing neighbourhood.

In the following section I will begin by positioning myself by discussing my ontology, epistemology, my positionality, and standpoint as a researcher, and my conceived research relationship during my thesis project, as well as ethical considerations. Next, I will review the relevant literature on the positive effects of green space on individual and community health and well-being. Then I will discuss the relevance of green space to the environmental justice movement, and conclude with theories from political economy to contextualize the macrosystem level within which Regent Park exists. Finally, I will outline my methodology, epistemology and methods to be used as well as my sampling strategies, interview guides, and a discussion of

research quality and rigour, concluding with a plan for coding and analysis and a timeline for the project.

Critical Reflexivity

Ontology

My beliefs about reality combine a singular and multiple realities. As I subscribe to the critical paradigm (Kirby et al., 2006), I believe that there is a singular (objective) reality, and that this reality is power dynamics. That is, there are commonalities to human experience, and these commonalities are power dynamics. Power dynamics involve objective phenomena, namely domination; however the experiences of these phenomena differ from person to person. My belief in multiple realities come from my understanding that each individual experiences the world very differently – due to the nature of their relationship with caregivers, their experiences throughout their entire life, their brain chemistry, their education and so on – and therefore each individual has her or his own reality. Further, I believe our individual realities should also be respected in the name of valuing humanity and its diversity, and in the name of knowledge.

Researcher Positionality and Standpoint

I have been drawn to the topic of green space since I was a child, however I did not always conceptualize it in the way I do currently. Green space has always had a special role in my life, and it was always curious to me how it changes from city to city. Growing up in the suburbs just outside of Toronto – in Ontario's "premier pre-planned suburb" of Mississauga – green space was both something that was strictly confined and allocated, and something which vanished in front of my eyes when witnessing construction and sub/urban sprawl. Most green space in my hometown was polluted with garbage – something to which I had rural areas of Southern Ontario to compare – and I feel this pollution has lead me to recognize that different

neighbourhoods experience differing levels of purity in their green space. Moving to Toronto in my early 20s has in particular sensitized my attention to natural spaces, given the lack of preserved green spaces in the downtown, or in its low-income peripheral suburbs of Etobicoke and Scarborough. I have come to see green space as precious and sparse, and often mediated by the socio-economic status and density of neighbourhoods.

In regards to relating to the residents of Regent Park, I believe I am limited. I am a white woman with middle-class social skills – as I have grown up middle class, but slipped down an income bracket or two in my late teens due to my father's unemployment – and my minority sexual orientation status is not always visible nor are my politics. Regent Park residents come from very different realities – most are New Canadians (60%) or come from immigrant families, all are low-income, and all live in a geographically isolated neighbourhood in the downtown core. This ethno-cultural dimension in the neighbourhood is also reflected in the predominance of multiple languages spoken. I believe I have adequately reflected the diverse realities of residents' live where applicable and appropriate primarily in identifying the ethno-cultural makeup of the neighbourhood and discussing its importance in relation to the broader Canadian context of the racism, environmental justice and poverty. Doing justice to the experiences and voices of the residents of Regent Park is important to me, both as an aspiring community psychologist and as someone who wishes to dedicate her life to social justice: facilitating a voice for those infrequently heard is an act of justice in my eyes. This consideration is at the forefront of my attempt to conduct Masters-level research in community psychology.

Epistemology, Methodology and Research Paradigm

My methodology and value base comes from a strong critical position, rooted in my study of critical theory and the Frankfurt School as well as a strong interest in critical psychology

and social and political thought. My epistemology is such: I hold that reality, while constructed of infinite, subjective personal realities interpreted through an individual's personal history, is wrought with objective power differentials. These objective power differentials are the cause of most social ills in that they take both immaterial and material form (Tolman, 1991; Horkheimer, 1947/2004). The material form of these power differentials is found in, amongst other places, the structural and aesthetic nature of where we live, i.e. in neighbourhoods (Friedmann, 1986). These objective power differentials are therefore evident in everyday lives. In addition, these differences are most evident – and consequently most stark – in neighbourhoods characterized by homogeneous income levels. Ultimately, I hold that it is important to identify material forms of power differentials in an effort to reduce their damaging effects on their immaterial consequences. The psychological health and well-being of a community are both affected by the opportunities afforded to a community. Therefore, the accounts of individuals within a particular community will reveal social and material (i.e., structural, aesthetic) characteristics of their individual lives and the experience within their neighbourhood.

My research approach falls under the critical paradigm, which is founded on reflective knowledge and contains critical, materialist, structural, and feminist theory (Kirby, Greaves & Reid, 2006). The critical paradigm examines societal structures and power dynamics and how they are involved in promoting and perpetuating inequalities, while also promoting reflection and action on principles of social justice. Theory is used in this paradigm to explicate underlying structures that influence phenomena, because what really exists cannot be discovered through empirical research alone. "The world of appearances (what we experience) does not necessarily reveal the world of mechanisms (what causes the world of appearances)" (Kirby et al., 2006, p. 14).

Research Relationship

My relationship with my research participants was like a "critical friend". I was intentionally respectful of my participants through my methods by basing my findings and subsequent analysis in their words and letting their accounts and experiences speak for themselves. My positionality was strongly in a kind of solidarity – read: a kind of "friendship" – with the participants as it concerned their health and well-being, coming from a critical macrosystem level focus. I am anti-capitalist, and have been an active member of anti-poverty and anti-capitalist direct action groups for a number of years. I believe that capitalism is systemic, and a structural form of violence against everyone, but is strongest against low-income and immigrant individuals and communities. I feel I have studied enough in my B.A. in political science (and psychology) and my own reading to have an adequate understanding of the ideology, manifestations and reification of capitalism to have a well-formed social, environmental, cultural, and economic analysis of it at multiple, if not all, ecological levels. I believe that many objective, material aspects of a life on low-income are oppressive, even psychologically, and that calling attention to these aspects is a political act. Through my linkages with macrosystem level economic and political theory, I believe I have illuminated its issues and influences as it relates to the contextualized understanding of Regent Park.

My research relationship was essentially based in my belief that the residents of Regent Park were being clearly and systemically oppressed by the nature of their having a low-income, coupled with living in Toronto. This is most clearly carried out by the physical conditions under which they live. Although I do not assume that any Regent Park residents had to share this view to relate to me or my research, I felt that my politics and my goal for this research were ultimately promoting their health and well-being.

Advisory Committee

In line with my participatory aims and desire to be respectful to those being studied, in my thesis proposal I stated that I would form an Advisory Committee of three to four individuals from the community. At least two would be residents of Regent Park, and at least one would be staff from the Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative (RPNI). This organization was chosen in particular because of the mandate of the RPNI: to represent the residents of Regent Park. The Advisory Committee would have met three or four times during the thesis project to discuss the research approach and the variables therein, and the first meeting would have occurred before the interviews and focus groups take place. Unfortunately the Advisory Committee was not formed due to a lack of interest from both residents and community staff in Regent Park. This ultimately proved unsurprising, given the community's climate of being "over researched".

Ethical Considerations

My ethical considerations for my research led me to consciously be sensitive to the possibility of "otherizing" the residents of Regent Park in any stage of my research. I was ultimately concerned that my analytic processes (trained in traditional "bourgeois" psychology which quantifies humanity) may dehumanize the residents in my attempt to apply my proper, academic analysis. In applying community psychology principles throughout – e.g., participation (here, in the construction of knowledge), collaboration and partnership, caring – I felt I overcame this concern. This way of relating combined a humanist respect for research participants, with a strong and ongoing critically reflexive analysis of both myself as the researcher and of the data. Initially identifying my positionality, standpoint, ontology, research paradigm and desired approach for my research relationship, as well as and reflecting on these areas, has helped maintain this respectful position as a researcher.

Literature Review

My literature review centres on the argument for green space as an issue of social and environmental justice. Beginning with a review of the empirical literature on the positive psychological effects of green space, such as attention restoration and feelings of safety, I intend to introduce the role of structural determinism in individual and community well-being. There are four parts to my literature review. The first topic concerns green space and its relationship to individual and community health and well-being. This focus underlies my entire thesis: it is my intent to emphasize the health and well-being benefits of green space, particularly in low-income urban areas. With these benefits in mind, the presence or absence of green space in a given neighbourhood should be considered an important factor for neighbourhood well-being, and consequently a concern of distributive justice.

Second, I review the conceptual framework of environmental justice, drawing parallels between the movement and the community health and well-being of urban neighbourhoods. Primarily, this section is to present the argument that green space is an issue of environmental justice. While the main focus of the environmental justice research and action concerns adverse physical health effects from the environment, there is much opportunity to also include a focus on environmental factors that positively affect psychological and community health. These positive effects in turn should be considered a universal right to be distributed to all neighbourhoods, regardless of the characteristics of the population that inhabits them. The study of Regent Park pre-revitalization anchors my argument: if green space is demonstrated as a benefit to health and well-being, then its systematic absence due to discrimination based on neighbourhood income should be addressed as a concern of environmental justice.

The third topic is the economic aspect of community access to green space. As community psychologists we typically consider social issues from multiple ecological levels with the often understated goal of achieving a holistic analysis. Holistic analysis is something that we should hope to ultimately achieve through thorough qualitative and mixed methods research, however it is not often clearly indicated as a goal in published research. It is my explicit intention to contribute to the effort of holistic analysis by clearly linking relevant economic factors at the macrosystem level to the neighbourhood and its residents. In shifting towards a focus on the macrosystem – and in effect, the proximal and distal causes of many aspects of social and environmental injustice – I discuss the economic context of environmental and neighbourhood design. The economy and its ideology are emphasized in their functions of determining space, architecture, and social relations. The economic context is brought into a review of green space and well-being, because I hold that economics is the single most important determining factor in the spatial layout of neighbourhoods. This assumption is central to my review and is argued by a brief review of the economic determinism of the work of Karl Marx. The final topic in my review of the literature is community engagement and the process of community consultation in the revitalization of Regent Park. This topic is a secondary, though integral, concern of my thesis project as it is the embodiment of power dynamics in the process of neighbourhood revitalization. The role of the residents of the neighbourhood, Toronto Community Housing Corporation staff, and city officials illuminate the power dynamics within an urban public housing neighbourhood in Canada. Under this focus, this review will start to document the process of community consultation – to be continued in the research – and whether that process has accurately represented the priorities and needs of residents. A review of the community consultation process during the thesis project will serve as an example of the

influences and opportunities of Regent Park residents in the hopes that these dynamics will echo in other urban low-income communities across North America. The neighbourhood of Regent Park is not atypical, and its study will likely reverberate in many other similar contexts.

Green Space and Community Health and Well-Being

The restorative effects of nature have a tradition in Western culture. Reports of the rejuvenating effects of spending time in natural settings have been found in the writings of philosophers (e.g., Thoreau, 1892/1995), naturalists (e.g., Leopold, 1949), landscape architects (e.g., Olmsted, 1865/1968) (Kuo, 2001, p. 6) and conceptions of "garden cities" from the late 19th century (e.g., Howard, 1902/1946). This history, in combination with the recent North American environmentalist movements of the 1970s on, primes Western thought for the empirical valuation of the natural environment.

A critical focus of my thesis is on the evidenced individual and community health and well-being benefits of views and proximity to green space. Such observed benefits include increased social contact between neighbours, increased sense of community, attention restoration, stress reduction, and increased ability to manage life issues. In the following section I will present the evidence of these purported benefits and their corresponding pathways. These benefits will establish an important base for the remaining parts of the proposal.

The Restorative Effects of Green Space. Empirical studies in the field of environmental psychology provide evidence demonstrating that visiting, and even viewing photographs of, natural places have restorative cognitive and emotional effects (Bell, Greene, Fisher, & Baum, 2001). Bell and colleagues found two prominent explanations for these positive effects present in the literature: stress reduction and Attention Restoration Theory (ART). Both explanations for

the restorative effects of green space resulted from research programs that were initially developed as studies of landscape preference (ibid).

Stress reduction holds that responses include reduced physical stress, reduced aggression, and a restoration of energy and health (Bell et al.). From a functional evolutionary perspective, this explanation supports the notion that humanity should have a "biologically prepared affiliation for certain restorative natural settings, but no such prepared response to urban environments since they have generally affected only a few generations of human experience" (Bell et al., 2001, p. 48). Examples of empirical work supporting this explanation come from the work of Ulrich who, in several studies on human responses to vegetation, demonstrated that viewing a series of nature scenes could lessen the effects of stress (e.g., caused by taking university exams, viewing violent scenes), and that views of green space improve postsurgical recovery in hospitals (Ulrich, 1979; 1984; 1986; Ulrich, Dimberg & Driver, 1991).

The second prominent explanation, Attention Restoration Theory (ART), comes from the work of Kaplan and Kaplan (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995) and holds that the fascination experienced by restorative environments restores humanity's ability to consciously direct attention to life's challenges. For example, the experience of unintentional focus (i.e., fascination) on the sight of hundreds of leaves of a tree blowing in the wind will restore one's capacity for intentional focus. Unlike sights such as a busy street, a tree does not evoke much, if any, cognitive energy or thought. This form of "blank" attention only comes from sights of nature, which is restorative in offering an opportunity for effortless attention. Directed attention may be fragile and therefore important to recapture. Any task, even if pleasant, if sufficiently prolonged is likely to lead to a "directed attention fatigue". This fatigue therefore requires

recharging. Fascination, that is involuntary attention that requires little effort, provides this effortless attention.

Green Space, Community and Neighbourhood Social Ties. Kuo, Sullivan, Coley and Brunson (1998) intended to bring an environmental research design perspective to the topic of community health, namely through the concept of Neighbourhood Social Ties (NSTs). NSTs first became a topic of interest for community psychology (CP) in the 1970s, through the work on Sarason (1974) on psychological sense of community (PSOC). NSTs are essentially the social connections and relationships made amongst neighbours. Kuo and colleagues note "this has at least two benefits for community psychology: the potential for a fuller understanding of how neighborhood social ties develop, and new possibilities for community-building interventions" (Kuo et al., 1998, p. 825). This potential has been noted to a degree. Shinn (1996) also notes, in introducing the special issue of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* on Ecological Assessment, that the physical environment might constitute an important new focus for theory, research, and practice in CP.

The involvement of an environmental research-design perspective is a significant contribution to CP: it brings a broader perspective of variables into account that affect cognition, behaviour, and community. Within the ecological level of localities, if CP emphasized the role of the physical, natural, and structural environment on community health and well-being, there would be great potential to make very powerful empirical arguments that cover almost all possible factors involved. So while environmental factors are part of the CP literature, it is often a specific approach within a research study, not part and parcel of an ecological analysis or a holistic approach.

Kuo and colleagues claim that there is already considerable evidence to suggest that NSTs develop not just from the people involved, but from the setting. Their examination of the literature suggests that the effect of settings on NSTs is mediated through the physical setting's influence on the quantity and quality of informal social contact among neighbours. In addition, factors that affect NSTs have also been shown to affect the quantity and quality of informal social contact among neighbours. In turn, the quantity and quality of informal social contact among neighbours are critical to the creation of NSTs.

The Kuo et al. study was situated in an urban public housing community in the inner-city of Chicago, Illinois. Their findings indicate that the more vegetation associated with a resident's apartment and building, the more they socialized with neighbours, the more familiar with nearby neighbours they were, and the greater their sense of community. Therefore, common green space has the proximal effect of increased NSTs near that space and also the distal effect of a greater sense of safety and adjustment. The most plausible interpretation entertained by Kuo and colleagues is that the level of greenness of a common space affects its use, and common green space allows opportunities for individuals to have informal social contact, creating NSTs. Supporting this explanation, Brunson, Kuo, and Sullivan (2001) found that inner-city residents who spent time outside in green common spaces – engaging in activities such as gardening – were more likely than their neighbours who did not engage in such activities to form strong social bonds with their neighbours.

Another example of the role of green space in forming social ties comes from a study of inner-city older adults. Like Kuo et al. (1998), Kweon, Sullivan, and Riley (1998) also tested the relationship between varying amounts of exposure to green common spaces and the strength of social ties among neighbours. Their study of older adults in an inner-city public housing

neighbourhood found that use of green outdoor common spaces predicted both the strength of NSTs and sense of community. The authors posit that the increased sense of community found in this study is mediated by higher levels of neighbourhood social integration, that is, NSTs.

What Inhibits Neighbourhood Social Ties? In reviewing the literature on what facilitates and encourages the building of community health, it is also important to consider what discourages the same phenomenon. According to Kuo and colleagues (1998), crowded, dangerous, and noisy settings all appear to inhibit the formation of NSTs. Crowding and high-density living environments have been linked to poor social relations in a variety of communities (Keane, 1991; McCarthy & Saegert, 1978; Tbgnoli, 1987, as cited in Kuo et al., 1998). Settings in which there is high crime or just the high fear of crime are associated with a lack of neighbourhood cohesion, and while in noisy or loud settings individuals are less likely to contribute to community activities (Cohen & Lezak, 1977, as cited in Kuo et al., 1998). A study by Riger, LeBailly, and Gordon (1981) found that individuals living in a dangerous neighbourhood who had no NSTs felt less safe and had more fear of crime than individuals who had some ties to their neighbours.

A study by Perkins and Taylor (1996) on fear of crime and ecological assessments of community disorder strongly indicated that the residents who were more fearful of crime in their neighbourhood also perceived more disorder *and* were surrounded by more physical disorder – that is, litter and graffiti – than their neighbours. Perkins and Taylor also found that fear of crime is linked negatively with NSTs. Crime, physical disorder, and community disorder are primarily characteristics of low-income neighbourhoods and therefore economic forces are of great importance to understanding this issue.

Green Space, Urbanity, Poverty, and Health. Kuo (2001) examined the effects of green space in the outdoor environment of a public housing building on the tenants' psychological resources "likely to be depleted in the struggle against poverty" (p. 6). Acknowledging Kaplan's (1995) Attention Restoration Theory as a probable explanation for the cognitive effects of nature, Kuo examined the empirical work supporting this theory. In 14 out of 16 studies examined, one or more of the predicted effects were statistically significant. Kuo notes that there are several compelling aspects to these studies: they have persistent positive findings in the face of low power, as 10 of the studies were in field settings in which there no experimenter controls over the conditions, and half of the studies used small samples.

One challenge raised in the research on the effects of nature is to determine what forms and dose of nature are effective. In response, Kuo (2001) examined a residential area with very little green space in an attempt to identify the effectiveness of a small dose of green space. She found that in the 145 adults who were randomly assigned to a number of architecturally identical apartment buildings, those who lived nearby some vegetation were significantly more effective in managing major life issues than those who lived near no vegetation. As hypothesized by Attention Restoration Theory, residents who lived in greener settings demonstrated reliably better scores on measures of attention, scores on a measure of effective life issue management were directly proportional to attentional performance, and the relationship between attentional performance and life functioning scores remained significant and large even when vegetation was controlled.

Mitchell and Popham (2007) examined the relationship between the percentage of green space in an area and the standardised rate of self-reported poor health in several neighbourhoods in England. In addition to this relationship, the authors explored whether this relationship holds

for areas with different combinations of urbanity and levels of income. They found that a greater proportion of green space was associated with better health, as measured by the Sex Standardized Morbidity Rate (SMR). This association varied, however, according to a combination of area income depravity and urbanity. The authors found that a greater proportion of green space was associated with better health in all urban areas and rural low-income areas studied – 32 482 low level super output areas (LSOA), which are a new geographical unit for reporting small-area statistics in England. Each area studied has a mean population of 1500, and an average area of 4 km squared.

The authors found a positive effect of green space on health in all urban areas and rural low-income areas, but no significant effect between green space and health in higher income suburban and higher income rural areas. One possible explanation offered by the authors is that higher income residents have their own gardens and their own personal green space, such as front lawns and backyards, and thus municipal green space is less important to them.

Overall, the authors found that the relationship between green space and area SMR were weak compared to the relationship between area SMR and other area characteristics, namely income deprivation and urbanity. These findings therefore emphasize both the larger effects of a small amount of green space, and the great importance of green space in low-income urban neighbourhoods.

Another important consideration in the discussion of green space, urbanity, poverty and health concerns the role of density in one's satisfaction with one's neighbourhood. While studying the effects of density on neighbourhood satisfaction, Kearney (2006) found that actual density – a common characteristic of low-income neighbourhoods – might not affect neighbourhood satisfaction as much as people may think. The presence of shared outdoor green

space – particularly the opportunities to visit these areas and the nature views they afford – was found to be more important to neighbourhood satisfaction than density.

The implications of this finding are two-fold. One, living in dense urban environments – which are often low-income – does not afford much opportunity for common green areas. This minimal opportunity, therefore, demands a level of efficiency in design. If small amounts of green space are found to also be effective in producing benefits, such as attention restoration, then it is plausible in terms of social action to advocate for minimal amounts of green space to be introduced into low-income urban neighbourhoods.

The second implication is that this finding implies that in regards to community well-being, density is less important than access to green space. This finding means that high density urban neighbourhoods can still experience the individual and community benefits of green space, regardless of the potential impacts of density on their health and well-being.

These findings at the level of neighbourhoods, in conjunction with the research reviewed that implicates green space in the facilitation of individual and community health, warrants a discussion of the factors involved in the distribution of green space. The most relevant concept concerning the distribution of environmental resources, as well as environmental hazards, at both the level of individuals and communities is environmental justice.

Environmental Justice

Another area that is useful to the discussion of individual and community health and well-being concerns the physical health of a community. Using a holistic approach to health and well-being (Circle of Health, 1996), the physical health of a community is considered inexorably linked to its psychological health and well-being. Given the ecological analysis that I employ in this thesis project, I conclude that the concept of environmental justice is most appropriate for its

articulation of community health at the level of individuals, microsystems, organizations, localities, and macrosystems. The comparative approach of environmental justice complements the ecological approach to my case study and further serves to frame issues of physical and psychological community health as issues of justice.

In addition to its analytic similarity, environmental justice provides a conception in which to discuss the role of justice in the distribution of green space. One definition of environmental justice is

> the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2009)

The breadth of the movement covers all steps of the decision-making process on the design and composition of the natural and built environment. It is in this regard especially that the case study of Regent Park and its revitalization is an example of environmental justice in action.

There are three aspects of environmental justice: the meaning of disproportionate impacts; the legal, public policy, and research challenges; and the community-based collaborative problem-solving strategies and tools needed to address environmental injustices (Lee, 2005). Disproportionate impacts refer to inequities in levels of harmful environmental exposures, deficiencies in services or benefits, or differentials in a community's capacity to withstand harms. The components of disproportionate impact are: proximity to pollution sources, unique exposure pathways, and susceptible and sensitive populations. Unique exposure pathways tend to exist because of a community's socioeconomic status or cultural practice. For example, the waters in Native reserves in Ontario – from which many communities still engage in subsistence fishing – have been polluted for decades, such as the communities of Grassy Narrows, Kashechewan (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008), and Aamjiwnaang (Mackenzie,

Lockridge, & Keith, 2005). Susceptibility and sensitivity, in the component of susceptible and sensitive populations, involves both intrinsic factors, such as age and genetics, and acquired factors, such as health care access and nutrition. Multiple and cumulative effects (also under the meaning of disproportionate impacts) are likely to be present in marginalized and underserved communities, from poor living conditions to living downwind and downstream. Social vulnerability, a final factor under the meaning of disproportionate impacts, refers to marginalized and underserved communities with numerous disadvantages that may exacerbate the effect of environmental exposures on health. Such exposure could affect a community's ability to prevent, endure, or recover from the effects of environmental harm.

Environmental Racism and Community Health. Greenburg (1993) distinguishes between two forms of equity. Outcome equity involves the balanced spatial and temporal distribution of benefits and burdens. Process equity involves the application of equitable environmental health, legal, economic, and political criteria to environmental policy. Northridge (1997) argues that these principles are insufficient to protect the public's health, especially those who are most vulnerable, by failing to address systemic issues of power that also saturate environmental protection. The lack of attention paid to the inescapable social construction of history, industry and decision-making will inevitably perpetuate its power dynamics and inequalities. These power dynamics are central to the focus on the "who" in the discussion of environmental justice. The social factors involved in environmental health cannot be divorced without building an incomplete picture of the nature of an environmental health concern. Examining discrepancies in rates of environmental hazard exposure among different communities by ethnic or racial identity, for example, will demonstrate that there is a social motive present that cannot be explained by

chance. Northridge (1997) argues that the core issue at hand in environmental justice is the racial segregation that occurs in most urban areas in the United States and Canada.

In the Canadian context, however, racial segregation looks notably different. In contrast to the United States where Black and Latino communities have been spatially segregated and marginalized, in Canada this segregation primarily affects New Canadians ("immigrants") and First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008). Regent Park is a neighbourhood with eight different ethno-cultural groups represented, many of which are composed of New Canadians (Meagher & Boston, 2003). This characteristic, in addition to the segregation due to its low income level, submits the neighbourhood to practices of, and conceptions based in, racism that exist at systemic levels. The factors influencing Canadian segregation are less straight forward and involve, on one hand, provincial and municipal settlement patterns, and on the other, the federal governance of natural resources, pollution and the regulation of both market and industry, and the federal legitimation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. On these levels of macrosystem and localities, many influences are out of citizens' control, and therefore subject to the influence of political ideology and economics.

Environmental Justice and Green Space. What is missing from the environmental justice movement and its literature is a focus on the systemic everyday injustices of marginalized communities: the impacts of the physical space in which these communities live their lives. Granted, the focus I propose shifts from individual physical health impacts to community-level impacts. The approach I am advocating takes a psychological approach – not to mention a more complex environmental deterministic route – towards disproportionate environmental health impacts on communities. But, as the literature on green space and health clearly demonstrates,

the simple absence of green space has notable impacts on the health and well-being of communities.

I argue that the presence or absence of green space in a community is an issue of environmental justice for two reasons. One, the presence or absence of green space has community health and well-being implications. These implications therefore form the basis for a much-needed focus on the distribution of benefits as it concerns environmental justice. The environmental justice movement has primarily focused on the distribution of environmental hazards and harms, while ignoring the distribution of environmental benefits and positives (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008). The inclusion of the distribution of benefits within the movement would bring about more constructive and positive change, in conjunction with responses to, and struggles against, environmental harms. Two, the absence of green space is an issue that is disproportionately affecting low-income urban neighbourhoods in North America.

The case of Regent Park is one of environmental injustice because, like many other marginalized low-income neighbourhoods, it is characterized by high density and minimal green space. This minimal green space is both specific and important to low-income urban neighbourhoods. Minimal green space is specific to Regent Park because of the nature of low-income and public housing: high density with little private space, let alone private green space. In contrast to middle- and high-income neighbourhoods, the lack of frontyards, backyards and personal gardens all emphasize the importance of public green space – or as Mitchell and Popham (2007) put it, municipal green space. As mentioned earlier in the review of literature on green space, urbanity, poverty and health, public green space has the largest impact on low-income neighbourhoods who lack any other form of it. The health benefits are therefore specific to low-income areas. These benefits have great importance to the public housing neighbourhood

of Regent Park, and transferability and relevance to all other urban low-income or public housing neighbourhoods in North America.

Historic, Social and Economic Context

History leading to the revitalization. Known to many as "the largest, most notoriously ill-planned public housing development in Canada" (Meagher & Boston, 2003, p.5), Regent Park's 2100 rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units span a radius of 69 acres in the east end of downtown Toronto, Ontario. Spanning from Parliament Street over to River Street, and Gerrard Street down to Shuter Street, the neighbourhood is home to over 7000 people, 60% of whom are New Canadians, resulting in eight major language or ethno-cultural communities being represented (Ibid). Using Census data, the Community Engagement Team, employed by TCHC to construct and oversee the community consultation process, examined the most common languages spoken and the most common countries of origin to determine the most prominent cultural groups in the neighbourhood. These major ethno-cultural groups were identified as: Chinese (both Mandarin- and Cantonese-speaking), Vietnamese, Somali, Tamil, Hispanic, Filipino, Black, and English-speaking Canadians of Western-European descent (Ibid., p.18). The changes undergoing in this diverse neighbourhood involve tearing down and rebuilding each building and adding new units, phase by phase; the addition of social infrastructure (e.g., an aquatics centre and new community centre) will transform it from a public housing only neighbourhood to a mixed income neighbourhood.

The political climate from the inception of Regent Park to its current day revitalization has shifted significantly in the past 50 years. From the particular post-World War II climate of the mid- and late-1940s, Regent Park was built in 1948, during a period when Western governments at all levels were investing in rebuilding social and economic infrastructure.

During the war, there was a significant housing shortage in many urban centres, and for years afterward there were notable veteran organizations, unions, and social groups pushing for government to put more money into housing (Bacher, 1993). Coupled with this pressure from the grassroots, it was generally believed in North American policy at the time that the post-war era would bring about a similar economic downturn as in the 1930s. In response to these concerns, governments began to invest more in housing. Although this investment was primarily into home ownership and development, this Keynesian era of the late 1940s through the 1960s was a political climate in which low levels of federal investment in public housing was considered reasonable and desirable (Purdy, 2004).

Ironically, given the neighbourhood's current reputation as a "ghetto", during its initial construction the development of Regent Park was considered a "slum clearance" of the southern part of the Cabbagetown neighbourhood (Purdy 2004; Matson, 1949; Hopwood & Rose, 1949). The neighbourhood, along with a growing portion of the downtown core, has since the late 1940s become increasingly gentrified, leaving Regent Park to become an isolated and almost out of place low-income housing development within a larger higher income neighbourhood (see Figure 1 for a map of income distribution in Toronto). The first body to oversee public housing in Toronto was the Housing Authority of Toronto (HAT) – created to direct "slum clearance" and the construction of public housing – created by the City just one year prior (in 1947) to the construction of Regent Park (Purdy, 2004). In 1949, residents moved into the new Regent Park North (RPN), primarily composed of three-story walk-up buildings and row houses. The whole RPN development was not completed until 1957. Regent Park South was not completed until 1959, when it was opened for residents, and was characterized by high-rise buildings.

Space, Urban Planning, and Economics

Spacing can be intentional with specific intended consequences. For example, the revolution of the ordinary street-bench design occurred not as a means to allow people their own personal seating space by default, but as a means to prevent homeless people from sleeping on them (Davis, 1992). From Los Angeles to Toronto, urban public space in the city can be very intentional. Spacing can also be unintentional but have significant unintended consequences, such as the presence of common green space and its unintended effects on NSTs, feelings of safety, and sense of community. The forces that create spatial organization are of critical importance to understanding the nature and outcomes of that organization. Community psychology need only further emphasize the macrosystem level of analysis to capture the full extent of the effect of ecologies and environments on community.

How Does This Relate to Economics? As mentioned in the Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman (2007) textbook on community psychology, macrosystems form contexts within which all of the other levels function. Dalton and colleagues use the example of economic climates affecting businesses; however, I argue that the economy saturates most levels of human life to varying degrees, not just what is clearly economically tied. Economic forces influence all other ecological levels primarily by their priority in life: they determine how adults spend their days, the standard of living of an individual or a country, the opportunities afforded to an individual or a country, the technological advances of a culture, and the power structures both within and across nations.

To illustrate my argument, I will use theories from political science on political economy – namely global politics, global political economy and international relations – that provide similar levels of analysis to that of CP's ecological levels. Specifically, I will draw on Marxist

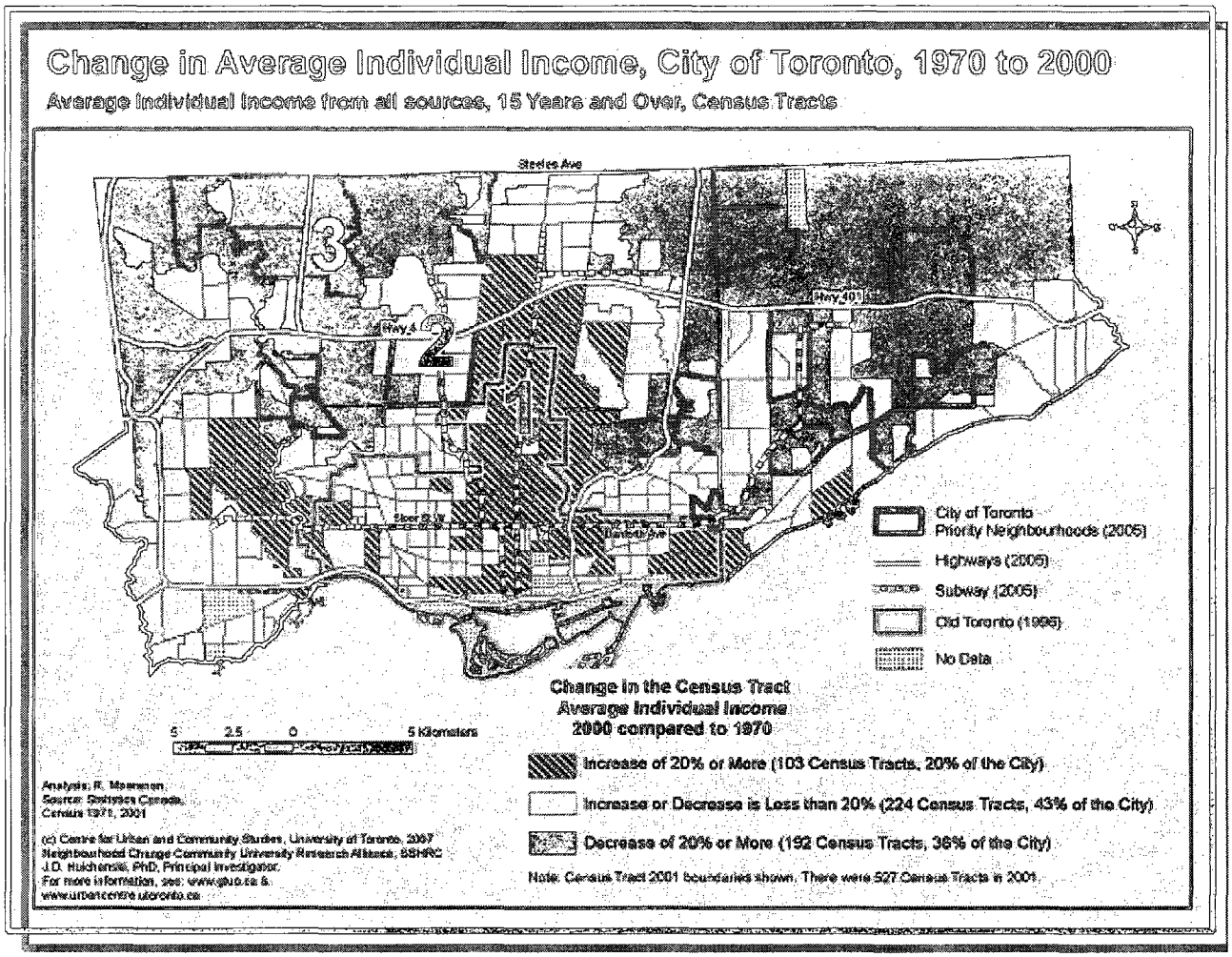
theories of international relations not only for their relevance in explaining spatial organization, but because "the vast bulk of [Marx's] theoretical efforts consisted of a painstaking analysis of capitalism as a mode of production, and the basic elements of his account have not been bettered" (Hobden & Jones, 2001, p. 201). Marxist theories are strikingly similar to CP's modes of analysis first because of the values in mind. Marx, famously, was committed to participation and anti-oppression, which are central to the aims of social justice which I hold is central to CP. Second, Marx promoted the view that the social world should be analyzed as a totality, thus holistically. Finally, central to Marxist thought is the materialist conception of history (Marx & Engels, 1848/1967). This conception holds that the processes of historical change are essentially a reflection of the economic development of a society. CP advocates a historical analysis of social issues, and within its macrosystem level of analysis promotes the study of economic forces and institutions as influencing all other levels. In using this breadth of analysis to study the revitalization of Regent Park, my intention was to capture its totality.

Wallerstein's (1979) World-System Theory is the most prominent and accepted account of global political economy and international economic power dynamics amongst Marxist theories of international relations (Hodben & Jones, 2001). It has become a flourishing sub-field of both Marxism and international relations theory. World-System Theory presents a political economy and sociological theory that elucidates the role of the ideology of neo-liberal capitalism in its spatial forms across nations. Building originally from Lenin's account of imperialism, World-System Theory maintains his two core assumptions. First, all politics, international and domestic, occur within the framework of a capitalist world economy. Second, states are not the only important actors in global politics; social classes are also important (Hobden & Jones, 2001).

According to Wallerstein (1979), the dominant form of social organization has been what he terms "world-systems". The modern world-system is an example of a world economy, as opposed to a world empire, and originated around the turn of the sixteenth century – the timing which is in line with what many would call the origination of capitalism, however, in its more overt and simple form of mercantilism. Central to the character of this world economy is that it can be described in terms of space and time. The spatial dimension involves the differing economic roles played by different regions of the world-economy. This spatial dimension is characterized in terms of core-periphery and semi-periphery. The semi-peripheral zone plays an intermediate role in the world-system, holding some characteristic of the core and some of the periphery. Because of this hybridism, the semi-periphery plays a particularly important economic and political role. It provides a source of labour, counteracting the upward pressure on wages in the core, and provides an opportunity to house those industries that no longer function profitably in the core.

World-System Theory posits that the three zones of the world economy are linked together in an exploitative relationship where wealth is drained from the periphery to the core. Given this interlinking, the positions of the zones are expected to become increasingly entrenched, resulting in the increasing polarization of rich and poor – a trend that has been verified in the past decade in many developing countries and even clearly in the clear economic segregation within the city of Toronto (See Figure 1 below). What is important to note about the location of Regent Park in Figure 1 is that it comprises the small dark square (representing City 3, low-income) in the southeast end of the lined City 1 (representing high-income). Up until the revitalization, Regent Park was an almost anomalous low-income neighbourhood within an

Figure 1: Mapping Income Distribution in Toronto



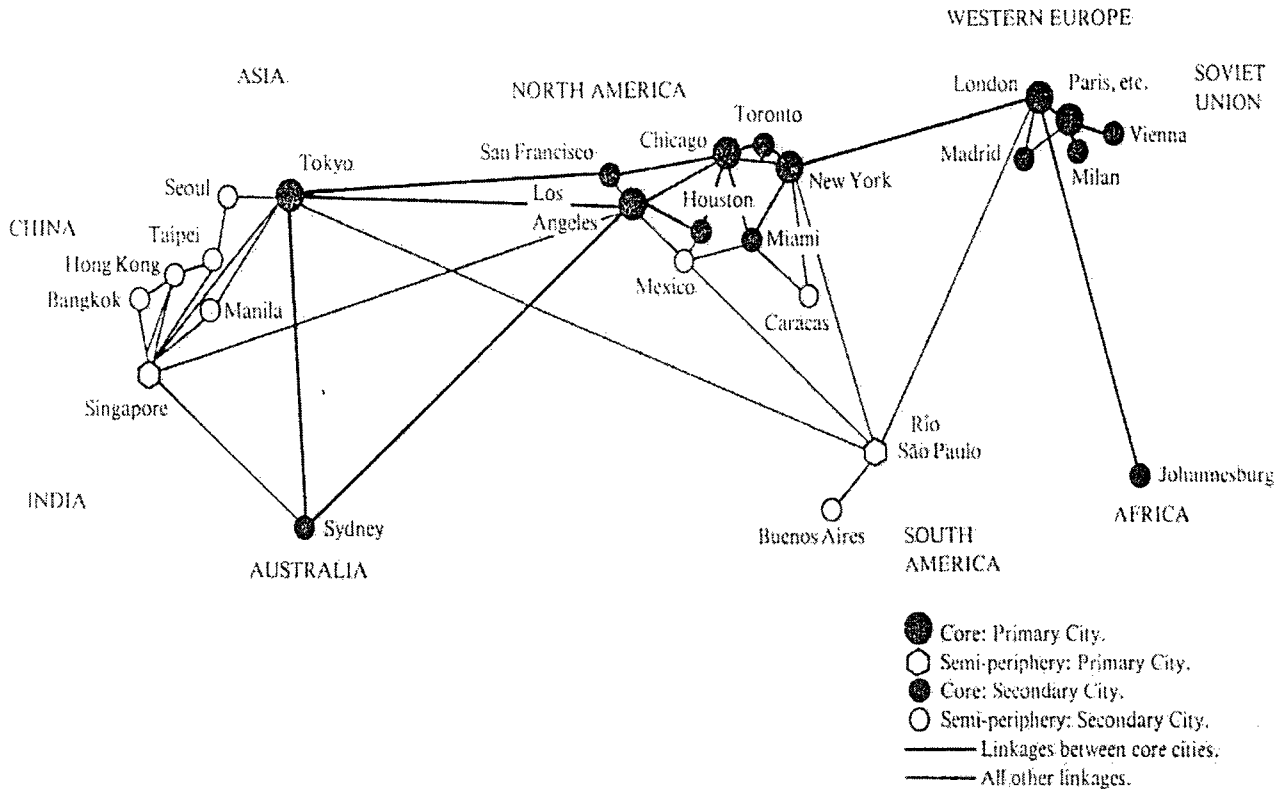
(Hulchanski, 2007)

increasingly gentrified, and thus high-income, downtown core. These temporal dimensions of world-systems play a critical role in understanding the material and social dynamics over time.

The World City Hypothesis by John Friedmann (1986) is nested in World-System Theory and proposes a concise method of understanding the spatial aspects of global capitalism at the city level. Friedmann presents the well-evidenced hypothesis that the organization of international markets forms hemispheric systems that are facilitated through major cities, creating different specialized roles for different localities. Cities are "nodal points" through which nations direct their resources and conduct business. This economic function creates a spatial organization of labour and production based in the city's role in the global economy.

The World City Hypothesis contains seven interrelated theses. The first, third, and sixth of these are of most relevance to the case of Regent Park. The first thesis is that "the form and extent of city's integration with the world economy, and the functions assigned to the city in the new spatial division of labour, will be decisive for any structural changes occurring within it" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 70). This thesis means that within this division, different localities perform specialized roles. Many metropolitan communities perform headquarter functions, or serve as a financial centre, or facilitate the regional or national economies within the world-system – in the case of Toronto, it plays all these roles. More specifically, contemporary urban change is seen as a process of adaptation to external changes. The structure of metropolitan labour markets and the physical form of cities can be explained in reference to a global process of capitalist production and accumulation.

Figure 2: The Hierarchy of World Cities



(Friedmann, 1986)

The second thesis is that "key cities throughout the world are used by global capital as 'basing points' in the spatial organization and articulation of production and markets. The resulting linkages make it possible to arrange world cities into a complex spatial hierarchy" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 71). The hierarchical linkages of these world cities reflects the workings of the global economy facilitated through key nodal points, perpetuating and also reifying the processes of global capitalism. In keeping with Wallerstein's World-System Theory, world cities are inherently linked to the world economy, affecting and being affected by its fluctuations.

The third thesis is that "the global control functions of world cities are directly reflected in the structure and dynamics of their production sectors and employment" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 74). This thesis holds that world cities are uniquely characterized by a dichotomized labour force: there is a high percentage of professionals specialized in the aforementioned control functions of the economy, and there is a "vast army" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 74) of low-skilled workers involved in manufacturing, personal services, hotel, tourist, and entertainment industries that exist to cater to the specialized professionals and higher socio-economic classes.

Theses four and five concern the concentration and accumulation of international capital, and the trends towards influxes of domestic and international migrant workers. Thesis six states "world city formation brings into focus the major contradictions of industrial capitalism – among them spatial and class polarization" (Friedmann, 1986, p. 76). Spatial polarization occurs at three scales. The first level is on a global scale, expressed by an increasing gulf in wealth, income and power between peripheral economies and a smaller number of rich countries at the core. The second is on a regional scale, where core countries experience relatively smooth income gradients – where the difference between high and low income regions is often 1:3 – and the semi-periphery experiences greater gradients, often 1:10 (Friedmann, 1986, p. 76). The third

scale is metropolitan, with spatially segregated inner-city ghettos and ethnic working-class neighbourhoods. This spatial polarization occurs as a result of class polarization. World cities experience class polarization with three principal facets: large income gaps between transnational elites and low-skilled workers, large-scale immigration from rural areas, and structural trends in the evolution of kinds of jobs. From these facets, Friedmann argues that the basic structural reason for social polarization is from the evolution of jobs, which in itself is the result of the increasing capital intensity of production.

Toronto in the Domestic and Global Economy. Toronto is a world city: it is a "nodal point" in that it has a high concentration of corporate, financial and industrial offices that facilitate global capitalism, characterized by a "disproportionate national share of business and commercial services" (Todd, 1995, p. 192). Given that concentration, there are many trickle-down jobs in strategic localities that support this work. The city serves as "Canada's undisputed financial and commercial services centre" (Todd, 1995, p. 197). As Friedmann's third thesis states, a small number of expanding sectors are the driving force behind urban social change and development. In Toronto, the service sector growth has been the primary fuel of urban economic development since the 1960s (Todd, 1995).

It should be emphasized that Toronto's main source of economic development and support over the past 50 years is one that thrives on precarious jobs and high turnover rates, minimum wage, and few, if any, opportunities for advancement or pay raises. The effects of this expanding sector are social: large numbers of individuals working at low-income in Canada's largest metropolitan city, resulting in a tie to a city in which they can afford homes in specific lower rent neighbourhoods. Given the trend of market and rental rates in Toronto over the past 38 years, the downtown core and lakeshore areas are almost exclusively the domain of mid to

high-income neighbourhoods (Hulchanski, 2007). With limited economic ability, those employed in Toronto's vast service sector have become increasingly stratified and segregated into the suburbs of Toronto – Etobicoke (primarily north) and Scarborough – and areas facing gentrification in the downtown core, such as Cabbagetown, and Parkdale (Hulchanski, 2007). Unlike mid to high-income individuals and families, those employed in the service sector cannot afford to move to the Greater Toronto Area's (GTA) commuter suburbs of Mississauga and Richmond Hill.

In a review of National Film Board (NFB) documentaries on Regent Park – one from 1953 and one from 1994 – Purdy (2005) argues that the "territorial stigmatization" of the inner-city neighbourhood seen in both films are not just ideological and spatial representations, but represent and reinforce the actual social and spatial divisions within the city. Building from the work of urban geographers and historians who have established that "places are sites of material social relations as well as culture [and] ideology" (Purdy, 2005, p. 530), Purdy recounts that Regent Park was placed by "slumologists" (Purdy, 2005, p. 529) within Cabbagetown, a working class area of the city, in a particularly blighted area. The segregation of low-income community is evident already in where the city deems them appropriate. The siting of Regent Park from its inception in 1949 was already desired to be spatially segregated due to dominant ideologies and beliefs about the nature of low-income communities: "The Cabbagetown area razed to build Regent Park, and its residents, were subject to such a nefarious representation from the 1930s onward, which assisted the state and the reform movement in making their case for slum clearance and public housing" (Purdy, 2005, p. 530).

With all of the influence that economics can have on job opportunities, the distribution of income within a city, and neighbourhood design, the opportunity to personally control the look

and design of one's neighbourhood is clearly an economically determined privilege. This relationship between income level and social power is primarily what makes Regent Park so relevant to other low-income neighbourhoods and communities in Canada, if not North America. Living in public housing means that a) you rent, and so the maintenance and aesthetic renovations of your home are out of your control; b) your landscaping is out of your control; and c) you rely on the municipal government to subsidize your rent. With the community consultation process, this privilege of control over one's home had been offered to the residents of Regent Park. Toronto Community Housing, therefore, inadvertently offered more than just a promise kept to the residents for revitalization, or to their mandate of responsibly public housing; they offered economic privilege, and influence – if not control – over the physical factors that affect community health and well-being. The community consultation of Regent Park offered the residents social power, something that most low-income people have little access to.

The literature reviewed in this section on the economic macrosystem and its effects on the spatial dimensions of the "world city" of Toronto elucidate the need to incorporate this level of analysis into the case study of a changing neighbourhood. Indeed, this level of analysis is where Regent Park can be seen as transferable to other low-income neighbourhoods and communities. The residents of Regent Park are as much shaped by their personal life-challenges as they are by the domestic economy. The domestic and global economies in large part determine one's place of employment, home architecture, neighbourhood layout, and community social and green infrastructure. While the force of the global economy varies from locality to locality, it is ultimately the same force with predictable spatial and social impacts. The layout of the buildings of Regent Park, for example, has been shown to be as intentional as the placement of the community.

> "The City of Toronto put a question on the 1947 municipal election ballot asking voters (at this time, only property owners and long-term leaseholders) for financial and political support for a large-scale public housing project; 62 percent of the voters answered in the affirmative (Rose, 1958). Two years later, Regent Park North, the ground-breaking effort in Canadian public housing, would open its doors amid much fanfare and celebration by City Hall and the reform lobby" (Purdy, 2005, p. 529).

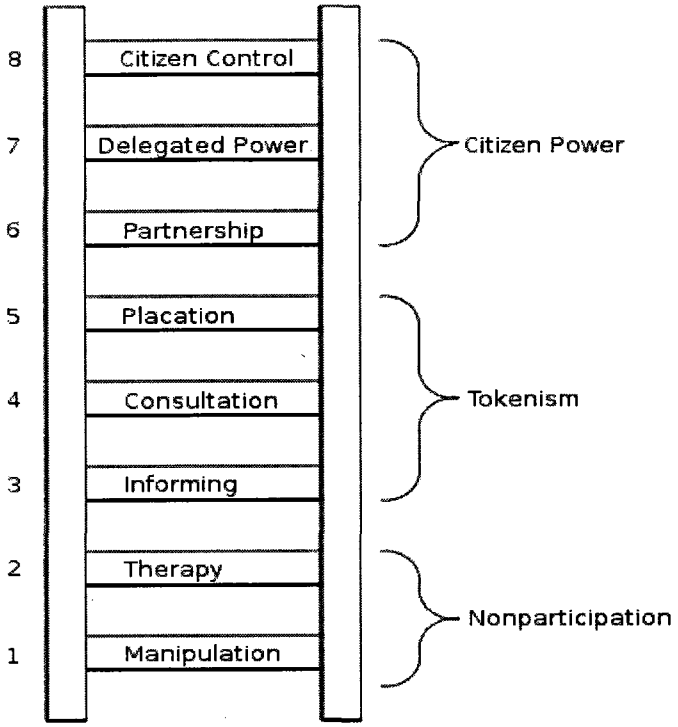
Given the significance of the economic and structural factors affecting the community of RP, the opportunity for residents to be actively consulted in their needs and priorities for the redevelopment and revitalization is an important case of community engagement. The following section will briefly overview the concept of community engagement and begin the discussion of its relevance and importance to Regent Park.

Community Engagement

Typologies of Community Engagement. Community engagement is a concept understood in multiple ways under multiple names, e.g., "civic engagement", or "political participation" (Bracht & Tsouro, 1990). Elementally, the concept centres on the notion of public participation, where individuals are engaged in direct opportunities in social or political activities that should ideally involve proportional decision making (International Association for Public Participation, 2007). In reviewing the many different typologies of community engagement described in the literature, it seems as if Arnstein's (1969) "ladder of participation" is one of the most established and commonly used ones (Cornwall, 2008; Green & Kreuter, 1999) and also one that is relevant to the community engagement process in Regent Park.

Arnstein's "ladder of participation" examines typologies of community engagement (see Figure 3 below) and distinguishes between three levels: non participation, tokenism, and citizen power. The most important distinction in this conception is between the middle, tokenism, and

Figure 3: Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



(Arnstein, 1969)

the top levels, citizen power. Tokenism refers to actions such as informing and consultation, distinguished from citizen power which involves partnership, delegated power and citizen control (Cornwall, 2008). Another important aspect of the community engagement processes is the issue of social power, as Cully and Hughley (2008) have pointed out,. These authors propose a framework of social power that involves three dimensions: superior bargaining resources, control of participation and debate, and shaping interests. Superior bargaining resources refers to the ability of the more powerful agent to use tangible and intangible resources in the negotiation of key issues to exert control. Control of participation and debate refers to the ability of the more powerful agent to determine the topics up for debate or discussion, as well as who is involved in the process. Finally, shaping interests involves the more powerful agent's control and dissemination of myths and ideology to influence and constrict the thoughts, desires and interests of the relatively powerless agent. This conceptualization of community engagement is relevant to the community consultation in RP because it expands upon Arnstein's model and identifies important distinctions at the highest level of the ladder, citizen power. Culley and Hughley define social power in the context of community engagement and discuss the role of the agents involved and how their respective social power impacts the overall power dynamic. A more comprehensive discussion of this framework and its implications for Regent Park follows in the discussion section.

Community Engagement in Regent Park. The Regent Park Revitalization plan was launched in 2002, and ratified by city authorities in 2003 (Purdy, 2005). In the words of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), the Regent Park Revitalization Study, presented in December 2002 to residents, "had incorporated a strong community engagement process to ensure that tenants were able to shape its content" (Revitalization Study and Action

Plan, (n.d.), para. 2). More than 2,000 residents, community agencies and financial, design and planning experts contributed to the plan. From this study, TCHC staff, with input from residents and other stakeholders, created an Action Plan that embodies the study's recommendations.

The community engagement process in this study and in planning for the Revitalization were summarized in a Community Engagement Team Report. The engagement of residents began with TCHC and its consultants taking the approach of hiring within the major ethnocultural and demographic communities within Regent Park. These individuals were employed as community animators and were involved in all facets of the project, "from process design to materials development" (Meagher & Boston, 2003, p. 5). Community animators, who were already situated within the social network of the neighbourhood and of their respective communities, nurtured networks to transmit information and facilitate community feedback. The Community Engagement Team Report states that this approach won the trust of the residents.

The engagement process involved an environmental scan and three rounds of consultation, where each round became increasingly focused on specific issues amongst residents concerning land-use planning and how they would be affected. Each round of consultation had its results posted for public review in the form of a public meeting, which also sought input for the following phase of consultation. All meetings and communications during this project were conducted in eight languages, with actively offered aid by the community animators to residents accessing information.

The result of the engagement process was a list of priorities from the community. These priorities included: the location of and functions of green space, the size of local streets, the speed and volume of traffic, access to parking, access to public services, access to community space, access to controlled communal space, access to community space within residential

buildings, distribution of commercial properties, distribution of subsidized and market units, and the location of high-rise buildings (Meagher & Boston, 2003, p. 51). From this list it is clear that issues of space is the most prominent and clear theme in the list. The residents of Regent Park themselves have identified the role of natural and built spaces on their lives and on their community.

It is from this list of priorities that the focus on proximity to and amount of green space is further studied in this context. The residents of Regent Park have identified their priorities, and therefore the process of the revitalization needs to be held accountable to them. In contrasting the results from the Community Engagement Team Report with the data from my research, my analysis will examine the extent to which the TCHC has respected the articulated priorities of the residents up until the current phase, the beginning of Phase II.

Research Approach

Research Questions

At this point in my literature review, I have found very few articles in community psychology that explicitly address green space as a factor in community health and well-being. Alternately, in my review of the literature in environmental psychology, there is a gap between accounting for structural and environmental factors that affect human behaviour and individual health, and the implications for community health and well-being. My drive to focus on green space in this discipline is to bridge the gap between studying the environment-behaviour relationship and studying the social determinants, and community embodiments, of health and well-being. I have emphasized the factors of the physical and natural environment in community psychology, and my desire to advocate on behalf of urban neighbourhoods with little to no green space.

I therefore intended to address six areas of concern: resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, uses for green space, the benefits of green space, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization (see Appendix A for my Methods Table). My research questions were: 1) Beginning in 2002, what has been the process of the revitalization of Regent Park? What have been the inspirations and catalysts for the revitalization? 2) What are the power dynamics involved in the revitalization of Regent Park? What has been the community consultation process? Has that process accurately represented the residents? 3) How is the history of Regent Park, pre- and post-revitalization, an issue of environmental justice? 4) What is the relevance of revitalization? What can we learn from the revitalization of a low-income, ethno-culturally diverse, urban neighbourhood?

Methods

Ecological Case Study

Case studies present concrete, practical, and context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2001). As methods should be tailored to the research topics they explore, I determined that an ecological case study was the most comprehensive and appropriate means of study for the social and political context of the revitalization process and dynamics of Regent Park.

The contextualization of the case study has been achieved through the repeated analysis of all data through Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological levels of analysis, using its more current articulation from Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman (2007). This mode of analysis has involved the conception of social reality into multiple levels: individuals, microsystems, organizations, localities, macrosystems (Dalton et al., 2007). This analysis has been applied to both interviews with residents and staff within Regent Park and archival data. In my review of the literature, this extent of ecological analysis in a case study approach has not been conducted to date.

An important characteristic of the case study method is the use of multiple sources of data in an effort to increase the credibility of research findings (Yin, 2003). In addition to the interviews mentioned above, I have also collected and analyzed documents and archival records from the community, the Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative (RPNI), and TCHC. I have also analyzed other sources such as major and independent media coverage, reports, and documentaries. This kind of information has served to contextualize and situate the findings obtained through interviews, and has contributed to the ecological analysis of the data overall.

Given my research questions and my epistemological approach, my method is a case study approach (Yin, 2003), wherein all aspects have been contextualized within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological levels of analysis. My method was therefore an "ecological case study" which used a hermeneutic approach to personal interviews and focus groups and a critical ecological perspective on archival data. The archival data included publically available pre-revitalization research conducted by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), such as a Community Engagement Study and a Social Development Plan, as well as local news reports and documentaries from both major news corporations and independent or community-based sources.

My approach to the "ecological case study" was a critical hermeneutic approach and involved the historical, political, economic, and social contextualizing of the experiences of the community of Regent Park. Hermeneutics worked to provide a framework where my research could conceptualize and categorize the "lifeworld" of participants – the world as it is immediately experienced pre-reflectively, rather than conceptualized and categorized (van Manen, 1997) – through the historical and political contextualization and analysis based in archival data. This contextualizing approach is also reflected in my method: my primary means

of collecting data was through hermeneutic interviewing. Participants, particularly during focus groups, were instructed to recount and evaluate their everyday experiences as well as critical events, and the work of hermeneutics further contextualized and analyzed these experiences.

Archival Data

The archival data reviewed consists of media on Regent Park – dating back to its inception in 1948 – census data from Statistics Canada, and neighbourhood studies conducted by TCHC prior to the revitalization. All sources of data were publicly available. The media on Regent Park have been sought from major Canadian news corporations, documentaries from the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), as well as independent and community-based reports and films, for example the Toronto chapter of the Independent Media Center (IMC, a.k.a. Indymedia) and Regent Park Focus. The neighbourhood studies conducted by the TCHC have been accessed through the public TCHC website for Regent Park, and included: a community engagement study, an urban planning and design study, a planning approvals study, a sustainability study, an architecture study, a social development plan, and a financial plan. It was my assumption that while greatly informative, all sources of archival data contain the bias of its authors and their roles as stakeholders in the revitalization. The accounts of Regent Park, therefore, have been critically evaluated by attempting to triangulate the information with multiple accounts and sources.

Community Meeting.

In early December 2008, I attended an open meeting intended primarily for the residents of RP to receive information and ask questions about the next phase in the revitalization, Phase II. The meeting was held in the largest room in the community centre and conducted in English, with seven translators interspersed throughout the room speaking the seven main languages (other

than English) of the community. The meeting lasted no longer than two hours, and was led by TCHC's CEO, Derek Ballantyne, who presented Phase II of the revitalization as it pertained to residents.

Hermeneutic Interviews

Hermeneutics is an interpretive paradigm and a methodology (van Manen, 1997; Aluli Meyer, 2003; Terry Mitchell, personal communication, January 28, 2008). The word hermeneutics is defined as "the art or science of interpretation, especially of Scripture" ("hermeneutics", Oxford English Dictionary, 2008). The hermeneutic approach makes a valuable contribution to psychology in that it suggests a method of understanding and studying action not against some rationalist principle, but in having *semantic* meaning (Packer, 1985). Further, it goes beyond the traditional rational-empiricist approach that has the researcher only interpreting and ascribing meaning. That is, observers of social interaction cannot fully or accurately describe what is happening because they are in a qualitatively different situation than the observers have the ability to describe. The focus for understanding the phenomena under study is therefore on participants' accounts of their own events. This is reflected in the spirit that in contrast "any act, looked at in isolation from its situation, is likely to be ambiguous to the point of opacity or obscurity" (Packer, 2005, p. 1081).

I am in agreement with other critical assessments of social sciences – namely Foucauldian – that hold that psychology will never be able to reach the status of a proper science (i.e., a hard science), because it is "deeply and unavoidably enmeshed in political, social and cultural functions in different ways" (Brinkmann, 2005, p. 770). In addressing this limitation of psychology as a hard science, I agree with Brinkmann's position that, in contrast, hermeneutics may hold a space for genuine values and meanings to be represented in psychology. The concept

of 'looping effects" in hermeneutics holds that humans are self-interpreting beings who understand themselves and their world through values (Heidegger, 1927/1962). This conceptualization is very much in line with community psychology's approach to values in psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005), and with the critical perspective I have taken to this research. Through the ecological contextualizing throughout data interpretation to the critical-constructivist position I have held on the nature of reality, hermeneutics was suitable to understand the varied and value-laden nature of social reality.

The object of study in hermeneutics is the semantic structure of everyday practical activity. What the hermeneutic researcher studies is what people actually do in everyday life, as opposed to abstract pencil and paper accounts. The assumption underlying this approach is that human beings make meaning in context in terms of what purposes it serves for those involved, they do not make meaning from abstraction. The hermeneutic approach to studying human action involves treating the action as though it has its own semantic and "textual" structure (Packer, 1985).

> Hermeneutics involves an attempt to describe and study meaningful human phenomena in a careful and detailed manner as free as possible from prior theoretical assumptions, based instead on practical understanding. (Packer, 1985, p.1082)

One of the significant differences of the hermeneutic approach and rational-empiricist methodology is the definition and understanding of the object of inquiry (Packer, 1985). The object of study in hermeneutics is the semantic structure of everyday practical activity. Participants interviewed – particularly residents of Regent Park – have engaged in reflecting on their everyday lives which involved recounting examples involving the phenomenon under study (i.e., experiences with green spaces, involvement in the revitalization's consultation process, opinions on what would improve their neighbourhood).

Practical activity is understood to have two characteristics: "perspectival", where something is seen as sensible from one point of view but not from another; and holistic: the understanding of an action is not possible without understanding the context. "Perspectival" practical activity is understood according to the assumption that:

> Social action is understood by people in a manner that is influenced by their own interests and projects and is just not available in the same way to an objective, detached, and disinterested observer (indeed, from the hermeneutic point of view, such a stance is not possible). (Packer, 1985, p. 1086)

The holistic character of practical activity is understood as an ever-present emphasis and analysis of context when looking at social phenomena. As in community psychology, the hermeneutic approach to understanding psychology does not divorce the behaviour or cognition from the context wherein it occurs.

The type of explanation that hermeneutics seeks from its analysis is one that does not create generalizable rules of human nature, but a specifically historically situated approach. Data take the form of accounts of events in narrative, the researcher must actively seek contextual information from both its interviewed participants and the archival data or media concerning the community context. In emphasizing Regent Park as a distinct community, the community as a whole also was examined. In reaching beyond the individuals being interviewed, the hermeneutic approach has extended itself to understanding the historical, political and economic context of the community of Regent Park as a whole.

Sampling

My sampling methods took three different forms for recruiting resident participants. The first sampling method involved asking my gatekeeper contact who has worked in one of the central community organizations in Regent Park to forward information about my research and

search for participants to staff in other community organizations in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, this yielded no resident participants. The residents forming the first focus group were primarily recruited through my second method, responding to posters that I had placed in the public transit shelters and telephone polls on the main streets surrounding Regent Park. Several dozen of these posters were put up every few weeks and invited residents in plain language to voice their opinion on the changes in their neighbourhood, their experiences with community gardens, and the community consultation process. For my third and final method, residents forming the second focus group were recruited directly through my walking around Regent Park and asking passersby if they lived in the neighbourhood and were interested in participating in a focus group for my Master's thesis research on the revitalization of the neighbourhood.

The eight interviews I conducted with staff members in organizations that serve Regent Park used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves the use of the researcher's special knowledge of a group or experience to select individuals who are most representative (Kirby, Greaves & Reid, 2006). I approached staff members from all major social service and community agencies that serve the Regent Park neighbourhood, and I received responses from, and subsequently interviewed, a mix of senior-level and lower-level staff from the following organizations: Regent Park Community Health Centre (RPCHC), the Toronto Christian Resource Centre (TCRC), Dixon Hall, Regent Park Focus (Focus), and the Regent Park Community Centre. I also chose to interview a staff member from the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) who has directly worked on the community consultation efforts in Regent Park.

Focus Groups with Residents

First outlined by Kitzinger (1994), focus groups provide 10 main advantages in research. The interaction between participants: 1) highlights respondents' attitudes, language, priorities and framework of understanding; 2) encourages a variety of communication; 3) helps identify group norms; 4) provides insight into group or social processes in the articulation of knowledge – that is, the information that is validated and invalidated within the group. 5) Interaction between participants can facilitate open conversation about sensitive topics and 6) further, focus groups serve to facilitate the expression of ideas that may otherwise be undeveloped in a one-on-one interview. 7) In studying the interaction between group members, researchers can explore difference between group participants. 8) Conflict that arises between participants can work to clarify why people believe what they do. 9) Interaction between participants provides the opportunity to witness arguments that members use against each other, as well as what influences individuals to change their minds. 10) Finally, focus groups provide opportunities for researchers to analyze how particular forms of speech encourage or inhibit peer communication, help clarify or confuse the issue at hand.

The use of focus groups with residents of Regent Park has been appropriate for two reasons: efficiency, and understanding common experience. Focus groups have been the best means to collect information about the common experience of those living in the neighbourhood. According to Kitzinger (1994), interaction is the most important aspect of a focus group. Collecting data in a group setting offers the unique opportunity to assess shared knowledge amongst participants. For example, if a participant makes a statement about his or her experience or about other residents' experiences that does not hold true with other participants, it will likely be disputed and discussed until the group reveals its common knowledge. Because I

have sought to understand the most common experience of the residents of Regent Park, the focus groups have gained that information much more appropriately than individual interviews could have pieced together.

Over the course of several months in the winter and spring, I facilitated two focus groups with residents of the neighbourhood. The first focus group contained four residents, three female and one male, all of whom were English-speaking Canadians of Western-European descent – one of the eight major ethno-cultural groups in Regent Park (Meagher & Boston, 2003) – and all had lived in the neighbourhood for over a decade.

The second focus group contained five residents, all of whom were women of colour, had lived in the neighbourhood for at least five years, and were also New Canadians. Many of the participants in this focus group were also Bengali. Two of the five participants were two of the 28 community animators employed by TCHC to help facilitate the community consultation process. Identified in the Community Engagement Study (Meagher & Boston, 2003), Community animators were Regent Park residents from the eight major ethno-cultural groups hired because of their social networks within the community, as well as the languages they spoke and thus the ethno-cultural groups they could connect with.

Both focus groups lasted around an hour and a half, and the discussions were audio recorded and transcribed. Participants were handed an informed consent statement to review and sign, consenting to their participation to participate in the focus group with a check box, and audio recorded and quoted in a separate check box. After reading the statement, I verbally informed the participants of their right to refuse to answer any question, that their participation was voluntary, and that their identity will remain confidential.

In the second focus group, many of the participants spoke English as a second language. In this focus group, one of the participants went through the entire informed consent statement and translated it into Bengali for several of the participants. The translation resulted in a longer process of consent because the participants who spoke Bengali intermittently discussed the details of the statement to ensure everyone understood its meaning. This translation and discussion process took the place of most of my verbally informing the participants of their rights in my research study. Once the statement had been translated for some of the participants, I verbally informed them that their participation was voluntary and that their identity will remain confidential.

All participants in the focus groups were given an honorarium of $15 for their time, including a couple of participants – one in each focus group – who had participated for a portion of the discussion and later left, declining to answer the latter part of the focus group questions. These two participants were not counted towards the number of participants in each focus group.

Because hermeneutics seeks to take a participant's account and situate it within a socio-historic framework (Terry Mitchell, personal communication, January 21 2008), it was well-suited for my approach of an ecological case study that involves a historical timeline. The reoccurring contextualizing within ecological levels that has been used throughout this research approach is mirrored in the approach of hermeneutics; however hermeneutics takes on a much more political and historical – rather than social – focus.

The contextualization has occurred in two ways: by participants during the focus groups, and through research memos on archival data. First, the focus groups involved questions that sought as much contextual detail as possible (see Appendix C for the interview guide). For example, when residents were asked what they like or dislike in their neighbourhood, follow-up

questions will prompted them to provide broader contextual data. During the focus groups, residents were also prompted to consider their neighbourhood comparatively in an effort to have them reflect at broad levels. For example, "What do you think about the amount of trees and grass Regent Park has? What do you think about the trees and grass here compared to other neighbourhoods? Why do you think Regent Park has a different amount of trees and grass than other neighbourhoods?"

In another respect, contextualization has taken place before the focus groups have been conducted. Archival data have provided much detail on the history and current social, political and economic characteristics of Regent Park, within the city of Toronto, which has provided rich data for analysis. After the archival data has given a broad background to the neighbourhood and to date, contextualization has also occurred in the form of detailed research memos on each interview and focus group, completed shortly after it took place. Any significant date or era discussed has been researched for its relevance to the social or political climate of the country of Canada, the province of Ontario, the city of Toronto, or the neighbourhood of Regent Park.

Quality and Rigour

In having adopted a qualitative approach to my research within a critical paradigm, in place of the concepts of reliability, internal and external validity, and power, I used the concepts dependability, credibility, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability refers to the degree to which methods have been consistent and dependable as tools for research. First, my methodology and methods have met the criteria of dependability in that they were consistent with one another. I have based my methods on a critical ecological perspective of community issues and I have reflected this perspective in my choice of focus groups with residents and interviews with key staff in the community, contextualized through archival data. My analysis

has reflected my approach in using hermeneutics to understand the essence of the community's experience within broader, influential meso- and macrosystem-levels of ecological analysis.

Credibility refers to the degree to which methods study the phenomena for which they are intended. My methods have met the criteria of credibility in that they have sought to reflect and understand the experiences of the community of Regent Park through the actual words and experiences of residents and key staff in the community.

Finally, transferability refers to the degree to which the study of phenomena can be relevant to other similar phenomena or approaches. My methodology and methods have met the criteria of transferability as a critical and paradigmatic case of the role of green space in a low-income urban neighbourhood in world city of Toronto. I selected Regent Park as a paradigmatic case study primarily because of its reputation as one of the oldest public housing communities in Canada, and because it has been referred to, even by city councillors, as a "slum". The community represents what dominant culture considers the image of poverty, and the physical structure of Regent Park is akin to other inner-city low-income neighbourhoods in North America: characterized by concrete, little green space, and little if any infrastructure. The structural and aesthetic characteristics of Regent Park are the default mental image of poverty in Toronto, if not Ontario (Purdy, 2005). As the community is one known for its representations and embodiments of poverty, its revitalization, therefore, speaks an incredible amount to the wrongs of its previous structural and aesthetic design. The model of community consultation and engagement in Regent Park that I have documented serves as an example for community consultation for other neighbourhoods facing redevelopment or revitalization.

Analysis

My findings come from both primary and secondary data sources. My primary data consists of my attendance at community update meetings, interviews with community staff, and focus groups with residents. My secondary data consists of a review of archival documents (i.e., media reports, TCHC newsletters, and community-based media) from before and during revitalization, and observations I have made during the research process. The case study of the revitalization of Regent Park is very multi-faceted and has significance for many areas of study beyond community psychology, such as planning, urban studies, and sociology. My research has centred on answering four research questions that attempt to document the significance of the change that has and is occurring from the unique perspective of the community. My first two research questions define the parameters of my analysis, while the latter two build on my findings to form a broader contextualization to be addressed in the discussion section.

My first question asks: beginning in 2002, what has been the process of the revitalization of Regent Park? Second, what are the power dynamics involved in the revitalization of Regent Park (i.e., the community consultation process)? Third, how is the history of Regent Park, pre- and post-revitalization, an issue of environmental justice? Finally, what can be learned from the revitalization of a low-income, ethno-culturally diverse, urban neighbourhood? My analysis of the secondary data sources consists of a scan of archival data, and observations I have made during the research process. These sources provide historical and political context for the case study in addition to the primary data. To address the research questions, my analysis of the primary data is divided into four major themes I pre-coded based on the research questions. These themes are: history leading to the revitalization, catalysts for revitalization, community consultation process, and resident priorities for their neighbourhood.

Secondary Data.

Archival Data. My search for archival data began by selecting a sample of TCHC newsletters and reports, community organization newsletters and reports, and mass media that seemed relevant to the general topics found in my research questions. I then skimmed through these documents and selected from this pool what was most relevant to addressing my research questions. This resulted in a final sample of mass media reports from the mid-to late-1940s on the construction of Regent Park, TCHC newsletters and studies pre-revitalization, and community-based newsletters and articles from organizations such as Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative (RPNI) and Regent Park Focus (Focus). From these sources, I extracted information that related to my six general themes that emerged from my research questions: resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, uses for green space, the benefits of green space, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization.

Observations. During the data collection process, I had an ongoing opportunity to walk and drive around Regent Park and the larger Cabbagetown neighbourhood and reflect on the social and structural aspects of the wider neighbourhood and city context. These observations will be relayed in the discussion section.

Primary Data.

My primary data sources were intended to be a direct representation of the community's voice. These sources were: my personal documentation of a community meeting for residents conducted by TCHC's own C.E.O., eight interviews with community staff, and two focus groups with residents of Regent Park. All of the staff interviews and focus groups were transcribed, coded using margin coding in Microsoft Word, and organized primarily under the six pre-coding

categories that emerged from my four research questions: resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, uses for green space, the benefits of green space, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization. I then used matrix coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to identify sub-themes that emerged from the data and organized these within my six general themes. During this coding process, one sub-theme emerged that did not fit in any one of the six general themes. This theme, opportunity for organization, is discussed in addition to the main themes.

Findings

Secondary Data

Archival Data. One theme that clearly emerged from the archival data is that the neighbourhood was built according to an untested housing development model. Several documents and media reports from the time of its constructions note the neighbourhood as being based on a theoretical model that had not been tested or similarly designed (e.g., Hopwood & Rose, 1949). In addition, several long-time staff in the community agencies serving the neighbourhood currently shared the position that it was a poorly planned neighbourhood based on an untested design. According to Jo, a long-time resident and urban planner with a prominent community agency in the neighbourhood,

> Well again, Regent Park is – if you look at the history – one of the first and the largest *ghettoes* in Canada. And for that meaning it was designed in such a way. For those who deal with architecture and social planning, you can … it is there. It is there evidently.

In its 1944 Annual Report, the City Planning Board's (CPB) Master Plan for Toronto

> represented the culmination of idealist and modernist planning ideas of the last half century, drawing particularly on the ideas of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, Patrick Geddes social survey approach, and Clarence Perry's notion of the self contained `neighbourhood unit.' (Brushkett, 1999, p.47)

One of the products of this culmination of idealist and modernist planning ideas was the housing development of Regent Park. With this Master Plan's guidance, the development of Regent Park was heavily influenced by Howard's (1902/1946) Garden City concept, born in the United Kingdom in the late 19th century. Regent Park was

> Originally designed as garden city, with walkways and park spaces instead of the original streets - this led to the isolation of the neighbourhood's residents from Toronto's downtown and contributed to concerns about community safety. (TCHC, 2008)

The neighbourhood was intentionally designed with minimal through-streets to encourage the use of pedestrian paths and to restrict a physical divide in the development. Its green space was also consciously laid out with the principles of merging rural and urban living (Howard 1902/1946), offsetting the heavily built surroundings of the downtown core with grass and trees. This insular design would later become a major concern for residents, city officials, mass media and academics – many of whom would call the design a failure.

According to archival documents and interviews with community staff, under its last two owners, talk of revitalization has been inside and outside RP. From 1968 to 2002 the neighbourhood transferred ownership from the municipal to the provincial government public housing authority, the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC). In 2002 the neighbourhood was transferred back to the municipal government under the newly created Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), and for over a decade beforehand residents heard plans to rebuild or revitalize. However, no progress was made due to a lack of commitment of funds from the provincial government (Meagher & Boston, 2003). There were several announcements made for an imminent redevelopment of the neighbourhood, yet these plans remained unfulfilled by the OHC (Ibid.). In 2002, along with its newly assumed ownership, TCHC announced plans for redevelopment and revitalization in RP.

The archival data have served to both contextualize the study of the neighbourhood and to familiarize me with the context before conducting interviews and focus groups. This information has produced informed and detailed questions that have maximized the information gathered from participants' interviews. The review of contextual information and the history of the revitalization also have aided the analysis of the data in consistently situating it within the multiple ecological levels – that is, within its social, historical, economic and political framework.

Primary Data

For the analysis of the primary data I used a triangulation approach as no one source of primary data was prioritized over another. In addition, I have contrasted and compared the data under my six general themes in order for the most prominent general themes and sub-themes to emerge directly from my findings. My primary data findings are divided into the three most prominent general themes that emerged from my staff interviews and focus groups: catalysts for revitalization, community consultation process, and resident priorities. Two general themes based in my research questions – use of green space, and benefits of green space – appear under the third theme, resident priorities. These themes address my first two research questions, while my final two questions are addressed in the discussion, leaving the final theme, significance of revitalization, to be expanded upon in the discussion section.

Catalysts for revitalization.

My first research question asks: beginning in 2002, what has been the process of the revitalization of Regent Park? What have been the inspirations and catalysts for the revitalization? My findings indicate that the biggest catalyst leading to revitalization for TCHC, many residents, and many community staff is the distinct concern for revitalization, above and

beyond a simple redevelopment of its buildings and layout. The second most prominent finding is that the insular neighbourhood design and the maintenance of the buildings and green space – including small garden spaces near the buildings – have been a concern for many in all three major stakeholder groups for over a decade. In the case of some residents, the neighbourhood design and its assumed effects on crime and feelings of safety have been notable concerns since the 1970s. Within these concerns, however, is the contrary opinion coming from some residents who feel that the neighbourhood does not need to be redesigned. These residents value the positives that the old design facilitates, such as fostering a sense of community and feelings of safety for their younger children.

Revitalization vs. redevelopment. A common, although understated, theme that emerged from my findings is that the revitalization underway is not simply a redevelopment of the buildings and neighbourhood layout, but an attempt to provide new economic opportunity, new social infrastructure, and new social opportunities for residents. The plan involves such things as job creation through such things as a clear commitment to hire residents for many of the demolition and rebuilding tasks, the introduction of a grocery store, bank and mailboxes in the neighbourhood, and a new aquatics centre.

When asked about the catalysts for the revitalization, many community staff highlighted the economic and social concerns that have been present in the neighbourhood for decades. Many staff felt that as a neighbourhood, Regent Park was lacking many of the qualities found in other neighbourhoods in the city. For example, as mentioned in the revitalization plan, the old neighbourhood had no grocery store within it, forcing residents to go outside of their community to shop for their food (see Figure 3 for TCHC's plan for neighbourhood infrastructure). The understanding that the neighbourhood was notably hindering the social potential and

connectedness of the community was found to be common amongst community staff. Anne, an Executive Director of one of the community agencies, noted that

> ... the intent of the redevelopment was to connect Regent Park with the rest of the city and provide opportunity for people living there to, um, have, uh, more access to more normal things, I guess, in their community, in this society.

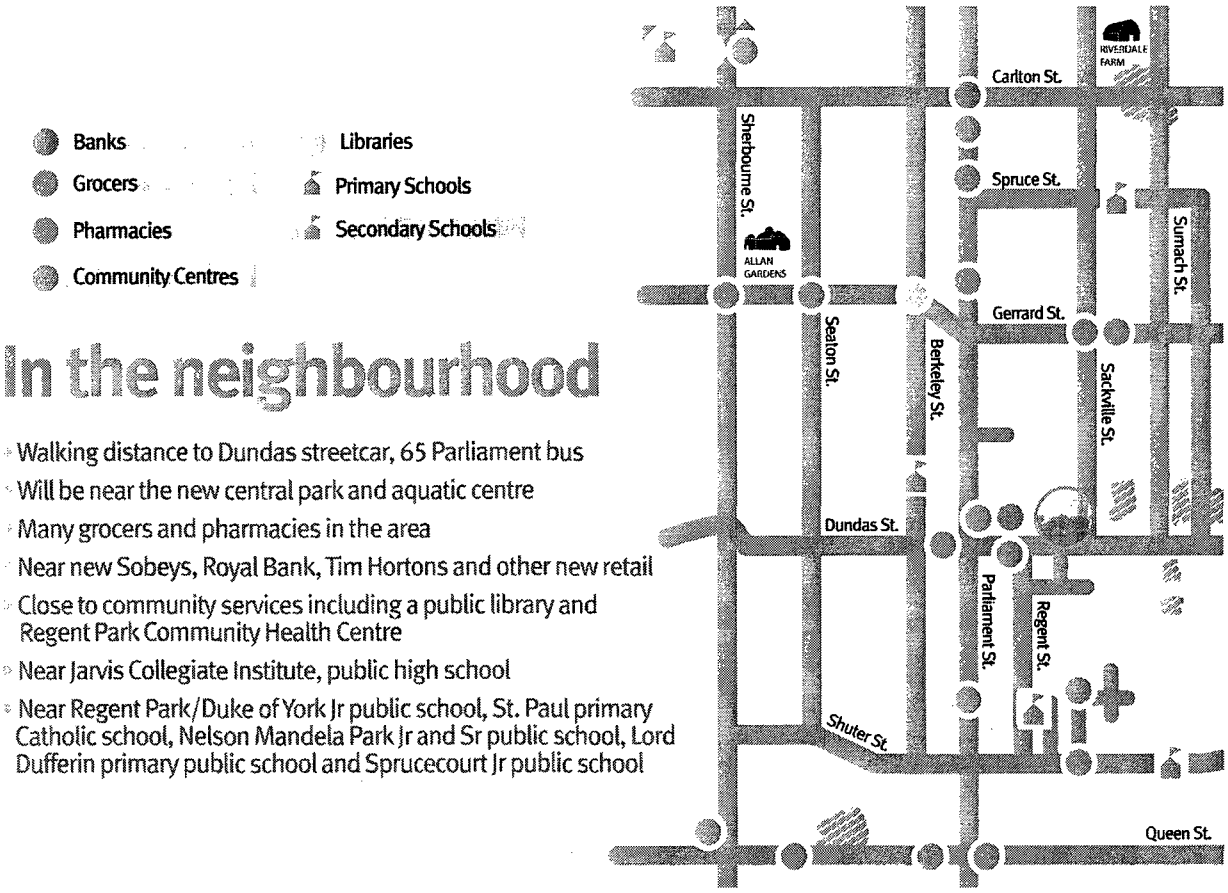
Overall, the community and TCHC appear to largely share the assertion that the changes needed in Regent Park extend beyond simply the redesign of its buildings and increasing the number of through-streets. However, one discrepancy that emerged between TCHC's vision of revitalization and that of the residents is the extent of the rebuild. The plan for the new Regent Park has involved literally tearing down every building and replacing it in the name of improvement, the addition of units, or changes to its function.

One building that some residents do not feel needs rebuilding is the community centre. During a community meeting that I attended in December 2008 held by TCHC to present the plans for Phase 2 (begun in January of 2009), residents in attendance expressed concern over the announcement that their community centre was to be demolished and a new one rebuilt. In his role as meeting facilitator, TCHC C.E.O. Derek Ballantyne emphasized the amount of rent geared to income (RGI) units being rebuilt, the proportion of condo units, and the process of returning relocated residents to the neighbourhood. In addition, he briefly presented the structural designs for the neighbourhood during this Phase, which included a large park in the middle of the neighbourhood and an aquatics centre. Once the formal presentation period ended, Ballantyne invited questions from residents. A couple residents asked about the first building that is near completion (near Parliament street and Dundas street) and how it is being allocated for families and seniors. This garnered a brief explanation from Ballantyne about the number of units and who they were allocated to. Another question that came from a resident in the

audience pertained to the community centre and its plan for demolition. As seen in the discussion that broke out amongst the crowd after this question was asked, concern over the community centre being torn down and rebuilt appeared to be a more widely shared issue amongst residents. Residents who spoke on this issue felt strongly that the community centre is a symbol in the neighbourhood of the residents' capacity to organize and provide for themselves. This long history of tenant organizing was emphasized by many of the community staff interviewed, noting that the formal process of community consultation was not the only means through which residents have been compelled to participate in the revitalization of their neighbourhood. At the meeting, some residents relayed that the community centre has a long history and that residents "fought for it" to be built in the first place, and so the idea of it being demolished was disrespectful to the history of the community. In response, Derek Ballantyne told residents that while they understood that the old community centre has a history and that it was important to residents, it was not feasible to keep the building with the new design for the neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood design and maintenance. The second most common opinion on catalysts for the revitalization was the need for new neighbourhood design and more maintenance. This opinion was widely shared amongst community staff, the formal position of TCHC, and residents – with some significant variation. When asked about the catalysts leading to the revitalization, several community staff noted that one of the major catalysts was the state of the existing buildings. With vivid accounts of the conditions of many of the buildings, some staff believed that decades of poor maintenance in the buildings had resulted in the need to either perform significant maintenance or rebuild completely. Bill, a staff member of a community organization that has been directly involved in voicing the needs of the community during the

Figure 4: Plan for infrastructure



(Toronto Community Housing Corporation, 2009)

revitalization, believed that the maintenance of the buildings got to such a poor state that TCHC realized it would be more costly to renovate the existing buildings than it would be to demolish them and start anew. When asked about their priorities for the new neighbourhood design, many residents identified that having more through-streets was "definitely a plus" to the existing design, however not all residents shared this view. Ultimately, it appears that the biggest physical change planned would turn RP from inward facing and insular to open and integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood. TCHC's plan for the new design involves the addition of several tree-lined through-streets, a large park and aquatics centre in the middle of the neighbourhood, and the addition of more trees shrubbery throughout (See Figure 4 for the plan for Phase II).

This redesign aspect has been met with mixed feelings from residents and community staff. The old design, even with its facilitation of drug dealing and other criminal activity, provided the benefit of feelings of safety by providing a closed-off space where children can be supervised. Also, some residents felt that the old layout facilitated opportunities for them to interact with their neighbours and members of their ethno-cultural community. This function of the green space in the middle of RP was identified by several residents and consequently considered a priority for the new neighbourhood design. Some residents feel that this benefit would be lost to the new design, and they preferred to keep the design as it was originally to retain this benefit.

A broader aspect of this concern is that demolition should be occurring at all to bring about revitalization. Jo, a long-time resident and urban planner with one of the community organizations, notes

> It has always been the aim of the community to somewhat uplift its... not only its demeanour, but also its social demeanour, and that has always been a struggle cause there

> has never been a hand there to help. There has always been – renovation could have been done, but no, it has now become a demolition.

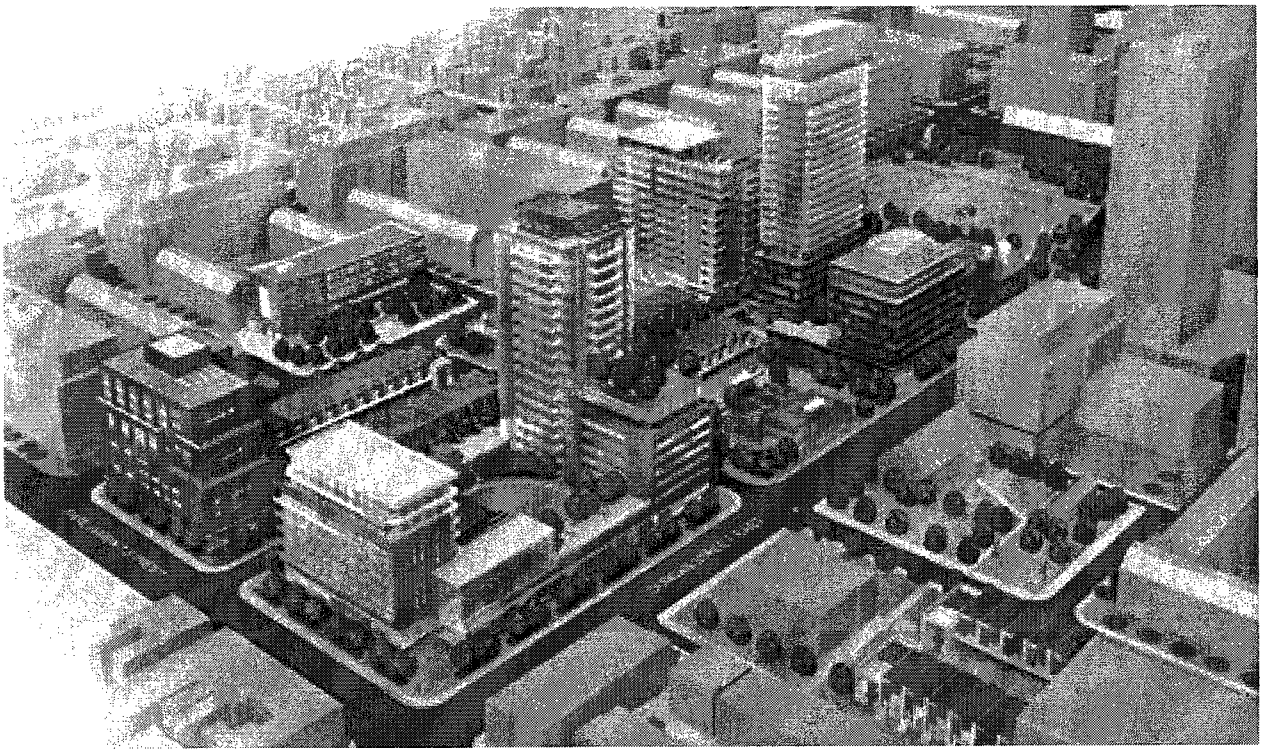
The reasons for the demolition are no doubt numerous, and demolition is no doubt necessary to rebuild, however the implications of some of these reasons are significant to the quality of life of residents.

Finally, the stigma associated with the old building designs emerged as a catalyst for revitalization, primarily from residents. A priority for revitalization that emerged from focus groups with residents is the desire for the neighbourhood to be less identifiable as public housing. Some residents relayed that the brown and red brick row houses along much of North Regent are symbolic of public housing, as well as often interchangeable with other public housing developments in some American cities like New York. For some residents, the revitalization and new building design was particularly important for its new, more upscale look that would make them feel their neighbourhood is not an isolated public housing ghetto, but an attractive part of a broader neighbourhood.

Community Consultation Process

Toronto Community Housing, a social housing corporation created and owned by Toronto's City Council, functions under a mandate to deliver housing residents of Toronto in responsive way with a clear commitment to their needs (Meagher & Boston, 2003). TCHC, since its inception, has attempted to define itself as a progressive and responsible public housing corporation. The 12 year redevelopment initiative in Regent Park was an opportunity for TCHC to live up to its mandate. Consistent with this commitment to the needs of the residents, TCHC began a vast community consultation with Regent Park residents and the surrounding community

Figure 5: Phase II of redevelopment of Regent Park



(Alcoba, 2008)

agencies, schools and services. In addition to the input from architects, planners and urban designers, TCHC sought to thoroughly consult with the agents that make the public housing neighbourhood a community: its residents and its community organizations. My second research question is threefold and asks "What are the power dynamics involved in the revitalization of Regent Park? What has been the community consultation process? Has that process accurately represented the residents?" By examining the structure of the community consultation and by asking the community for their opinions on their direct and indirect involvement in the process, I have explored the unique opportunity afforded to the community to, at least in name, participate in the revitalization and redesign of their neighbourhood.

The Structure of the Consultation. Beginning in July 2002, the community consultation process involved three rounds of consultation. Hired by Toronto Community Housing, the process was created by Public Interest Strategy and Communications, an organization that develops outreach and engagement strategies, policy and research, and communication and social marketing for public sector and non-profit organizations. When TCHC and Public Interest created the methodology for the community consultation, they set specific goals in mind.

> They wanted to do more than consult the community; they wanted to actively engage it. Toronto Community Housing and the Community Engagement Team identified three specific goals:
>
> 1) Ensure the community had a distinct voice in the planning process.
> 2) Strengthen existing and emerging community infrastructure through the consultation process.
> 3) Assist TCHC staff in building new and effective long-term relationships with residents. (Meagher & Boston, 2003, p.8)

These three goals led to a specific approach in consulting with the neighbourhood.

The consultation with residents occurred in three phases. In recognition of the barrier between everyday language and land use planning jargon, TCHC and Public Interest decided to hold increasingly specific consultation phases with residents in order to give them an opportunity

to, first, express their needs for the redevelopment, and then refine the discussions based on the residents responses. The process of consultation happened in small group discussions facilitated by residents trained by TCHC to be a Community Animator. Staff and board members from the community agencies within the neighbourhood were also consulted. TCHC arranged to gather their input on their material and immaterial needs as a community organization. As agents who much more directly affected by the revitalization, I primarily analyzed the consultation with residents for its process and significance.

Community Animators. The best method of consulting with residents was identified by Public Interest as using community-based workers. The recruitment, training, and hiring of residents as the "front line" of consultation (Meagher & Boston, 2003, p.11) fulfilled the three goals of the consultation, and bypassed the climate of distrust and cynicism that was the result of a history unfulfilled promises from the landlords of Regent Park. In order to achieve a process that was truly based in the community, these workers were given a role in shaping the process. The workers

> had to 'animate' a discussion that was rooted entirely in the community. People from the community had to design the process, and they had to feel a real commitment to the process or their doubts would be transmitted to the people they spoke with. (Ibid.)

TCHC hired 28 community animators to consult with residents for their unique role in meaningfully and intimately engaging residents from their particular ethno-cultural community or language group. One Community Animator spoke of her experience being trained:

> They [incompr.] first, they train us first, and they [incompr.], then they sent us with their interview sheet like you, these interview sheets, we'd go to the people, collect information, we fill out, and then we submit to them, they make the summary, and they, and then they, talk to the whole community, in, in the, in, like community centre [incompr.], they talked with all the informations they collected, and they, then they, and they also do social research, social survey...

Phases of Consultation. In Phase 1 of the community consultation, residents were asked general questions including: "What do you like about Regent Park, what do you not like about Regent Park, what do you hope will happen with redevelopment, [and] what do you fear will happen with redevelopment?" (Ibid., p.13) During Phase 2, community animators were instructed to animate the residents in a discussion on the specific physical aspects of their neighbourhood they liked and disliked and why. Residents were prompted to assess the buildings, the streets, the parks and the commercial areas. In the final phase, Phase 3, community animators reported a draft plan that was constructed using the feedback collected in previous phases and the residents are invited to assess the plan according to their needs (Meagher & Boston, 2003).

At the end of each phase, an open public meeting was held to present the findings gathered from the previous round of consultation. The meetings were translated into eight different languages by the community animators. After the meetings, the Community Engagement Team – composed of Public Interest's Sean Meagher and community development consultant Tony Boston – would meet with the architects and planners hired by TCHC and discussed the implications of the community feedback for the redevelopment plan. According to Public Interest,

> In the end, the success of this model was apparent by the extent to which the more specific later feedback altered the assumptions made by planners, architects and urban designers based on the data from earlier phases. (Ibid., p.13)

Breadth of the Consultation. According to Public Interest, the model of consultation has "involve[d] the community in all aspects of the redevelopment and has consistently produced participation from about 1,000 Regent Park residents (10–12% of the population)" (Public Interest Strategy and Communications, 2009). In the community, however, there are mixed

feelings as to the breadth of the consultation process. Several community staff felt that the consultation was not comprehensive enough and that TCHC could have done more to engage the community, while others felt insufficiently involved in the process to comment. Several residents, however, felt more optimistic and believed that the consultation did reach every resident. The second focus group I conducted was composed of five women of colour, several were First Generation Canadians born in Southeast Asia. Two of the five women who participated had been directly part of the TCHC's community consultation process. These two women were part of the group of 28 community animators TCHC employed from the major ethno-cultural communities living in Regent Park. When asked about the consultation, the residents who had been employed as community animators felt that the consultation process was comprehensive and further relayed stories of going door to door to survey residents and conducting spontaneous group discussions outdoors during the summer while walking around the neighbourhood.

> And when these people do this, we'd go to that group, go to that [incompr.], you know, park, go to the playground, or, find lots of community people, and we'd talk with them. We'd go to the school. We'd [incompr.] come in contact with lots of community people, we'd go to the religious groups that have sessions, we'd go there, we'd go to mosques, we'd go to, through different sources, [incompr.]. So every, every person in Regent Park, they have contacted.

This position echoes one of the three goals outlined by Public Interest and TCHC: to employ front-line consultants with the residents who felt a real commitment to the process.

Resident Priorities

One means of assessing the community consultation is to compare TCHC's incorporation of resident priorities into the revitalization with my findings of resident priorities. During my two focus groups with residents of the neighbourhood, participants were asked to identify what their priorities have been for the redevelopment of their neighbourhood. The residents were first

asked "What do you like best about your neighbourhood?" followed by "What would you most like to see change in your neighbourhood?" The most common priorities identified by residents were concerns over crime and safety, neighbourhood design and maintenance, and green space.

Crime and Safety. In the experiences relayed by residents, as well as in the words of TCHC in their press releases and updates to the community, a notable motivator for the revitalization was the position that the structural design of the neighbourhood directly contributed to its crime. David, a young resident whose family has lived in Regent Park on and off for 40 years, relayed:

> ... when we had the meetings before, before they started building and they were discussing how it was set up, um, that was one of the biggest problems they said, was the streets are cut off, so, you know, like you said, if somebody's running away from the police, the police are stuck, like they drive in, and then they have that locked...

When asked about their daily experiences witnessing crime in the neighbourhood, many residents relayed stories of drug dealing or related behaviour happening both in plain sight and in the well-covered corners of buildings. One resident said:

> ...people are able to sell their drugs, and in the corners, and yeah, no streets for police to get through, they have nothing but buildings, you know what I mean, and there's no way to drive through there, really, you know what I mean, there's only one street goin' through, but you can hide there, run in the other buildings, you know what I mean? It is one place that is built very, very, the way it was built, the architectural design is very, uh, it's wrong, I mean it, it was really kind of screwed up. Obviously, I mean, people know that.

In the context of the focus group, other residents agreed with this assertion that the architecture played a significant role in the amount of crime that occurs within the neighbourhood. This understanding, that the structural design and layout of the buildings has in part facilitated and maintained criminal activity, was found to be shared amongst residents and community staff. In addition, crime and safety arose as a concern in interviews with both residents and community staff in most of the thematic categories that emerged from the data. Crime and safety were

discussed in relation to the uses for green space in the neighbourhood, the resident priorities for the revitalization, the catalyst for the revitalization, and in regards to the significance of the revitalization.

Neighbourhood Design and Maintenance. The second most prominent theme that emerged from residents' priorities for the revitalization was neighbourhood design and maintenance. Two priorities in this theme were: neighbourhood design and its mediating effects on crime, and reducing stigmatization associated with public housing. The first priority, while somewhat distinct, overlaps with the themes crime and safety and green spaces. When residents discussed their concerns for what they would like to see changed in their neighbourhood, several mentioned that the new neighbourhood design would completely change the layout, creating new tree-lined through-streets with lampposts along its sides. In conjunction, residents spoke of how they were looking forward to this kind of change in the design for its assumed effects on reducing crime and increasing safety in the neighbourhood.

The second priority, as mentioned previously in the context of catalysts for revitalization, was to change the look of the buildings so that they no longer looked like public housing. Several residents noted that the look of the row houses in RP reminded them of ghettos in New York City. Some residents reported that their children don't tell their classmates at school where they live because of the stigma attached. This priority was also reflected in interviews with staff. One community development worker in the neighbourhood noted that "they [the residents] wanted mixed income *buildings*, not just a mixed income neighbourhood", and that this was so the buildings itself would not be recognizable as public housing buildings, and that residents' identities as public housing residents would be less obvious to outsiders.

Green Space. The third most common priority mentioned by residents was the redesign and addition of green space. The way in which residents discussed existing green space and the plans for new green space indicated that generally they were not satisfied with the amounts in the old design. As mentioned earlier, this theme overlapped often with concerns for crime and safety however the appreciation for the addition of green space came up in discussion.

> But yeah, like she's saying, more lights would be a plus, more red lights, you know, more greenery like you were mentioning earlier, more light, more trees, more public parks, like you know parks in different areas of the neighbourhoods, uh, benches, more areas to have the community hang out together, have the, uh, you know, uh, mingle together and be around each other, and, I'm not, really get to know each other and, you know, you don't have to be friends, but at least be acquaintances, you know when you know each other, you know when you know each other and say, "How you doin' John", and you know, "How you doin', how was your", you know, talk to each other and have your kids playin' together and in the park, you know, like Regent Park we have one park, that's it, one little basketball park, that's it! In the whole of, well I dunno, I can't talk about South, but North Regent there's one little park, on, near my 407 area, there's one park, there's one basketball area with basketball nets that don't even have nets.

As seen in this quote, and echoed in the words of many community staff, green space such as well-lit parks were desired by the community in part because of their facilitation of a sense of community. These spaces were seen by many to provide opportunities for residents to interact with one another in both active and passive ways. Some residents who felt very connected to their ethno-cultural community expressed that these spaces within the neighbourhood provided them material opportunities to interact with one another. In addition, the plans for more park space and tree-lined streets were almost automatically valued by residents without the need for much explanation. Many residents felt that more green space was just a positive that should be present in their neighbourhood.

Another facet of residents' priorities for green space was found in the clear benefits that these spaces provide. The most common aspect of the old neighbourhood design that residents

valued was the community gardens. Throughout the 69 acre downtown neighbourhood, residents were given space for multiple community gardens that were frequently used not necessarily to grow food for themselves, but to engage in an activity with fellow residents.

> Back home every family has their piece of garden. And they grow vegetables in their piece, it's our hobby, we enjoy it.
>
> I like garden, yeah, my backyard side, [incompr.] ...
>
> And we want to go to the garden, community garden, this is the place, meeting place for us.
>
> [Everyone laughs and agrees]
>
> Some of them, every woman is in the garden. [laughs]
>
> And so you grow your own food?
>
> Grow, not only food, but we grow for ourselves, distribute it to give as gift to our friends, those who don't have gardens, or keep gardens, might be somebody producing something that I did not produce, I do not produce, so we share, give and take.

According to several community staff, these ground-level gardens will likely not be part of the new Regent Park. While there are plans for rooftop gardens, the concern exists that only residents of that building will be able to make use of them as they will be more sectioned off, therefore not providing the benefit of the sense of community that they once did. Many community staff, including Bill, feel that this was a great loss to the residents and relayed that there are multiple efforts from both residents and community agencies to recapture and eventually rebuild the gardens.

Beyond these immediate findings lies a larger picture: one that fully situates the community experience of the revitalization within its broader context. To fully examine the factors involved in the revitalization of Regent Park and its unique community consultation model, my final two research questions form the basis of my discussion section. These questions move past simply representing the voice of the community and make clear connections to

relevant macrosystem level forces beyond immediate experiences. In the next section, my findings will be placed within a constellation of ecological levels and ultimately tied to an understanding of environmental justice.

Discussion

My final two research questions have sought to tie the case study of the revitalization to a critical understanding of power, a theory of justice, and its significance in relation to other contexts. In keeping with the critical paradigm with which I have approached my research, I hold that all three aspects of this examination are important for a comprehensive understanding of the community's experience of, and role in, the revitalization.

Community Engagement

My third research question concerns the issue of justice in the revitalization of Regent Park and asks: how is the history of Regent Park, pre- and post-revitalization, an issue of environmental justice? To understand how this case study can serve as an example of a community facing issues of environmental injustice, the power dynamics must first be identified. As discussed previously in the literature review, community engagement is a process wrought with power dynamics with important implications for citizen participation – an important value for community psychology (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2005). Community engagement in the RP community consultation can be analyzed beyond Arnstein's "ladder of participation" for a more detailed understanding of the meaningfulness of the power offered to the community. In the context of the revitalization, using Arnstein's ladder as a framework, the participation level of the residents of Regent Park falls under tokenism, where their involvement takes the form of being consulted for their priorities for redevelopment and revitalization, and being updated on

the phases of revitalization. These power dynamics are expanded upon and analyzed according to Cully and Hughley's (2008) framework of the dimensions of social power. After examining what has occurred in terms of power in the process of revitalization, the process will then be analyzed according to the framework of environmental justice.

Using Culley and Hughley's (2008) theoretical framework of the dimensions of social power, the community consultation process of RP can be analyzed in three dimensions: superior bargaining resources, control of participation and debate, and shaping interests. The first dimension, superior bargaining resources, is

> generally understood as the use of superior resources (by A: the relatively powerful) to reward or punish behavior of those with fewer resources (B: the relatively powerless). Because (A) has superior resources (e.g., money, property, authority), (A) is able to prevail in the negotiation of key issues—via the exercise of control over resources which are used to overtly coerce (B) to do what (A) wants. (Cully & Hughley, 2008, p.101)

In the case of RP, it is clear that TCHC as owner, landlord, and rent subsidizer is in a relatively powerful position in contrast to residents. This dimension can be seen in the fact that TCHC has been the formal catalyst and conductor of the revitalization. The changes to the neighbourhood are in no part being made by residents, and residents have only been consulted by TCHC. If residents and community staff were genuinely given shared power in the revitalization, there would be a clear distribution of responsibilities and resources in order to involve all stakeholder groups in the neighbourhood changes. Apart from the employment of residents to perform particular tasks assigned to them by multiple hierarchies of supervisors, the residents have no tangible control over the revitalization process that is occurring in their neighbourhood. The only power afforded to them is their voice and the promise that their voice would be incorporated into TCHC's plans through the community consultation.

The second dimension of social power, control of participation and debate, is "understood as the ability to determine who participates and what is debated in decision making about key issues" (Cully & Hughley, 2008, p.101). From the surveys sent to residents, to the community meetings to present the new phases of development, the community consultation process is a concrete form of participation and debate. The outcome of the process is found in the Public Interest Community Engagement Study (Meagher & Boston, 2003) and the phases of development planned by TCHC. The community consultation process was ultimately the product of TCHC and Public Interest who have collaborated to produce a model that was intended to gather information through a means deemed appropriate and most conducive to the community's participation. However, it was still a process overseen by the most powerful stakeholder: the owner, landlord, and rent subsidizer of the neighbourhood. While TCHC did indeed ask residents for their priorities, and their use of community animators to conduct group discussions and door to door surveys appears effective in engaging resident participation, ultimately their decisions on what to include in the new plan are clear indicators of what they considered important in the revitalization. One example of this power dynamic is in the fate of the community gardens. The gardens were identified by residents and community staff as a benefit in their lives as well as a priority in the design of the neighbourhood. But as of Phase II there are no clear commitments from TCHC on providing space for them at ground level.

Further, the community gardens reflect an important benefit to community health and well-being identified in the literature on green space. As discussed previously, green space in a neighbourhood affects individuals' attention restoration (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995) and stress reduction (Ulrich, 1979; 1984; 1986; Ulrich, Dimberg & Driver, 1991), and this individual-level replenishment has important implications for low-income communities, such as

Regent Park. On a community level, these individual processes of attention restoration are shown as invaluable in restoring psychological resources, such as attention, in order to address larger life stressors that are a direct result of poverty (Kuo, 2001). Coupled with the findings that public green space has a significant affect on individual and community well-being in low-income neighbourhoods in particular – in contrast to their negligible effects in mid- and high-income neighbourhoods, typically characterized by notable amounts of private green space (Mitchell & Popham, 2007) – the residents of Regent Park, by virtue of being low-income, have a unique opportunity to actualize these benefits to health and well-being. As a benefit to both the individual and the community, the community gardens should be considered a critical resource that is being lost in RP contrary to the desires of many residents.

The third and final dimension of social power, shaping interest, concerns the ability of the relatively powerful to control and disseminate myths and ideology used to influence and constrict the thoughts, desires and interests of the relatively powerless (Cully & Hughley, 2008, p.101). Broadly, this dimension illuminates the influence of the history of the neighbourhood and its social climate has on the community consultation process. According to several community staff who were also long-time residents, undeveloped promises for maintenance, more recreational facilities, and social infrastructure have been provided the community in the past and have all resulted in disappointment. The climate therefore during the appropriation of the neighbourhood by TCHC in 2002 was that of scepticism, grounded in a history of no physical changes in Regent Park and a deteriorating sense of safety (Meagher & Boston, 2003). In 2002, a renewed promise of redevelopment and revitalization was offered by TCHC. As new owners of the development, TCHC were afforded the opportunity to work on building a new relationship with the residents.

As a clear means to understanding the power dynamics involved in the community consultation, this dimension is the least relevant to its assessing the process details; however, the dimension underlines some of the themes at broader ecological levels. As aforementioned, residents were a) concerned about the look of the old buildings in their neighbourhood because of the stigma attached to public housing, and b) concerned about the stigma attached to themselves and their children for living in Regent Park. The stigmatization of poverty and those who live within in is not a product of TCHC or the City of Toronto, but of its social power in relation to all other socio-economic levels. The relatively more powerful mid- and high-income residents of the city and Province, as well as the formal (e.g., mass media) and informal institutions (e.g., access to higher education, higher skilled employment) have created perceptions of the poor because of their ability, by their control of resources, to define dominant conceptions of social groups and communities. The direct influence of socio-economic status on social power inherently puts the residents of RP at a disadvantage, as poverty in itself is a broad and well-understood disadvantage.

Environmental Justice in Regent Park

The second dimension of social power, control of participation and debate, contains a clear overlap with the concept of environmental justice. One comprehensive definition of environmental justice is

> the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2009)

In this definition, the "meaningful involvement" of all people is placed in just as high a priority as their "fair treatment" – a prominent focus historically for the environmental justice movement

(Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008). Using this conception, the meaningfulness and calibre of the community consultation process is an issue of concern for environmental justice. The revitalization is a transformative undertaking that is changing the physical, social and economic environment of RP and the extent to which the residents are involved in planning, deciding upon, and implementing those transformations defines their level of involvement. Further, the revitalization has brought about an opportunity for residents of RP to assess their priorities around green space – an aspect of the built environment that has clear benefits for individual and community health and well-being (Bell, Greene, Fisher, & Baum, 2001; Brunson, Kuo & Sullivan, 2001; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995; Kuo, Sullivan, Coley & Brunson, 1998; Kweon, Sullivan & Riley, 1998; Ulrich, 1979; 1984; 1986; Ulrich, Dimberg & Driver, 1991).

According to my research, the community of RP has been uniquely involved in its own revitalization, however more passively than is ideal. Through the tailored consultation model created by TCHC and Public Interest, the residents have participated in a sensitive means of consultation. The employment of residents from all major ethno-cultural groups as community animators in particular has, in part, overcome concerns about a climate of distrust amongst residents. In addition, according to residents who have participated on both sides of the consultation, the process undertaken by community animators has facilitated the opportunity for residents to participate in a relaxed and culturally appropriate way. TCHC's design process for the community consultation did appear consistent with its mandate to operate with the needs of residents in mind.

Even with the uniquely designed consultation process, the relative social power of residents involves more than being consulted for their needs and priorities. Social power, in this instance, would mean the involvement of residents at every stage and in every major aspect of

conceptualizing, planning, and implementing the revitalization. TCHC ultimately has shared some of its power with residents by engaging them in an intensive multi-year consultation process, however, it has not overcome the clear discrepancies in social power between the two stakeholder groups. As renters living on low-income, residents of RP are subject to an inexorable hierarchy of landlord over tenant and it is a power dynamic that yields tangible consequences in the form of control of maintenance, landscape, design and infrastructure in one's neighbourhood. The community consultation process has given some of that control to residents, though the final say in the implementation of the revitalization belongs to TCHC.

Moving even further beyond the power dynamics and issues of justice involved in the community consultation process, the revitalization of RP will be examined next for its significance beyond the context of the city of Toronto. The neighbourhood of RP shares characteristics with other urban public housing developments, low-income urban neighbourhoods, and ethno-culturally diverse urban neighbourhoods. In addition, the process of community consultation carried out by TCHC is a model that can be implemented in other contexts seeking community engagement around issues of the natural and built environment, as well as environmental justice.

Significance of the Regent Park revitalization

My fourth and final research question seeks to understand the relevance and significance of the case study. It asks: what can be learned from the revitalization of a low-income, ethno-culturally diverse, urban neighbourhood? This question will be addressed by an examination of the revitalization at all ecological levels of analysis, focusing on the macrosystem level, and concluded with a discussion of the transferability of the case study. The ideological and spatial nature of the economic macrosystem – global capitalism – will be incorporated using

Friedmann's (1986) World City Hypothesis, forming the analysis of the spatial dimensions of Regent Park within the context of Toronto.

Ecological Levels of Analysis. Beginning with the individual level of analysis, which is nested within the four other ecological levels, the revitalization of RP has provided the opportunity to consider the individual health and well-being benefits of green space (see Figure 6). When asked for their priorities for the changes in their neighbourhood, the residents of RP have shown a clear valuation for the presence of green space. Green space has been identified by residents as having many benefits in its functions – e.g., providing a space for children to play, providing a space for residents to interact – and these functional benefits are echoed in the aforementioned literature pertaining to its benefit pathways (Kuo, Sullivan, Coley & Brunson, 1998; Kuo, 2001).

From observations I have made during the research process, in my exploration of its layout during the summer months, I came across several community garden plots which were always being used by at least a couple people. In the middle of the neighbourhood, particularly in Regent Park North, the lawn and tree-lined areas were usually occupied by children, or by groups of parents and children who all socialized together. These observations echoed the literature on the community health and well-being benefits of green space that identified how green space afforded these benefits: by providing physical opportunities for people to interact. This may indicate a larger scale appreciation for the role of green space amongst residents, and speaks to the appreciation of green space as a benefit to be distributed to all neighbourhoods under the framework of environmental justice.

At the microsystems level, the revitalization of RP has illuminated the relationship between neighbourhood design and feelings of safety. As identified as a tension in the data on resident opinions on the redesign of the neighbourhood, some residents expressed a preference for the old design for its closed-off characteristic, allowing parents to let their younger children play within it. From my own observations of the neighbourhood during my research process, one social and structural observation that consistently surprised me was the isolated feeling of and within Regent Park – particularly Regent Park North – from the larger Cabbagetown neighbourhood. In order to reach the community centre, for example, I had to park on the only through-street in the neighbourhood and navigate a series of walkways to find one that led to the community centre. The isolation of the neighbourhood I witnessed was primarily evident in how much of the row houses in Regent Park North lined the streets, resulting in a wall of buildings with a few walkways seen in between. As an outsider to the community, I frequently felt uneasy walking through the neighbourhood because I felt I was encroaching on very private territory. In a way, this is reflected in the opinion of some residents who valued the old design of the neighbourhood for its benefits in isolating children and their play areas from the larger, busy downtown area. If the design discourages outsiders from going in or through the neighbourhood because of this closed off feeling in the neighbourhood, then the design does encourage a certain social atmosphere, one that can have benefits for insiders with concerns over safety and protection.

These concerns over the deterministic relationship between structural design and feelings of neighbourhood safety and community cohesion have been supported in the literature on issues of community health and well-being. This preference from some residents for an isolated, closed-off neighbourhood which encourages feelings of safety can be seen as having a protective

and positive effect on the health of the community. As previously discussed in the literature review on what inhibits the formation of neighbourhood social ties, crowded, dangerous, and noisy settings all appear to inhibit their formation, leading to less feelings of sense of community (Riger, LeBailly, & Gordon, 1981; Kuo, Sullivan, Coley & Brunson, 1998).

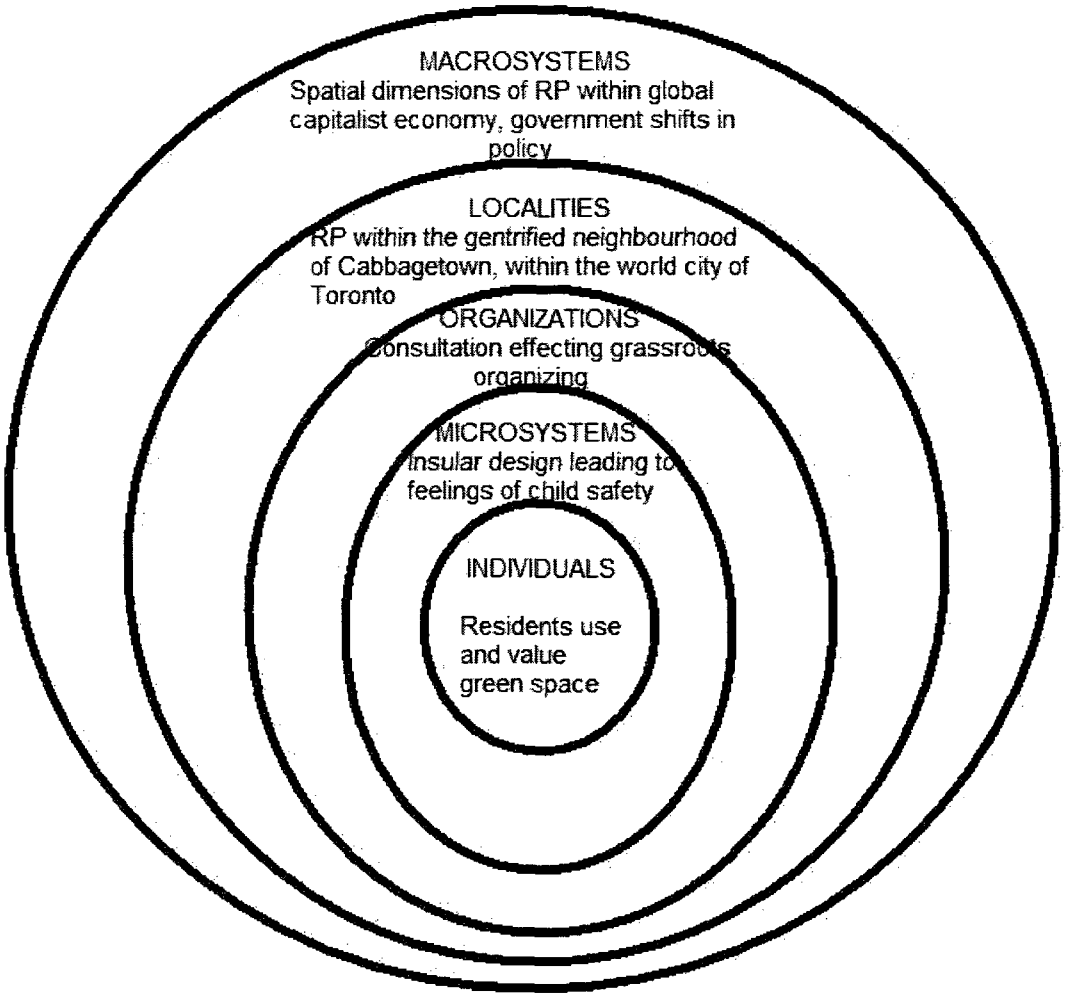
This preference amongst some residents and its correlation with the literature highlights the microsystem: it illustrates the influence of one's perspective according to family role, and locates the influence of familiar considerations in resident priorities for revitalization.

Leading into the level of organizations, one theme that emerged from the data from residents is that both formal and informal grassroots organizations have been built from the community consultation process.

> One of the unforeseen benefits of TCHC's community consultation has been the opportunity for social organizing. Some residents relayed how being employed as a Community Animator has allowed them to discover the breadth of their ethno-cultural community, as well as further explore and address social problems within the community. We have one, we have one, different grassroots groups, we have the, we have like, uh, with the, our community, we also, you know, connected to, made connections with other organizations like [incompr.], Dixon Hall, focus groups, and uh, health centre, through this, through this process, we become connected with all these organizations, and we developed program collaboration with those organizations. Now, I get help from Dixon Hall, they give me space [incompr.], but they did not plan it, [incompr.], so now they don't work outside, so the lawn [incompr.], the lawn coming to the centre, the lawn [incompr.], now they go back to their home, they use [incompr.], they all collect orders and they now work...
>
> Make money.
>
> And now they make money, yeah, so, so this is, this is, it grows out of this revitalization.

These results do echo the need for, and promise of, economic revitalization and job creation within RP, however it is unclear if TCHC had any role in supporting these grassroots initiatives.

Figure 6: Ecological levels of analysis and the Regent Park revitalization



At the level of localities, the revitalization process has highlighted the role of RP within its larger neighbourhood. As one of the goals of the process has been identified by all stakeholder groups as the integration of RP within its larger neighbourhood, the revitalization illustrates the importance of broader neighbourhood context. In addition, the examination of the case study at this ecological level illustrates its position within the city of Toronto. As seen in Figure 1, the neighbourhood is an anomalous low-income development within a prominent high-income downtown core. The plans to make the neighbourhood mixed income will change the economic landscape of the area. No longer will RP be a stigmatized, isolated development within the increasingly gentrified larger neighbourhood of Cabbagetown, but an integrated part of the larger neighbourhood.

Finally, at the macrosystem level of analysis, the context of the revitalization of RP is most clear. However, this level of analysis – especially in the context of a global economic analysis – did not emerge from the primary data. This is most likely due to the passive nature of the interview and focus group questions which could have been more involving and awareness-raising in order to have participants reach this level of analysis. Therefore, the macrosystem level of analysis has been a contextualizing incorporation, based in my literature review and in my review of archival documents.

The neighbourhood can be understood at multiple ecological levels – namely macrosystem and locality – when examined on a spatial level within its economic macrosystem context. Using the World City Hypothesis (Friedmann, 1986) and its articulation of the World City in both economic and spatial terms within a global capitalist economy, the city of Toronto is predicted to have certain characteristics. As discussed previously with Figure 1's illustration of the spatial nature of income distribution in the city, Toronto is clearly demarcated by three

"cities" (Hulchanski, 2007) – low-income, mid-income, and high-income – which naturally determine the characteristics of neighbourhoods within those "cities". Regent Park is located within the high-income City 1 and so its revitalization and plans to change to a mixed-income neighbourhood reduces the anomalous quality of a large public housing development in a larger high-income neighbourhood. Given its location, the revitalization can be seen as consistent with process of gentrification that has been occurring within the downtown core which has been identified by several sources (Hulchanski, 2007; Kipfer & Petrunia,). This explanation of gentrification has also been found in the literature on Regent Park Therefore, there are economic forces at both the macrosystem and locality levels of analysis that couple with grassroots forces that have catalyzed the revitalization of RP.

Second, as discussed in the history of the neighbourhood, RP and its revitalization are influenced by the ideology of government and the climate of policy circles at municipal, provincial, and federal levels. Under the jurisdiction of municipal and provincial government, public housing is no longer considered as desirable as it once was during the post-war Keynesian era. The social context surrounding the neighbourhood in the past decade has not involved the same degree of urgency for housing or slum clearance as surrounded it during its original planning and building. As a housing development with a high level of New Canadians within a city with a very high level of immigration compared to other Canadian cities, RP has faced the unique challenge of an ethno-culturally diverse, urban, and low-income neighbourhood within an increasingly stratified city (Hulchanksi, 2007). The economic and spatial forces influencing the revitalization reflect the magnitude of these forces at the municipal level, and so these changes are essentially the reification of these conceptual macrosystem level factors. This articulation of

the economic and social forces upon RP may provide a framework within which to approach the study of other neighbourhoods or geographic communities.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the degree to which the study of phenomena can be relevant to other similar phenomena or approaches (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First and foremost, the community engagement piece in the RP revitalization is an important historical event. The residents of the largest and oldest public housing neighbourhood in Canada have been actively and uniquely consulted for their needs and priorities in the complete redevelopment of their neighbourhood. Considering the characteristics of residents – i.e., 60% New Canadians, high number of youth, high levels of poverty – the community consultation process developed by TCHC and Public Interest may be of use to other low-income communities seeking a means of community engagement.

Second, at the macrosystem level, the revitalization of Regent Park may introduce a shift in ideology: in dominant social and political understandings of the role of the built environment on poverty, crime and safety in a neighbourhood. The old Regent Park has historically represented what dominant culture considers the image of poverty, and the physical structure of Regent Park is akin to other urban low-income neighbourhoods in Canada: characterized by concrete, little green space, and little if any infrastructure. The fundamental redesign and revitalization of the default mental image of poverty in Toronto, if not Ontario (Purdy, 2005), and the new social climate that will result in over a decade's time will serve as empirical evidence for the deterministic role of the natural and built environment on community health and well-being. If all the stakeholders involved in the revitalization – i.e., TCHC, residents and community staff – firmly believe that the design of the neighbourhood has facilitated its levels of crime, then the assumed social changes from the redesign will confirm this widely held belief.

Plans for Action

My plans for action from my research primarily take the form of communication with the actors involved. First, my thesis manuscript will be summarized in plain language and transformed into a newsletter format and distributed to all community agencies in RP. It is my hope that the staff at these agencies, with a far better familiarity with the needs and dynamics of the community, will use my research findings as a catalyst to consider the important role of the residents in the revitalization. Second, as I have informed all of my participants, once this summary is distributed to community agencies, I will organize and hold a community meeting in the neighbourhood to discuss the themes that emerged in my research, and invite residents to provide feedback and suggest next steps for making use of my findings. It is my hope that residents in attendance will become inspired to consider their role in the community consultation process from 2002, as well as use my findings to hold TCHC accountable to the priorities of residents.

Limitations

One limitation of my research is the issue of timeframes. The community consultation, though well-documented, began in 2002, and therefore some details may have been lost from participants due to the passing of time. It is my hope that through the use of archival documents alongside qualitative interviews and focus groups that the most significant details have been captured in my research.

A second limitation of my research is the difficulty I have faced in recruiting participants – both residents and community staff. Over the period of a year, I worked on building research relationships with key community staff only to be faced with a consistent lack of interest in participating in the planning or process of my research. In addition, my key contact in the

community going into my research – a staff member at an important community agency – was not able to secure my entry into the community to the extent that I had hoped. Even as an insider to the community, my key contact person ended up abandoning her own research within RP because of the difficulties she also faced in recruiting resident and staff participants. The extent of the "over-researched" quality of the community did not fully reveal itself to me until I was immersed in participant recruitment. In the end, I used several means of participant recruitment and – on the advisement of a researcher at the University of Waterloo who has done research on RP – I had to use the most direct form possible to invite participants to my research: I walked around the neighbourhood asking passersby if they a) were residents, and b) wished to participate in my research. This method, though fruitful after several days, was not the most ideal form of participant recruitment. The reason for these difficulties, however, can be traced to a lack of buy-in from the community. I chose to pursue the topic of the revitalization without first consulting with staff and residents for their needs around research, and this lack of buy-in is ultimately reflected in the response I received. From these difficulties, I have learned that for future community-based research projects, buy-in and expressed need are critical to community participation.

Implications and Directions for Future Research

The implications of my research for the field of community psychology are primarily in building on the framework of factors that affect individual and community health and well-being. As presented in the literature review, green space can have direct benefits on individual health, provide direct opportunities for individuals to interact with their neighbours, and the ultimate result in many empirical cases at the level of neighbourhoods is an increased sense of community. Using the argument for justice from the framework of environmental justice,

community psychology could both broaden its conception of justice, as well as strengthen its ecological analysis in social interventions using green space as a consideration in community health and well-being.

My first suggestion for directions for future research is to examine the extent of the community consultation process with community staff specifically in order to assess the meaningfulness of their involvement within the framework of environmental justice. Assessing the power of the community staff – perhaps even in relation to residents – may be useful in examining another facet of TCHC's community consultation process, as well as serve as an important historical documentation. As it pertains to residents, I do not recommend further research with them unless researchers are invited to do so. In my experience, residents would not directly benefit from the process and, as raised in several interviews with community staff, residents require action on social issues that face them as living on low-income, such as a living wage, unemployment, and crime. This is beyond the scope of a Master's thesis, though I encourage others to engage in meaningful Participatory Action Research (PAR) that is based in a call for action from the community in order to address its tangible needs.

My second suggestion for directions for future research centres on awareness raising and the need to involve participants in reflection at multiple ecological levels. As previously mentioned in the discussion section, the connection of the revitalization of RP with the macrosystem or broad economic factors did not come from the primary data. This can be seen as a limitation in the data gathering methods used, but it also speaks to the need to share information in return when conducting community-based research. While my intentions to "give back" to the community from this research take the form of action after the research process has finished, I now see a missed opportunity during my interviews and focus groups to fully facilitate

contemplation of social, political and economic circumstances at ecological levels beyond immediate reality, as is the goal of hermeneutics.

My own directions for future research very clearly build on my inspiration for, and learnings from, my Master's thesis. In my doctoral dissertation, I intend to more broadly explore the topic of green space as a benefit to be prioritized within the framework of environmental justice. This exploration will likely take a similar form of focusing on an economic analysis of the distribution of municipal green space within neighbourhoods in Waterloo Region. I believe there is great potential for the benefit of green space to be researched and advocated for within Community Psychology, and I look forward to taking action with communities to bring about environmental justice.

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Appendix A

Methods Table

Research Question	What Information Will It Seek?	Method(s)	Analysis
RQ1: Beginning in 2002, what has been the process of the revitalization of Regent Park? What have been the inspirations and catalysts for the revitalization?	This RQ will seek to understand the history of the community, the role of green space since its inception, and the layout of the neighbourhood before the revitalization. This RQ will also seek information on what factors have been involved to catalyze the process of revitalization.	Archival data (media, documentaries) Hermeneutic interviews with staff in Regent Park Focus groups with residents	For analysis, there are six pre-coding categories: resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, uses for green space, the benefits of green space, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization. This RQ falls under three of the six pre-coding categories: the process or catalyst for revitalization, uses for green space, and resident priorities for revitalization. Sentence-by-sentence coding
RQ2: What are the power dynamics involved in the revitalization of Regent Park? What has been the community consultation process? Has that process accurately represented the	This RQ will seek to understand and analyze the role of power in the revitalization of Regent Park. Under this focus, this RQ seeks to understand the process of community consultation, and if that process has accurately represented the priorities and needs of residents.	Archival data (primarily TCHC community studies and media reports) Hermeneutic interviews with staff Focus groups with residents	This RQ falls under four of the six pre-coding categories: resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization. Sentence-by-sentence coding

residents?			
RQ3: How is the history of Regent Park, pre- and post-revitalization, an issue of environmental justice?	This RQ seeks to analyze the pre- and post-revitalization history of the neighbourhood and its design through the lens of environmental justice. This lens is intended to form the basis for framing green space in neighbourhoods as an issue of social and environemental justice.	Archival data Hermeneutic interviews with staff Focus groups with residents	This RQ falls under four of the six pre-coding categories: the benefits of green space, uses for green space, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization.

RQ4: What is the relevance of revitalization? What can be learned from the revitalization of a low-income, ethno-culturally diverse, urban neighbourhood?	This RQ seeks to understand the revitalization holistically. In considering the context of Regent Park, and the findings on the community consultation process, power dynamics, and catalysts, looking at the case study in context may be relevant to other contexts. The revitalization of Regent Park may encourage other public housing corporations and cities to revitalize other public housing neighbourhoods. This RQ concerns the transferability of the case study of Regent Park. This RQ seeks to contextualize and emphasize the ecological nature of the revitalization and to understand all factors as a whole.	Archival data Hermeneutic interviews with staff Focus groups with residents	This RQ falls under all six pre-coding categories: the benefits of green space, uses for green space, resident consultation, resident priorities for revitalization, the process or catalyst for revitalization, and the significance of revitalization. Sentence-by-sentence coding

Appendix B

Interview Guide for Regent Park Staff

This interview is to be done with a volunteer or staff from a community organization serving Regent Park.

Before we begin, I'd like to inform you of your rights as a participant. [Hand participant Informed Consent Form] There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. Your participation is voluntary, and you may chose not to answer any question. You will be audio taped, and the recordings will be transcribed. What you say may be quoted. However, it is important to note that your identity will be confidential, and there will be no identifying information associated with your interview. In the transcript, you name will be replaced by a pseudonym. By signing the Informed Consent Form, you consent to be interviewed, audio recorded, to have that recording transcribed for use solely for my Masters thesis project and any publications that may result from it.

My thesis project is on the revitalization of Regent Park and what it means for residents. I'm particularly interested in what role green space, such as grass, trees, and parks, means for the community and how it has been incorporated into the process of revitalization. I am interviewing you because of your unique knowledge and experience on the topic.

To begin, could you tell me where you work and what your organization does?

Probes:

- How did you become a part of this organization?
- Could you tell me a little bit about the history of [your organization]?

In order to better understand your personal position in regard to your opinions on Regent Park, I'd like to ask you about the neighbourhood you're from.

Where did you grow up?

(If did not grow up in Regent Park) When did you first come to Regent Park, to work or to become involved with the neighbourhood?

Probes:

- What were your first impressions of the neighbourhood?
- Regent Park is known to be characterized by row houses that face the main streets. What do you think of its building design?
- What were your first impressions about the residents, the community of Regent Park?
- Was there anything that influenced your perception of the neighbourhood?

How does Regent Park compare, in terms of design, structure and layout, to where you grew up?

Probes:

- Can you please explain you think they are similar/different?

Interview Guide for Regent Park Staff (Continued)

How do you feel about the natural design of the neighbourhood, like the amount of trees and grass?

Probes:
- Please explain?
- Can you think of reasons why the neighbourhood is designed the way it is?

Regent Park has a pretty notable design: row houses along main streets. As public housing tenants, current residents may not have much choice or control over the look of their neighbourhood.

In your experiences, what do residents feel about the built and natural design of their neighbourhood?

Changing the built and natural design of the neighbourhood is a key aspect to the revitalization underway. I'd like to ask you some questions also about the history of the revitalization of Regent Park.

Could you tell me about the history of Regent Park, leading up to the revitalization?

Probes:
- What did you know about Regent Park before hearing about plans to revitalize it?
- What was happening in the community around the time that revitalization first started being discussed?

Who where the driving forces behind the initiation of the revitalization process and how did they communicate the planned revitalization to organizations like yours, the residents of this neighbourhood, and the general public?

Probes:
- What were you told about it when you first heard about it?
- Was it translated for all the different languages in Regent Park?

What were your first thoughts about the revitalization?

Probes:
- How do you feel now about the revitalization?
- Do you think the revitalization is needed?
- Do you think residents think the revitalization is needed?

Who and what groups were invited to the table when decisions were made about the design of the revitalized neighbourhood?

Probes:
- Did you take part in any of the consultations?
- What do you know about residents' input into the design of the revitalized neighbourhood?
- Did the formal consultation have translators?
-

Interview Guide for Regent Park Staff (Continued)

- Do you know if they provided incentives for people to take part in the consultation, like provide childcare or compensation for their time?

Tell me a little bit about how residents have been involved and represented in decision making in regard to neighbourhood development in the past and how that is similar or different to how they were involved in the revitalization process.

Probes:
- Who are the active residents, or people who play leadership roles, in the process?
- Who are the residents, or groups, who have been least active in the process?

What have residents communicated about what they want to stay the same in their neighbourhood?

Probes:
- Do you think there are any particular things – like the buildings or the layout of the grass and trees – that people want to stay the same?
- Why do you think people want to see that stay the same?
- What kinds of things do people do with _____? Can you give me some examples of things you've done or seen?

What have residents communicated about what they would like to see change in their neighbourhood?

Probes:
- Do you think there are any particular things – like the buildings or the layout of the grass and trees – that people want to see changed?
- Why do you think people want to see that changed?
- Has this ever come up before?
- What kinds of things do you think people would do differently with _____? Can you give me some examples of things you imagine or things you've heard from others?

Do know what, if any, plans the revitalization has for parks, gardens and other kinds of green space?

Probes:
- Have you heard anything about community gardens?
- Why do you think parks and green space came to be included in the priorities of the Revitalization?
- Was green space raised amongst the residents or in [your organization]?
- To what degree have the residents needs around green space been met?
- Is there anything you've heard about that residents are unhappy about in the plan?

Do you think the addition of green space will affect the neighbourhood at all?

Probes:
- Please explain how?
- Have any residents talked to you about green space, pre or post-Revitalization?

Interview Guide for Regent Park Staff (Continued)

Now I would like to ask you about the unique community consultation process that has been part of the revitalization.

Was there any concern about resident consultation in the revitalization?

Probes:
- Was this based in any past events?

Could you explain to me the factors that are driving the revitalization process in Regent Park?

Probes:
- What came from residents, and what came from planners and developers?

Thank you. This was the last question. Before we end, is there anything you would like to add about [your organization] and the Revitalization that we haven't addressed so far?

I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to me and your willingness to share your thoughts with me. This has been very helpful and I learned a great deal. Thank you.

Appendix C

Focus Group Interview Guide for Residents of Regent Park

Before we begin, I'd like to inform you of your rights as a participant. [Hand participant Informed Consent Form] There are no risks associated with participating in this research. Your participation is voluntary, and you may chose not to answer any question. You will be audio taped, and the recordings will be transcribed. What you say may be quoted. However, it is important to note that your identity will be confidential, and there will be no identifying information associated with your focus group. In the transcript, you name will be replaced by a pseudonym. By signing the Informed Consent Form, you consent to participate in the focus group, audio recorded, to have that recording transcribed for use solely for my Masters thesis project and any publications that may result from it.

My thesis project is on the revitalization of Regent Park and what it means for residents. I'm particularly interested in what role green space, such as grass, trees, and parks, means for the community and how it has been incorporated into the process of revitalization. I am interviewing you because of your unique knowledge and experience on the topic.

To begin, can you all introduce yourselves and tell us when you came to Regent Park, where in Regent Park do you live?

How do you feel about living in Regent Park?

Probes:
- What is it like living in your neighbourhood?
- What do you like about your neighbourhood?
- What don't you like about your neighbourhood?

What do you value about your neighbourhood?

Probes:
- What is important to keep in the neighbourhood?
- If you had the power to change things in this community, what would you change?

[(If it comes up) You mentioned the layout of the neighbourhood/green space/community gardens, what is it about _____ that is beneficial?]

What do you know about the revitalization process?

Probes:
- How do you feel about it?
- What has been your experience with the community consultation process with the revitalization?

How do you think Regent Park compares to other neighbourhoods (within Toronto)?

Probes:
- [For the following, take notes on flipchart paper to facilitate discussion]

Focus Group Interview Guide for Residents of Regent Park (Continued)

- How does it compare to Trinity-Bellwoods? How does it compare to The Beaches? How does it compare to Scarborough Village?
- [If needed, name the street boundaries of the neighbourhood and demonstrate on a map, OR suggest alternative neighbourhood with similar qualities]
- What are the differences?

How did you first hear about the revitalization?

Probes:

- What were you told about the revitalization?
- What were other residents told about it?
- Did you take part in any of the consultations?
- Was the information about the revitalization translated for all the different languages in Regent Park?

Appendix D

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Interview

This form is intended to inform you of your rights as a participant in research.

Information
The research that I am conducting is for my Master's thesis in Community Psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. My research is particularly concerned with what the community of Regent Park has experienced, and what the city of Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) has implemented around the revitalization of the neighbourhood. I am interested in this research because I think it's important to document what is happening with the revitalization because it's significant to make major improvements to existing neighbourhoods, especially at the cost of the city. Regent Park will look completely different when all of the phases of the revitalization are over, and it is being done with the expectation that it will improve the quality of life of the people who live there. My research wants to understand what is important to the quality of life now for the residents of Regent Park, as well as what they have experienced since the idea of changing the neighbourhood was first brought up.

You are invited, as someone with experience and knowledge on the revitalization of Regent Park, to participate in an interview which will last between 45 minutes to one hour. The interview will be audio recorded. Between 8 and 10 other staff who work in Regent Park will be interviewed.

When consenting to this interview please note that you also have the option to consent to be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription and you will also have the option to allow me to use your quotations, without identifiers, in my research study on the Revitalization of Regent Park. No deception will be used in this study. Your consent form and interview data will be stored in locked files in my office at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Risks
There are minimal risks for participating in this research. There is some risk you may feel uncomfortable discussing personal or professional issues related to the research topic. If so, you may stop your participation at any time and you may refuse to answer any particular question asked to the group without penalty. You will be provided with a copy of the written transcript of your interview so that you can confirm the accuracy of the transcript, add or clarify any information, and ensure that your anonymity is protected by removing any potentially identifying information from the transcript and selected quotes.

Benefits
The potential benefits of participating in this research are the heightened awareness prompted by your participation, where you are given the opportunity to reflect on your work in ways you do not everyday.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT (continued)
The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Interview

Confidentiality

Your anonymity will be protected by not using your real names in the transcript or the write-up. With your consent, direct quotations from your interview will be used in the research project. You will have an opportunity to review the quotations selected from the transcript to ensure that there is no identifiable information. You will be contacted by telephone or e-mail and you will be sent the transcript and selected quotes for your review and approval. The confidentiality of quotations cannot be guaranteed while in transit (i.e. if transferred by email).

The digital data (audio recording, notes and transcript) obtained from the interview will remain in a secure research drive only available to the Principal Investigator and her Advisor. Physical data (i.e., consent forms) will be stored in a secure, locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Only the Primary Investigator, Jacqueline de Schutter, will handle the data.

The data containing identifying information will be retained for seven years. Once this period has expired (July 1, 2016), this data will be disposed of by the Primary Investigator. Physical data will be disposed of via shredding all paper documents. If an individual withdraws from the study before completion, both their digital and physical data will be destroyed by deleting electronic files and shredding physical files within two days of noticing the Principal Investigator of their withdrawal. Unidentifying information, such as transcripts and audio recordings, will not be destroyed.

Contact

If you have questions at any time about the research or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this research) you may contact me, the Principal Investigator, Jacqueline de Schutter at (519) 590-3261, dexs7310@wlu.ca. My advisor is Manuel Riemer, (519) 884-0710, extension 2982 (mriemer@wlu.ca). This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Human Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions about the ethics of the project you may contact Bill Marr, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-0710, extension 2468, bmarr@wlu.ca.

Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the research before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed. You have the right to omit any question(s)/procedure(s) you choose. However, participation in this study requires that the participant is willing to provide consent for the use of quotations from the interview transcripts.

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Interview

Consent

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Feedback

Participants have the option at the end of this form to request a final copy of the research write up (i.e. the manuscript). Participants wishing to receive the final write up will either be e-mailed or mailed a copy, depending on their preferred means.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT (continued)
The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Interview

Please check all boxes that apply:

□ **I agree to be interviewed**

□ **I agree to be audio recorded**

□ **I agree to be quoted**

If you agree to be audio recorded and quoted, please provide your contact information below to review your transcript.

□ **I would like a copy of the final manuscript of this research**

E-mail: _____

Telephone : _____

Participant's Signature_____

Date _____

Appendix E

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Focus Group

This form is intended to inform you of your rights as a participant in research.

Information

The research that I am conducting is for my Master's thesis in Community Psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. My research is particularly concerned with what the community of Regent Park has experienced, and what the city of Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) has implemented around the revitalization of the neighbourhood. I am interested in this research because I think it's important to document what is happening with the revitalization because it's significant to make major improvements to existing neighbourhoods, especially at the cost of the city. Regent Park will look completely different when all of the phases of the revitalization are over, and it is being done with the expectation that it will improve the quality of life of the people who live there. My research wants to understand what is important to the quality of life now for the residents of Regent Park, as well as what they have experienced since the idea of changing the neighbourhood was first brought up.

You are invited, as someone with experience and knowledge on the revitalization of Regent Park, to participate in a focus group of four to six individuals which will last between an hour to two hours. After the focus group has been transcribed, you will be sent a copy of the transcript to review for accuracy and for the opportunity to play a small role in the research by noting the themes that emerged in the discussion under each question. This "preliminary coding" will take about 30 minutes. Child care will be provided and you will be compensated with $15 for your participation (to be awarded after the focus group).

When consenting to participation in the focus group please note that you also have the option to consent to be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription and you will also have the option to allow me to use your quotations, without identifiers, in my research study on the Revitalization of Regent Park. No deception will be used in this study. Your consent form and interview data will be stored in locked files in my office at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Risks

There are minimal risks for participating in this research. There is some risk you may feel uncomfortable discussing personal or professional issues related to the research topic. If so, you may stop your participation at any time and you may refuse to answer any particular question asked to the group without penalty. You will be provided with a copy of the written transcript of your focus group so that you can confirm the accuracy of the transcript, add or clarify any information, and ensure that your anonymity is protected by removing any potentially identifying information from the transcript and selected quotes.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
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Focus Group

Benefits

The potential benefits of participating in this research are the heightened awareness prompted by your participation, where you are given the opportunity to reflect on your neighbourhood and your lives in ways you do not everyday with other residents in a comfortable setting. Also, the focus groups may improve your own understanding of participation, which you can apply to your personal contexts.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus groups. Steps to protect privacy and confidentiality will be taken. First, as a participant, you will be asked to keep the discussion private from others for the sake of confidentiality. Second, all data collected from participants will be stripped of any identifying information and replaced with non-personal identifiers (e.g., names changed into numbers). With your consent, direct quotations from your focus group will be used in the research project without attribution. You will have an opportunity to review the quotations selected from the transcript to ensure that there is no identifiable information. You will be contacted by telephone or e-mail and you will be sent the transcript and selected quotes for your review and approval. The confidentiality of quotations cannot be guaranteed while in transit (i.e. if transferred by email).

The digital data (audio recording, notes and transcript) obtained from focus group will remain in a secure research drive only available to the Principal Investigator and her Advisor. Physical data (i.e., consent forms) will be stored in a secure, locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Only the Primary Investigator, Jacqueline de Schutter, will handle the data.

The data containing identifying information will be retained for seven years. Once this period has expired (July 1, 2016), this data will be disposed of by the Primary Investigator. Physical data will be disposed of via shredding all paper documents. If an individual withdraws from the study before completion, both their digital and physical data will be destroyed by deleting electronic files and shredding physical files within two days of noticing the Principal Investigator of their withdrawal. Unidentifying information, such as transcripts and audio recordings, will not be destroyed.

Contact

If you have questions at any time about the research or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this research) you may contact me, the Principal Investigator, Jacqueline de Schutter at (416) 792-7589, dexs7310@wlu.ca. My advisor is Manuel Riemer, (519) 884-0710, extension 2982 (mriemer@wlu.ca). This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Human Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions about the ethics of the project you may contact Bill Marr, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-0710, extension 2468, bmarr@wlu.ca.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT (continued)
The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Focus Group

Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the research before data collection is completed, your physical data will be destroyed (i.e. consent forms), however the audio recording cannot be destroyed. You have the right to omit any question(s)/procedure(s) you choose.

Consent

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Feedback

Participants have the option at the end of this form to request a final copy of the research write up (i.e. the manuscript). Participants wishing to receive the final write up will either be e-mailed or mailed a copy, depending on their preferred means.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
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The Political Role and Social Meaning of Green Space in Regent Park
Jacqueline de Schutter, Manuel Riemer (advisor)
Focus Group

Please check all boxes that apply:

□ **I agree to be interviewed**

□ **I agree to be audio recorded**

□ **I agree to be quoted**

If you agree to be audio recorded and quoted, please provide your contact information below to review your transcript.

□ **I would like a copy of the final manuscript of this research**

To be contacted to review the transcript of the focus group, please provide your e-mail address or, alternately, your telephone number to be contacted for your mailing address.

E-mail: _____

Telephone : _____

Participant's Signature_____

Date _____

Appendix F

Recruitment Script – Interview

Hello, my name is Jacqueline de Schutter and I am a Masters student at Wilfrid Laurier University. My studies are in Community Psychology – a field of psychology that looks at the health and well-being of communities at multiple levels in society. I'm conducting a Master's thesis project on the process of the revitalization in Regent Park, and I would like to invite you to participate in an interview on what you have seen professionally and personally around the revitalization and your opinions on it. The interview will take place around the Regent Park neighbourhood, and will last between 45 minutes and one hour.

The research that I am conducting is particularly concerned with what the community of Regent Park has experienced, and what the city of Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) has implemented around the revitalization of the neighbourhood. I am interested in this research because I think it's important to document what is happening with the revitalization because it's significant to make major improvements to existing neighbourhoods, especially at the cost of the city. Regent Park will look completely different when all of the phases of the revitalization are over, and it is being done with the expectation that it will improve the quality of life of the people who live there. My research wants to understand what is important to the quality of life now for the residents of Regent Park, what is important to staff in the community, as well as what the community has experienced since the idea of changing the neighbourhood was first brought up.

I would like to note that I would very much appreciate your participation in my research. I would not be able to conduct this research and tell the story of the experience of this revitalization process without hearing of your experiences and opinions as staff in the community. Taking the time to help create this research on the revitalization of Regent Park will form what I hope will be one of the many community voices on this topic. I hope especially that recording this process in Regent Park will help share what it means to improve the look and design of a neighbourhood and whose vision that really belongs to.

If you would like to participate in the interview, it will be audio recorded. If you consent to it, some of your quotations will be used to inform the data that I gather and the transcript of the interview will be used for my Master's thesis, to be completed in part for my Master's degree in Community Psychology.

If you agree to participate, please let me know if you prefer to be contacted by telephone or e-mail. If you prefer e-mail, please reply to dexs7310@wlu.ca to confirm your participation, and I will send you back an Informed Consent Form to look over – and sign when at the interview – that outlines your rights as a participant in the research. Also, I will reply with a list of possible dates and times to conduct the interview.

Thanks for your time,

Jacqueline de Schutter

Recruitment Script – Interview (Continued)

M.A. Candidate
Wilfrid Laurier University

Appendix G

Recruitment Script – Focus Group

Hello, my name is Jacqueline de Schutter and I am a Masters student at Wilfrid Laurier University. My studies are in Community Psychology – a field of psychology that looks at the health and well-being of communities at multiple levels in society. I'm conducting a Master's thesis project on the process of the revitalization in Regent Park, and I would like to invite you to participate in a focus group (a group discussion of 4-6 people on specific topics) on what you have seen around the revitalization and your opinions on it. The focus group will take place around the Regent Park neighbourhood, and will last between 1.5-2 hours. To involve participants as much as possible in analysis, as a participant in the focus group you will also be asked to review the focus group transcript for themes which will take between 30 minutes and one hour. Childcare will be provided. You will be compensated with $15 for your time and participation.

The research that I am conducting is particularly concerned with what the community of Regent Park has experienced, and what the city of Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) has implemented around the revitalization of the neighbourhood. I am interested in this research because I think it's important to document what is happening with the revitalization because it's significant to make major improvements to existing neighbourhoods, especially at the cost of the city. Regent Park will look completely different when all of the phases of the revitalization are over, and it is being done with the expectation that it will improve the quality of life of the people who live there. My research wants to understand what is important to the quality of life now for the residents of Regent Park, as well as what they have experienced since the idea of changing the neighbourhood was first brought up.

I would like to note that I would very much appreciate your participation in my research. I would not be able to conduct this research and tell the story of the experience of this revitalization process without hearing of your experiences and opinions. Taking the time to help create this research on the revitalization of Regent Park will form what I hope will be one of the many community voices on this topic. I hope especially that recording this process in Regent Park will help share what it means to improve the look and design of a neighbourhood and whose vision that really belongs to.

If you would like to participate in the focus group, it will be audio recorded. If you consent to it, some of your quotations will be used to inform the data that I gather and the transcription of the focus group discussions will be used for my Master's thesis, to be completed in part for my Master's degree in Community Psychology.

If you agree to participate, please let me know if you prefer to be contacted by telephone or e-mail. If you prefer e-mail, please reply to dexs7310@wlu.ca to confirm your participation, and I will send you back an Informed Consent Form to look over – and sign when at the focus group – that outlines your rights as a participant in the research. Also, I will reply with a list of possible dates and times to conduct the focus group and ask that you send it back so I can schedule a time that works for everyone.

Recruitment Script – Focus Group (Continued)

Thanks for your time,

Jacqueline de Schutter
M.A. Candidate
Wilfrid Laurier University