

April 8, 1947

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Sociology 150

Suggestions for Course Papers

1. The Housing Community and Its Social Environs.

Prevailing attitudes toward the housing community among residents in nearby areas, Images of the community. Bases for these images. Degree of contact with residents of housing community. Channels of communication. (Can be related to paper #2.)

2. Public and Private Housing Communities in the Public Eye.

Content-analyses of references in local newspapers to proposed and existing housing communities. Factors singled out for comment regarding low-rent communities compared with those for middle-income groups. Stigma and status-building categories of reference.

3. Comparative Value of Field Observation, Interviews and Schedules as Devices for Research in Community Organization.

Study of monographs on community organization, to detect the types of data obtained by one or another method. Locating and classifying types of data available through each procedure. Actual inter-relations of several types of data in the analysis.

4. Cross-cultural Comparisons of the Concepts of Privacy.

Class differences in "privacy" as a value. Various types of privacy. Techniques for ensuring privacy. Varying functions of privacy.

5. The Place of Housing in Value Systems as Reflects in Income-Budgets and Time-Budgets.

Survey of income budget studies (e.g. as summarized by Zimmerman and Faith Williams) to determine proportions of income devoted to shelter, furnishings, etc. Variations by geographic region, occupations, ethnic groups, rural and urban populations, etc. Survey of time-budgets to determine variations in locus of daily round of activities, with variations by sex, region, occupation, income, ethnic groups, etc.

6. Mobility, Rootedness and the Local Community.

Survey of existing literature on residential mobility. Variations by class, occupation, income, etc. Factors making for mobility. Tensions between pressures for mobility and concern with rootedness. Consequences of mobility.

7. Patterns of Participation in Community Organization.

A review and comparison of the numerous studies of "social participation" among the various social and economic strata, ethnic groups, age groups, etc. in varying types of communities. What are the patterns of participation? The alleged factors affecting participation?

8. Presumptions Concerning Social Life in Public Housing Communities.

An analysis of U.S. Senate hearings on housing bills, to determine the pre-conceptions and facts introduced into this testimony concerning the "social effects" of public housing upon the resident population. An itemization of the values in terms of which public housing is defended or attacked (e.g. socialism, health asset, "rights" to minimum housing, economic asset to community, etc.)

9. Analysis of Social Participation in a ~~Low-rent~~ Housing-Project.

Detailed material is available for one project in Yonkers. The student undertaking this assignment must be familiar with the use of the Hollerith machine.

10. Informal Personal Relations in a Low-rent Housing Project.

(As in #10)

11. Racial Occupancy Patterns in Public Housing Projects.

A bibliography on this subject is available, although there is little by way of systematic research on the problem. Judging from a systematic review of the literature, what factors have been found to promote inter-racial amity, which lead to intensified conflicts? What techniques of management have been employed with what results?

12. The Housing Manager: An Occupational Type.

Previous career -- patterns of housing managers, public and private. Circulation of managers between public and private fields. Data to be obtained through questionnaires addressed to membership of National Association of Housing officials.