

*NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE: FACTS, PERCEPTIONS, PROSPECTS*

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*ABSTRACT*

*This study is based on personal interviews with 312 residents of a racially-transitional neighborhood in Akron, Ohio. Three indexes, not previously linked, indicate facility use, neighboring and neighborhood satisfaction in this transitional area. The data are analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively. Though facility use showed a decline by white residents, neighboring and satisfaction levels were high. A model of resident types and an empirically-validated link between knowledge of the neighborhood organization and perceptions of the neighborhood's future are two theoretical explanations offered for these unexpectedly high levels. This is the first empirical test of Hunter's theory that organizations can create a sense of community when none exists in transitional neighborhoods. Using the model of resident types, policies are suggested for achieving neighborhood stabilization in racially-transitional areas, recognizing that neighboring and satisfaction are not enough to achieve it.*

*INTRODUCTION*

One persistent topic of urban research is neighborhood change or succession. Despite extensive literature on this subject, embodying three different perspectives, there is no comprehensive analysis linking neighborhood-change research and theory to neighborhood-stability policies.

The earliest type of analysis is an ecological approach which examines neighborhood change in relation to land use, ecological processes, models of locational choice and social area analysis (Bailey, 1966; Hoyt, 1939; McKenzie, 1926; Shevky and Bell, 1955).

More recent studies of neighborhood change may be categorized into two additional approaches offering differing views about the

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future of racially changing neighborhoods. The first approach is called *degenerative*. It suggests an inevitability of neighborhood decline once institutional forces cause population turnover and affect residents' locational choices (Aldrich and Reiss, 1976; Little, Nourse and Phares, 1975; Molotch, 1972; Varady, 1979; Yancy and Erickson, 1979).

The second more recent approach is called *interactionist*. Its focus is on the relationship between social support networks and neighborhood preservation (Ahlbrandt and Brophy, 1975; Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979; Helper, 1979; Hunter, 1975; Suttles, 1972; Zehner and Chapin, 1974). The interactionist perspective does not accept the inevitability of neighborhood decline. It offers hope for neighborhood stability through social support networks. Consistent with this approach is the theory that organizations can create a sense of community when none exists in racially-transitional neighborhoods (Hunter, 1975).

The study reported here of an Akron, Ohio racially-transitional neighborhood is part of a larger one on the neighborhood-stabilization movement through the country. It offers a profile of one changing neighborhood and its organized struggle to retain stability in a racially-integrated area. Two basic research questions are posed: 1) What are the internal dynamics of a racially-transitional neighborhood? 2) Can a neighborhood organization contribute to stability in such a neighborhood? The first question focuses on the feelings and actions of the residents of the neighborhood. Are they satisfied with the neighborhood? Do they neighbor with each other? Do they use the facilities of the neighborhood?

Combining the first and second basic research questions, five hypotheses are suggested. In a racially-transitional neighborhood, when considerable racial change has already occurred:

1. Facility use by whites is lower than use by blacks.
2. Neighboring is minimal.
3. Satisfaction is low.
4. Anxiety about the future is high.
5. The presence of an active neighborhood stabilization organization has little impact.

This study, though supportive of the interactionist approach, differs from previous interactionist research in six ways:

1. The Akron study was conducted in a neighborhood which had already undergone major racial transition. Most previous studies focus on areas with much lower levels of racial change.
2. The Akron study examines three neighborhood aspects which have not been combined within any previous study: facility use, neighboring, and satisfaction.

3. The Akron study combines qualitative and quantitative methods. Previous studies are primarily quantitative.
4. The Akron study specifically examines the differing perceptions of racial and other subgroups. Most other interactionist studies do not.
5. The Akron study offers the first attempt to test Albert Hunter's theory empirically (1975).
6. The Akron study concludes that interaction and satisfaction are necessary, but insufficient, conditions for neighborhood stability.

This paper describes the setting and research design of the study first. It then presents the findings on the extent of facility use, neighboring and satisfaction in a racially-transitional area. The findings are then related to a theoretical model of resident types and to a partial confirmation of Hunter's theory. Finally, implications of the findings for policy formation are discussed, using an approach called *interventionist*.

#### THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Understanding the setting of the study is important and relevant to the conclusions and policy implications discussed later. The transitional area selected for the study is the largest interracial area of Akron, Ohio and its surrounding metropolitan regions. The area is not only racially diverse, it is socio-economically varied with income levels ranging from low- and moderate- to middle- and upper-middle incomes. It consists of 200 blocks, contains 10,000 households and includes portions of five census tracts.

One census tract was chosen as the study site for four reasons. Tract 5062 was selected because it: 1) was still racially integrated, 2) had experienced much of the turnover trauma of the west side of Akron, 3) was the only complete tract in the study area, and 4) contained the senior high school serving the area -- thus representing the "hub" of the neighborhood. For these reasons, this tract seemed to offer the best opportunity to study an area "in transition", so typical of other such neighborhoods across the country.

Between 1962 and 1982, the minority proportions of the larger area increased in some of the five tracts by 50 percent or more, primarily because of urban-renewal relocation and public housing-site selection. The results of these institutional forces were further exacerbated by two other institutional forces: real estate steering tactics and bank red-lining. All these forces had an impact on the schools and businesses of the neighborhood, leading to instability and further turnover. This entire pattern is typical of the experience of other urban transitional neighborhoods (Helper, 1969; Przbylski, 1979; Saltman, 1977, 1978, 1980; Taub, Taylor and Dunham, 1984; Taylor, 1979). The figures in Table 1 indicate the extent of racial change in the study area since 1950 when it was an all-white neighborhood.

Table 1. Racial Change in Study Area - 1960-1980.

Tract	Percent Black		
	1960	1970	1980
5061	0	.3	9
5062*	0	11	57
5063	23	77	85
5064	0	4	16
5065	0	27	75

\* Survey site

The general perception of the area was one of instability at the time of the study in 1979. Because of the increasing racial turnover in the residential and commercial area, the general view was that neighboring had decreased and a "sense of community" (Hunter, 1975) had been lost. People believed that residents of the area were anxious and nervous about the possibility of further turnover. This seemed especially true of Tract 5062, the site of the study.

#### THE ORGANIZATION

The larger area of five census tracts represents the boundaries of the neighborhood stabilization efforts conducted in Akron since 1967 by West Side Neighbors. One of hundreds of similar neighborhood groups across the country, West Side Neighbors (WSN) began as a demonstration model of "effective integrated living". It was formed in direct response to four institutional forces critically affecting the west side of Akron: urban-renewal relocation, public housing-site selection, real estate steering practices and school racial imbalance.

The organization refers to itself as a voluntary, neighborhood improvement association dedicated to the maintenance of an open, integrated and desirable community. Its first ten years of work were unfunded, conducted totally by volunteer committees and a twenty-one member board of directors representing the diverse population of the area.

In 1977, WSN won the Akron-area Brotherhood Award for "outstanding efforts" contributing to better inter-group relations. Its programs were typical of such groups and included block organization, housing-complaint resolution, area advocacy, newsletter and educational material distribution and special community events (international smorgasbord dinners, arts festivals and regular open meetings in rotating locations).

Since 1977, WSN has received small, short-term grants from private foundations and local and federal government agencies to continue its stabilization efforts. It now has one part-time staff person working out of a small office in a neighborhood church, aided by volunteers.

#### METHODS

The data were obtained from interviews, field notes and participant observation. Field notes and observations were collected during the author's residence in the study area since 1955; interviews were conducted in 1979. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were applied to the data. In interviewing, 312 households were selected, representing 18 percent of all households in the tract studied. There was complete geographical coverage. Four households were randomly selected for interviewing on each block in the tract, with "block" referring to one square census block. A separate sub-survey was conducted of all households with "For Sale" signs.

The structured interview schedule consisted primarily of open-ended questions, with occasional designated choices of answers. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The interview schedule contained eight clusters of questions (a total of 83 questions) concerning: 1) facility use, 2) sense of community, 3) neighboring, 4) WSN impact, 5) interest in a useful service exchange (a new program contemplated by WSN), 6) neighborhood concerns, 7) real estate experiences and prospects, and 8) respondent characteristics. Interviewers were instructed to include all narrative statements, which were later typed on sorting cards (McBee system) for qualitative analysis.

Three indexes were constructed for measuring the extent of facility use, neighbor interaction, and neighborhood satisfaction. These were the dependent variables. Previous community research has not linked these three variables.

Index 1, Facility Use (FU) was based on responses to four questions, scored as 1 for use of facilities in the WSN and 0 for use outside the area. The higher the score, the greater the use of facilities in the WSN area. The facilities were stores offering groceries, shoe repairs, drugs and clothes cleaning. Items were dropped from the Indexes if they correlated less than .40 with the total mean score for each Index.

Index 2 concerned Neighboring (N) and was based on responses to five questions. The questions concerned the number of neighbors' names known, the frequency of chatting, exchange of household items and visiting. Again, the higher the score, the more neighboring was present.

Index 3, Neighborhood Satisfaction (NS), focused on 21 specific concerns and responses to two general questions on neighborhood rating and neighborhood satisfaction. Nine specific concerns were included in Index 3: noise, dogs, neighbors, kids, lawns, housing, business area and turnover.

Stepwise regression analyses in Table 2 were done for the three indexes by race, using ten independent variables: age, children (under age 19), education, income, location of block, occupation, race, school (public or private), sex and years in the neighborhood. These were selected for their significance after analysis of cross-tabulations and elaboration. Variables contributing less than one percent of the variance were omitted from the table.

#### FINDINGS

*Demographics.* 52 percent of the respondents are white and 48 percent are black. There is a high proportion of middle-income levels and almost total owner-occupancy. Of those responding, 75 percent have incomes above \$12,000 (the city median income) and 92 percent own their homes. This is true for blacks and whites alike, though blacks have double the number (66 percent) of two-income households when compared to whites. This is consistent with general Census findings across the country at the time.

Though the sample is almost evenly divided into those with and without children under 19, the racial subsamples show marked differences and reversed proportions. Two-thirds of the blacks have children under 19, while two-thirds of the whites have no children under 19. This is also related to age differences according to race. Blacks are generally younger, with only three percent over-65 compared to 27 percent of the white respondents over-65. These results are consistent with those of national studies (Bradburn, Sudman and Gockel, 1971), though the income levels and owner-occupancy rates are higher in the Akron neighborhood than most other interracial areas.

Households with children under 19 have one-third of them attending private or parochial schools, with significant differences in white and black households. Three times as many of the white children attend private or parochial school as do the black children. This, of course, contributes to area public schools being predominantly black, a negative factor for neighborhood stabilization (Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979; Bradburn et al., 1971; Helper, 1979; Varady, 1979).

The most surprising finding in the personal data is the fact that whites are moving into the tract at almost the same rate as blacks, reversing a trend of over a decade of more black in-movement than white. The whites moving in most recently have a high educational level, as Table 3 indicates. Analysis of their family composition indicates that a majority (58 percent) of the white newcomers have no children, in contrast to the black newcomers, of whom a majority (71 percent) have children.

#### *Facility Use*

Residents who use the area businesses primarily use drug stores, cleaning and laundry stores and shoe repair shops, with only one-third using the grocery stores in the neighborhood. Analyzing for racial differences reveals that the respondents who use the WSN area facilities most frequently are black. Fifty-seven percent of the

Table 2. Stepwise Regression Analyses for Three Indexes by Race and Independent Variables (R<sup>2</sup> values)

FACILITY USE					
Variable	White	Variable	Black	Variable	All
Yrs.inN	.12**	Location	.06*	Location	.08
Occ.	.19***	Education	.08*	Race	.11*
Sex	.20**	Yrs.inN	.11	Yrs.inN	.17*
Children	.23***	School	.12	Sex	.18
Total Explained Variance	.29		.15		.21
NEIGHBORING					
Location	.10***	Yrs.inN	.15***	Yrs.inN	.03*
Yrs.inN	.13**	Children	.24***	Location	.06*
Children	.17*	Location	.26***	Race	.08*
Age	.19**	Income	.28***	Occ.	.09
Total Explained Variance	.21		.31		.25
NEIGHBORHOOD SATISFACTION					
Location	.06*	Location	.04	Yrs.inN	.03*
Age	.08	Occ.	.08	Location	.06*
Occ.	.10	School	.10*	Race	.08*
Children	.11	Yrs.inN	.13*	Occ.	.09
Total Explained Variance	.12		.14		.10

\*F significant at .05 level

\*\*F significant at .01 level

\*\*\*F significant at .001 level

NOTE: No association was found among the three indexes for the total sample. This supports Hunter's finding (1975) of no association between facility use and neighboring, and Zehner and Chapin's (1974) finding of no association between neighboring and satisfaction. Racial analysis of a correlation matrix of the three indexes above shows blacks with a low positive correlation (.29) of facility use and neighboring and a low negative correlation (-.20) of facility use and satisfaction. For whites, no association was shown for the three indexes. Complete data are available from the author.

black respondents have high-user scores compared to only 24 percent of the white respondents. Conversely, only 24 percent of the blacks have low-user scores compared to 47 percent of the whites ( $X^2 = 18.10$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .001$ ). The complete table from which  $X^2$  is computed is a 3x3 one including high, moderate, and low scores for blacks, whites and total respondents.

This finding reinforces the studies of Aldrich and Reiss (1976) and Yancey and Ericksen (1979) who find a strong negative effect of blacks on the number of facilities and services found in urban neighborhoods. Hunter's (1975) study of facility use in a Rochester transitional neighborhood also finds a general decline in residents' use of facilities close to their homes, but does not report a racial subgroup analysis.

Table 2 indicates that 17 percent of the variance in facility use is explained by race and years in the neighborhood, with a total explained variance of 21 percent. Proximity to the shopping area is significantly related to facility use. Race, however, is more significant than location in accounting for facility use by the total sample.

### *Neighboring*

Scores on neighboring are considerably higher than anticipated. They are one of the unexpected results of the Akron study. The data indicate that a majority of residents have quite extensive social ties with their neighbors, contrary to the common local perception of the area as one of alienation due to turnover. Table 4 indicates that a majority of respondents know the names of six or more of their neighbors, 77 percent chat with their neighbors often or sometimes and 54 percent visit with their neighbors often or sometimes. Since all blocks in the study tract are racially integrated, ranging from 32-to-68 percent black, the neighboring is interracial. Table 4(C) indicates that neighboring scores are higher for whites than blacks, but whites also lived in the neighborhood longer. Regression analyses in Table 2 show length of residence as the most important predictive factor of neighboring. Thus, though racial differences in neighboring exist in the study neighborhood, the statistics hardly indicate the anomic neighborhood anticipated.

Interpersonal ties in urban neighborhoods have been analyzed extensively (Galster, 1982; Helper, 1979; Hunter, 1975; O'Brien, 1975; Zehner and Chapin, 1974). Hunter finds that almost 80 percent of the respondents in his Rochester study chat "often or sometimes" with their neighbors rather than "rarely or never". He finds no significant association between decline in local facility use and neighboring, though the Rochester neighborhood did not undergo the extent of racial transition that occurred in the Akron neighborhood. In 1970, the percent black ranged from only 4.5 to 27.3 in the three tracts of the Rochester study area.

Zehner and Chapin's (1974) analysis of neighboring is based on visits and shared activities rather than chatting or knowledge of first names, as in the Akron study. They find that 40 percent of the

Table 3. Educational Level by Length of Residence and Race (Percent)

Ed. Level	Length of Residence							
	Blacks				Whites			
	0-3	3-10	10+	Total	0-3	3-10	10+	Total
Low	34	28	38	100	11	0	89	100
Moderate	29	37	34	100	16	22	62	100
High	27	50	23	100	29	18	53	100
(N)	(43)	(54)	(46)	(143)	(35)	(30)	(93)	(158)

Note: Low = Less than high school graduate  
 Moderate = High school graduate/some college  
 High = College graduate/ graduate school

Table 4. Neighboring in Transitional Area

A. Number of Neighbors' Names Known

Number	Percent
6 or more	61
3 to 5	24
1 or 2	11
None	4
	100 (N = 312)

B. Chatting and Visiting with Neighbors

Frequency	Chat	Visit
Often	29	17
Sometimes	48	37
Rarely	20	23
Never	3	23
	100	100 (N = 312)

C. Neighboring Scores by Race (Percent)

	Black	White	Total
High	25	45	36
Moderate	50	40	45
Low	25	15	19
	100	100	100 (N = 312)

residents in their study area near Washington, D.C. visit neighbors as often as once a week. They also find no association between patterns of interaction and feelings of satisfaction toward the neighborhood. Their study areas also do not reflect the extent of racial transition that took place in the Akron neighborhood. The four communities that Zehner and Chapin study were from 1-to-26 percent black in 1970.

#### *Satisfaction*

Table 5 shows the generally high level of satisfaction with the Akron neighborhood for the total sample and for the racial subsample. Seventy percent of the respondents rate the neighborhood excellent or good, while 90 percent are very satisfied or pretty satisfied with their neighborhood. This level of satisfaction is retained in the racial breakdown, with only four percent difference in black and white attitudes.

Though national surveys indicate that most people in the United States rate their neighborhoods as excellent or good places to live (HUD Annual Housing Survey, 1979b), this is generally not the case with racially-transitional neighborhoods or those that are considered substantially integrated or segregated (Bradburn, Sudman, and Glockel, 1971).

#### *Concerns*

The specific concerns of the residents are shown in Table 6, with a rank order of 21 concerns considered as serious or somewhat serious problems in the neighborhood. The most serious problem in this tract is the rundown condition of the business area, cited by the greatest number of residents. It supports Aldrich and Reiss' (1976) findings as well as those of Yancey and Ericksen (1979) relating racial composition to decline in facilities.

The most significant background variables associated with this concern are length of residence and race. People who have lived in the neighborhood the longest have the highest percentage viewing this concern as a serious problem (30 percent). Only half as many (16 percent) of those with a shorter length of residence view this as a serious problem. Of the white respondents, 29 percent view this as a serious problem compared to 15 percent of the black respondents. This is also reflected in the fact that white respondents use the area facilities less than do black respondents. Of those who do not view this as a problem, 58 percent are black compared to 42 percent who are white. Thus, the neighborhood and its amenities are perceived differently by residents of different races.

Some examples of concern with the condition of the business area (Copley Road) are offered in the following statements of black and white residents, young and old, showing their distress:

"I'm planning to move because of the deterioration of the businesses" (white, age 65+, length of residence 10+ yrs).

Table 5. Neighborhood Satisfaction

A. Rating of Neighborhood			
	Percent		
Excellent	27		
Good	43		
Average	25		
Below Average	7		
		100	(N =312)
B. Degree of Satisfaction			
Very Satisfied	45		
Pretty Satisfied	45		
Not Very Satisfied	7		
Not At All Satisfied	3		
		100	(N =312)
C. Satisfaction Scores by Race			
	Black	White	Total
High or Fairly High	77	81	79
Moderate or Low	23	19	21
	100	100	100
N =	(146)	(166)	(312)

Table 6. Rank Order of Problems Rated as Serious or Somewhat Serious

Problem	Percent
1. Business Area Run Down	50
2. Streets (paving, holes)	49
3. Crime	40
4. Dogs Loose	37
5. Noise	35
6. Poor Street Lighting	29
7. Inadequate Parks, Playgrounds	24
8. Kids Uncontrolled	22
9. Housing (vacant, unkept)	17
10. Schools	16
11. Sewers (poor drainage)	16
12. Inadequate Social Activities	16
13. Lawns & yards (not kept up)	15
14. Turnover (nieghbors moving)	15
15. Sports Inadequate	12
16. Undesirable Neighbors	12
17. Teenage Activities Inadequate	12
18. Bus Service Inadequate	11
19. Child Care Facilities Inadequate	9
20. Seniors' Activities Inadequate	8
21. Garbage collection inadequate	6

"Some areas are beginning to deteriorate. We need to encourage good businesses to move in and get the liquor stores and beer halls out" (black, age 45-54, length of residence 3-10 yrs).

"Copley Road is a hell hole. We need to get rid of the bars and chicken fast-food places" (white, age 65+, length of residence 10+ yrs).

"The business area is my biggest concern. We should revoke liquor licenses and get rid of the bars" (black, age 25, length of residence 3-10 yrs).

"Neighbors advise me not to shop on Copley Road. It's dangerous - trashy people hang out there" (white, age 55, length of residence 3-10 yrs).

"We need to add better shops" (black, age 45-54, length of residence 10+ yrs).

One specific concern having critical importance in neighborhood stabilization is schools (Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979; Bradburn et al., 1979; Helper, 1979; Varady, 1979). Though it ranks tenth in order of importance in the Akron study, with only 16 percent of all respondents seeing this as a serious or somewhat serious problem, further analyses of these 16 percent reveal significant racial differences. Twice as many whites (12 percent) see this as a serious problem as compared to blacks (6 percent).

The differences are magnified when controlling for type of school used (public or private). Four times as many of those using private or parochial schools (21 percent) see the schools as a serious problem. Only six percent of those using the public schools feel it is a problem. This is also related to race. Three times as many of the white respondents (43 percent) send their children to private or parochial school compared to black respondents (14 percent). The most important factor in the public schools for whites is the racial composition. But both blacks and whites expressed their concerns, as in these typical comments:

"We need to fight for integrated schools ...segregated schools lead to poorer facilities" (black, age 65+, length of residence 3-10 yrs).

"The schools worry me because we won't keep the good teachers if the neighborhood becomes black"(black, age 35-44, length of residence 10+ yrs).

"I'm worried about the racial balance...If the schools were 50/50 that would help. I'm thinking about sending my kids to a private school in the fall...I'm uncertain about what to do..." (white, age 25-34, length of residence 1-3 yrs).

"If the schools were integrated that would help. I can't see my child being the only white. We need to have the schools integrated in order to continue attracting

young professionals to the neighborhood" (white, age 25-34, length of residence 10+ yrs).

### *Moving Plans*

The respondents were asked if they expected to move from the neighborhood in the next year, and why. Seventy-seven percent say no, 17 percent are uncertain, while 6 percent expect to move. Of those expecting to move, most are moving out of town, with the rest moving elsewhere in the city. Asked about moving plans in the future, one-third say yes, and another third say no. The remaining one-third are uncertain or did not answer. Of those who do not expect to move, 65 percent say their reason for staying is attachment to the dwelling or neighborhood. Nineteen percent of those expecting not to move cite convenience of the area. Of those who do expect to move sometime in the future, the reasons for moving, in order of frequency are: better house, better job, retirement, better neighborhood, better climate or better schools.

Extensive real estate activity in the area is indicated, with residents complaining of heavy solicitation by real estate agents urging them to sell. The extent of this institutional force is indicated by the fact that more than half (55 percent) of the respondents say they have been solicited by real estate agents. Seventy-three percent cite multiple attempts by agents inducing them to sell their homes.

### *Future of the Neighborhood*

When asked what they thought the neighborhood would be like in five years, 42 percent say "the same", 23 percent say "worse" and 15 percent say "don't know". Analysis of "the same" comments indicates that 88 percent of those comments are positive. Based on this finding, responses are categorized as *optimists* or *pessimists* with optimists including "better" and "the same" answers and pessimists including "worse" and "don't know" answers. Twice as many black respondents (27 percent) are pessimists as are white respondents (15 percent). Pessimists' perceptions about the future are contrasted with the optimists in these comments typical of each group:

#### *Pessimists*

"People don't know how to keep it better, they don't take care of it (the neighborhood). It's a black neighborhood and this happens to black neighborhoods everywhere. People don't keep them up and the city and landlords neglect them" (Black respondent).

"I've lost interest in the neighborhood. I think of this as a 'colored' community. They come and go. I'm not a racist, but I like harmony. This used to be an exclusive area, but not any more. People across the street were robbed twice in the last two years" (White respondent).

*Optimists*

"Everybody seems to care and wants their houses to look good... People are moving back in and will have money to keep up their properties" (Black respondent).

"Many nice people are buying and moving in...The gas shortage will force people to move back...young families moving in will make it better (White respondent).

*Impact of WSN*

To assess the impact of the neighborhood stabilization organization, then 13 years old, respondents were asked if they had heard about West Side Neighbors (WSN) before receiving the flyer announcing the survey. A substantial majority of the respondents (82 percent) said they had. Only 16 percent of the respondents said they had not. Two percent of the respondents were uncertain. Asked how they heard of the organization, 75 percent of the respondents said from other members, 20 percent of the respondents said from friends and four percent of the respondents said they heard from publicized meetings or events.

To find out whether they could correctly state the complex purpose of the organization, the respondents were asked what they thought the purpose of WSN was. More than half of the respondents (51 percent) answered correctly or partially correctly. Eleven percent of the respondents were uncertain, three percent of the respondents answered incorrectly and 31 percent of the respondents were unable to state the purpose at all. To be coded "correct or partially correct", an answer had to contain either one of these two purposes: racial integration maintenance and/or neighborhood improvement. The data indicate that the organization is widely known in the area and that its purpose is quite well understood.

To further test the effect of the organization, cross-tabulations are analyzed for only those who correctly or partially-correctly state the purposes of WSN. Though no association between knowledge of the organization and neighborhood satisfaction is found, this study does find a relationship for white residents only between knowledge of the organization and attitudes toward the future of the neighborhood (optimism).

When asked what they think the neighborhood will be like in five years, twice as many knowledgeable (about WSN) whites think the neighborhood will be better in five years than those who are not knowledgeable about WSN. For blacks, knowledge of the organization does not affect their views of the future of the neighborhood. Generally, blacks are less neighborly, less satisfied and less optimistic about the future. Table 7 shows the association between the knowledge of the organization and attitudes toward the future of the neighborhood. This offers a partial confirmation of Hunter's (1975) theory.

*For Sale*

A special subsurvey was conducted of all those in the tract who had "For Sale" signs on their properties. Of the 55 homes with "For Sale" signs, only 38 homes had residents available for interviewing. This number is too small to apply statistical tests of significance to the data obtained.

Compared to those in the total sample, those moving away or trying to move are younger, have higher incomes, have more children under 19 and are mostly white (76 percent). Their use of facilities is considerably less than the rest of the respondents. Their neighboring is about the same, but their satisfaction with the neighborhood is lower than the rest of the respondents.

Their specific concerns are ranked differently from the rest of the sample, with a much higher percent viewing each of the following as serious problems (rank-ordered): noise, schools, housing, garbage collection, lighting, and parks and playgrounds. More of those planning to move name turnover as a serious problem (26 percent compared to 15 percent in the rest of the sample). A much higher proportion of those planning to move cite schools and housing as serious problems (25 percent compared to 17 percent and 16 percent for the rest of the sample).

Movers show a lower level of knowledge about WSN (76 percent compared to 82 percent for the rest of the sample) and a smaller proportion who can correctly or partially-correctly state the purpose of WSN (only 37 percent compared to 51 percent for the rest of the sample). About one-third of those moving away are moving to another neighborhood in the city, while 11 percent of those planning to move do not know where they are going. The remaining percentage of those planning to move want to leave Akron.

*SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION*

The data show that the residents of this bi-racial tract in Akron are home owners of middle- and moderate-income levels. Slightly less than half of the residents are black, slightly more than half of the residents are white. Black residents are younger, have more children under 19 and have lived in the neighborhood fewer years than white residents. Most of the black children are in public schools. A much higher proportion of the white children are in private or parochial schools.

Most residents have a strong identification with the neighborhood, a high level of neighboring and a high level of neighborhood satisfaction. More blacks use the business and shopping area than do whites, indicating some abandonment by whites of the main business area, especially for grocery shopping. This is consistent with findings in other studies of urban transitional neighborhoods, where business areas come to be perceived by whites as deteriorating and predominantly black (Aldrich and Reiss, 1976).

Of the five hypotheses presented in this paper, the data confirm only one. Facility use is lower for whites than for blacks. The other four hypotheses are not shown to be valid concerning expected

low level of neighboring, satisfaction, optimism and organizational impact.

The single most encouraging fact emerging from the Akron data is that young, white households are moving back into the study neighborhood at almost the same rate as young, black households (See Table 3). They have, moreover, a high educational level. This trend, if it continues, could achieve the neighborhood stabilization so long sought by the neighborhood organization (WSN).

But as a counter-balance to this positive finding is the sobering fact that those moving away from the neighborhood are predominantly white, young and of high socio-economic level. Though few of these movers directly refer to any disappointment with the neighborhood, their satisfaction scores are lower than those of the rest of the sample. Their specific concerns indicate that they are more distressed about the neighborhood and its future than are the stayers. Their perceptions, in fact, may be among the underlying causes of their moving.

Despite the negative conclusions drawn from the subsample of those moving away, there are the reassuring, but surprising, findings of much neighboring and high satisfaction with the neighborhood by a majority of the residents. This defies all previous assumptions about alienation resulting from more than a decade of rapid racial and economic turnover in this tract.

There are two possible reasons for the unexpectedly high level of neighboring and satisfaction. The first theoretical explanation is that most unhappy residents left the neighborhood long ago. Those that remain are of four types: 1) Newcomers, who consist of (a) stayers of choice, and (b) potential movers, and 2) Oldtimers, who are composed of (a) stayers of choice, and (b) stayers of circumstance. Table 8 shows these four theoretical types of residents in transitional neighborhoods.

Type 1 residents are newcomers who moved in for reasons of economics and convenience, but who plan to leave when it is feasible to do so. They do not plan to remain indefinitely. They are mostly white, with some higher socio-economic level blacks. These are the residents who are most uncertain about the future of the neighborhood.

Type 2 residents are newcomers who moved in knowing what to expect of the neighborhood. They consciously choose an integrated way of life for themselves and their families. They are black and white. They plan to stay indefinitely and are prepared to make it work.

Type 3 residents are long-term home owners who remain because of choice and plan to remain indefinitely. They witnessed the rapid racial and economic turnover of the neighborhood and hope for an eventual stabilization. They are both black and white. Some of them

Table 7. Organizational Knowledge by Perceptions of Neighborhood Future and Race

Organizational Knowledge	Optimists and Pessimists By Race						Total N
	Black		White		All		
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Known	41	30	74	25	115	25	170
Unknown	43	32	43	24	86	56	142
Total N	84	62	117	49	201	111	312
	n.s.		p>.05*		n.s.		

Note: Optimists are shown as +, pessimists as -. Those who know about the organization (WSN) and correctly understand its purpose are shown as Known. Those who do not know about it are shown as Unknown. Knowledge of the organization is a greater indicator of impact than mere membership. This is why it is selected for analysis rather than the dichotomy of members/non-members.  
 $\chi^2 = 4.21$ ,  $df = 1$ .

Table 8. Transitional Neighborhood Resident Types by Mobility Potential and Tenure

Tenure	Mobility Potential		
	Movers	Stayers Choice	Circumstance
Newcomers	Type 1	Type 2	
Oldtimers		Type 3	Type 4

are the founders and original supporters of the neighborhood stabilization group (WSN).

Type 4 residents are those who remain because of circumstances, but would leave if they could. They are "trapped" (Gans, 1962) because of insufficient resources or because their stage of the life cycle (elderly). They know they cannot leave and may have decided to make their peace with the situation. They are mostly white. The data comparing white newcomers to white oldtimers support this idea, indicating that newcomers (1-3 years) are more satisfied (54 percent) than oldtimers (40 percent).

A second theoretical explanation of the unexpectedly high levels of neighboring and satisfaction links these variables with data indicating a strong level of knowledge about WSN. There may well be a sense of trust prevailing in the neighborhood as a result of the work of this organization for the past 13 years. Knowing or thinking that there is a "big brother" taking care of things may offer hope and confidence in the neighborhood and its future. WSN may provide a "social construction of the community" (Suttles, 1972). Supporting this theory is the fact that the movers show a lower level of knowledge about WSN than the rest of the sample. Movers also show a lower level of satisfaction with the neighborhood. Also supportive of this theory is the fact that a significantly higher proportion of the optimistic white respondents are knowledgeable about WSN (see Table 8).

Other studies link neighborhood commitment to satisfaction (Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979; Varady, 1979) and satisfaction to residential stability (Varady, 1979). This study suggests that neighboring and satisfaction are not enough to insure stability in racially-transitional neighborhoods.

#### *POLICY IMPLICATIONS*

The Akron study suggests an "additive" model of neighborhood change. In this model, three interacting links are part of a circular process: residential change (turnover), business turnover, and school turnover. Racial change in any one of the links leads to change in the other two, leading to further turnover.

Supporting this model, a study of 1300 businesses in ten major cities concludes that non-economic factors such as schools, public services and crime rates play a larger role in corporate decisions to expand or relocate than purely financial factors like tax rates and labor costs (Joint Economic Committee, 1979).

That conclusion contrasts with Aldrich and Reiss's (1976) findings which show no association between perceptions of increasing crime and business survival in racially-changing areas. This study does, however, find such an association in retail trades, linking such business change with residential changes as in the Akron "additive" model.

The Akron study also suggests that degeneration is not inevitable in racially-transitional neighborhoods. Whether degeneration occurs or does not occur depends on the extent, nature and timing of intervention in the additive process. An effective intervention program, designed to avoid degeneration in a racially-transitional neighborhood, should focus on the three links of the additive process and strengthen the neighborhood organization. This should be done before the neighborhood becomes racially identifiable as a black neighborhood. The intervention program should also be structured to counteract the institutional forces ultimately destroying such neighborhoods: urban-renewal relocation, public housing-site location, real estate steering tactics and bank red-lining. The objective should be to retain the stayers and deter the movers. A four-pronged interventionist effort should offer a comprehensive strategy for achieving neighborhood stabilization. It should focus on

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the business area, the schools, housing opportunities and the neighborhood organization.

#### *The Business Area*

The most pressing concern in the Akron study area is the condition of the main business street. Vacant stores and rundown properties exist alongside undesirable businesses.

For such racially-transitional areas, consultation should be sought to determine the best land use for the business section. The city and neighborhood organization together could sponsor a Planners' Contest to encourage multiple expert suggestions for optimum land use (mini-parks, low-rise multi-family housing, businesses, offices, or some combination of these). Technical assistance would also be needed to develop plans for the revitalization and beautification of the business area, based on revised land use.

If it is determined that businesses are the most desirable for this area, there must be a vigorous effort to attract the types of businesses that would improve a critical main artery. An intense affirmative marketing effort would need to be developed to confront and overcome the negative images of a long-neglected area.

Using the additive model of neighborhood change, this study predicts that if no change occurs in the condition of the present business area, resident dissatisfaction may eventually result in the complete abandonment and resegregation of the entire tract and its surroundings, with only residents in the lowest socio-economic levels remaining. Here would be the degenerative model come true.

#### *The Schools*

The inter-relationship of schools with housing patterns is well-known and well-documented (Billingsley, 1979, Orfield, 1981). One needs only to search the real estate ads in any local newspaper to see how often the schools are referred to in the housing section. While it is true originally that segregated neighborhoods led to segregated schools, this causal sequence is now reversed. Today, residents, especially those with children of school-age, choose their neighborhoods on the basis of the perceived quality of the schools. Their perception of quality is strongly associated with the racial composition of the schools (Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979; Bradburn et al., 1971; Molotch, 1972; Varady, 1979).

Thus, it is critically important for city and regional planners and government officials to work closely with school administrators concerning plans that vitally affect both the schools and the neighborhood (i.e., highway, construction, homesteading, regional mobility plans, public housing-site location, new construction and other related programs that affect dislocation and relocation of households and businesses - and ultimately, schools).

Two specific efforts that have had positive results elsewhere and could be duplicated anywhere are: 1) Affirmative marketing programs, such as the one in Louisville, Kentucky linking school desegregation and housing opportunities county-wide (Kentucky

Commission, 1980), and 2) Fair Housing Program expansion, strengthening metropolitan efforts to broaden housing opportunities for minorities and low- and moderate-income households (Miami Valley Commission, 1978; Orfield, 1981).

Financial incentives for those making pro-integrative moves should be implemented. If such incentives are used daily in the business world to encourage expansion and investment, why not use them to encourage freedom of choice and movement in housing? This strategy was first introduced in California to the Los Angeles City Council with the Farrell-Ferraro Resolution in February, 1982. In Ohio, this strategy was implemented for the first time in 1984 by the state Housing Finance Agency. Ten percent of a state-wide mortgage revenue bond program was set aside for first-time home buyers in the Cleveland-area making pro-integrative moves (i.e., blacks to white neighborhoods and whites to integrated neighborhoods). This was accomplished after two-and-a-half years of negotiations between the state agency and a coalition of neighborhood and fair housing organizations.

Another innovative program in the Cleveland area, East Suburban Council of Open Communities, links racial integration in housing and schools. This is implemented through joint efforts of municipal governments and school boards in suburbs surrounding the city of Cleveland. The program was designed, however, by leaders of organizations concerned with neighborhood stabilization and fair housing. They recognized that expanding housing opportunities for minorities in non-traditional areas reduces the pressures on racially-integrated neighborhoods at the same time that it deconcentrates the schools in those neighborhoods. With Louisville, Kentucky implementing the first such program (Kentucky Commission, 1980), the Cleveland-area program is believed to be the second such regional effort in the country simultaneously linking school and housing integration.

#### *Neighborhood Organization Support*

If the lifeline of transitional neighborhoods is to be found in indigenous neighborhood organizations, technical assistance is needed to enable them to function most effectively. The problem with most such organizations is that they lack adequate day-to-day coordination of their programs. Frequently, they lack leadership with organizational skills. Some minimal funding should be set aside by cities for this purpose so that neighborhood associations can hire part-time staff to meet their daily needs. In addition, funding source information and grant proposal assistance should be provided by city governments.

Residents respond to such organizations with a trust and motivation that makes it possible to accomplish changes that might not otherwise happen. Without these organizations, it is doubtful that stabilization efforts would continue and these transitional neighborhoods would doubtless become resegregated. Even with these organizations, there is no assurance that stabilization can be achieved because of the socio-historical past of such areas. They have unique histories compared to other neighborhoods in the city. They also require unique programs to overcome past practices,

policies and perceptions (Helper, 1969; Saltman, 1977, 1978).

Two examples of unique programs already implemented that could be conducted in other transitional neighborhoods are: 1) an equity assurance program, and 2) a promotional campaign. The equity assurance program reimburses residents for up to 80 percent of any losses incurred in the sale of their homes after five years. A model program exists in Oak Park, Illinois where the local government sponsors it to stem flight and attract new residents to the racially-integrated community (Oak Park Village, 1977). Other municipalities with stabilization programs sponsored by local governments are Baltimore, Maryland; Bellwood, Illinois; and Shaker Heights, Ohio.

Neighborhood promotion campaigns (Baltimore Neighborhoods, 1979; West Side Neighbors, 1980; Saltman, 1984) also work toward the maintenance of quality integrated neighborhoods by creating a positive image of transitional areas. Such efforts are directed to key institutional decision-makers affecting the life and death of neighborhoods. These institutional decision-makers include lending institutions, real estate companies and corporate executives. The promotion campaigns involve intensive public relations, mass distribution of literature, wide use of all media and face-to-face meetings with major executives of the three institutional networks. The objective is to foster cordial relations, understanding and appreciation of the transitory neighborhood and positive policies of reinvestment and affirmative marketing in the target areas.

#### CONCLUSION

The maintenance of an integrated urban neighborhood cannot occur with only a neighborhood stabilization organization at work. That is a necessary, but insufficient, condition for success. Though the provision of active neighboring can heighten a sense of community and neighborhood satisfaction, it alone cannot bring about stabilization or the avoidance of resegregation.

Transitional neighborhoods are fragile entities, subject to immense institutional forces which could topple them outright or slowly and systematically destroy them -- along with the organizations that are struggling within them. This study identifies these institutional forces and acknowledges their power and the critical need to counteract them.

Specific policies to achieve stabilization of urban integrated neighborhoods should include the critical institutional forces in any comprehensive strategy. Municipal governments, together with neighborhood organizations, should mount an ongoing effort to contact the major institutional networks affecting housing, schools and businesses. Their understanding and cooperation should be secured to achieve the following eight conditions for stabilization:

1. Maintenance of a flow of both whites and blacks into the target area, through affirmative marketing campaigns.
2. Technical assistance to neighborhood organizations to enable them to function more securely and

effectively.

3. Reduction of the mobility potential of residents by improving the neighborhood schools and business areas in quality, racial balance and security.
4. Maintenance of quality housing and streets to insure pride in the area as a desirable integrated neighborhood.
5. Reduction of residents' anxiety about the neighborhood by alleviating fears of loss of money, status, security and neighborliness.
6. Provision of an adequate supply of housing for people of all income levels throughout the metropolitan area.
7. Provision of some living examples of freedom of choice in housing through incentive payments for pro-integrative moves and adequate funding for regional fair-housing agencies.
8. Public commitment by city, county, state and federal officials for social impact statements citing effects of governmental expenditures on housing and school integration maintenance.

These eight conditions are essential to counteract the previous years of stereotyping and misconception about racially-integrated neighborhoods. Such integration is achieved and maintained with great difficulty. Special and extraordinary efforts are required to sustain it. Whether such efforts will receive the necessary commitment will determine the future of remaining transitional neighborhoods.

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