WHERE HAS OCTAVIA HILL GONE?
NOT AS FAR AS YOU MIGHT THINK

by

Paul M. Lambert

B.A. Urban and Regional Planning, Miami University (1989)

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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ABSTRACT

Social Services in United States public housing authorities has gone through a number of transitions since the Housing Act of 1937 which established the federal public housing program. Each transition was dependent upon changes in policy and regulations, exogenous factors, and/or the relationships between social service agencies and public housing authorities.

Today, many people involved in housing at all levels of government are pushing local authorities to take on the role of providing social services themselves. Public housing is now seen by many authorities as a social service and not as ‘bricks and mortar’. This philosophy of housing being more than the physical plant and managers concerned with more than the buildings is not new. In the 1930’s and 1940’s and again in the 1960’s housing authorities concerned themselves with the social welfare of tenants. One model of housing including social services which closely resembles some of today’s public housing authorities is seen in the buildings owned and managed by Octavia Hill in the late 1800’s. While present day public housing has differences with Octavia Hill, there are many similarities including the economic class of tenants housed, and some of the methods and philosophy of how to best deal with those tenants, and their needs.

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After completing over a year’s worth of research for this thesis, I had little doubt that housing authorities around the country were adapting methods of social service provision today which more than scantily resembled the system of Octavia Hill the 19th century housing reformer in London. Like Hill many authorities believe in more than brick and mortar, concentrating resources on the human side of housing and are housing the same class of tenants she did: the poorest of the poor. However, until recently I did not believe that a continuum existed from Octavia Hill to the present day in which problems got formulated and reformulated. Instead, I thought certain factors in the physical and social condition of housing called for certain responses which sometimes included the provision of social services, and sometimes did not. It was certain in my estimation that no one remembered Octavia Hill, or even what had happened in the early years of the public housing program.

Needless to say, I was wrong.

In the past month I have found the ‘Rosetta Stone’ of social services in public housing. Just as the Rosetta Stone allowed linguists to crack a code to see a correlation between three languages, my find has allowed me to realize that the work of Octavia Hill in the 1860’s had a direct connection to social service policy in public housing in the 1930’s as well as today.

Republished in an appendix of The National Center for Housing Management’s (NCHM) Housing Managers Resource Book published in 1990, is an article written in 1935 by Beatrice Greenfield Rosahn which extolls the virtues of the Octavia Hill Management system for the emerging public housing program. Rosahn sites Hill’s
"concern with the human side of the problem," as the reason for adopting at least parts of her system if not all of it.¹ By reprinting the article in their handbook to managers, NCHM has not only shown an awareness of Octavia Hill and the philosophy of the "do-gooders" of the early 1930’s, it has proactively encouraged managers to embrace the Hill system.

There is no question that it is impossible for public housing authorities of the 1990’s to get back to Octavia Hill and her system in its entirety. But, housing authorities in many different ways and forums are being prodded to get back to a holistic method of providing housing where social service provision and housing provision were one, and shared an equal relationship.

This thesis is an examination of the role social services have played in housing authorities across the United States since the Housing Act of 1937. In addition, this study looks at the Octavia Hill system of housing management as the foundation of future housing programs for the poor which integrated a social service component. While some housing authorities today resemble the Octavia Hill system in many ways, it will be impossible for social work and management to be one again. The Bureaucratic expansion during the New Deal and War on Poverty, necessitated a split and specialization of those working on housing issues and those working in the social services. In addition, changes during the late 1960’s in regards to civil rights, empowerment, and community participation would create a new way of looking at social work in public housing, which would still have a substantial impact on housing authorities from the 1960’s on.

¹ Rosahn, Beatrice Greenfield; *Housing Management - It's History and Relation to Present Day Problems*; National Civic League; 1935; p.1
In the end, this thesis will show that the correlation between Octavia Hill’s system and what present day housing authorities are doing in regards to social service provision is no coincidence, but is based on the population of tenants housed, as well as the re-emergence of old "ideas in good currency."

Paul Lambert

May 1991
CHAPTER 1:

The Octavia Hill Method: In the U.S & U.K.

Like many early housing programs, the beginning of the collaboration between social services and housing in poor communities, is not found in the United States, but in London, with the work of Octavia Hill and her cadre of ‘ladies’.

While philanthropies throughout England had been concerned with the less than healthy conditions of working class housing since the early 1800’s, it was Octavia Hill who both "deliberately sought a less respectable class"¹ of tenants, and believed that through a system of "friendly visiting" which provided guidance in tenants lives, she could actually help cure many of the problems confronting London’s poorest citizens.

This chapter will explore Octavia Hill’s method of low income housing provision and management, as well as how her ideas on social services and housing came to and were implemented in the United States. The chapter will go on to describe how different authors have viewed Octavia Hill depending on their frame of reference, although no author sees the Hill System in its entirety but only looks at pieces of it. Finally, the chapter will examine how other American Philanthropic housing types and models viewed and implemented social service programs from the early 20th century until the Housing Act of 1937, and how the ideas of the 1930’s housing advocate played a role in shaping the way public housing would respond and utilize social services.

¹Owen, David; English Philanthropy 1660-1960; Belknap Press: Harvard University; Cambridge MA; 1964; p.387
However, it behooves us to first look at Octavia Hill’s formative years to understand how she developed her ideas on the poor and housing, just as we will examine how future philanthropies and public housing programs developed their ideas about housing from earlier housing programs.

**Octavia Hill Before Housing**

Born December 3, 1838 into a middle class family of eight children, Octavia spent the first few years of her life in relative comfort. Her father was a moderately successful banker at the time of her birth, and her grandfather was the relatively well known sanitary reformer Dr. Southwood Smith.

In 1840 a change for the worse occurred with the advent of a bank crisis from which her father "was never to fully recover."² And due to the family’s financial situation, Octavia, her mother and her three older sisters were forced to move in with her grandfather Dr. Smith. Octavia’s mother, Caroline, an educator who had written a number of articles on the subject, took over the girls’ schooling on a wide range of topics including a number of foreign languages and religion.

At the age of 13, Octavia Hill and her family moved to London so her mother could become the manager of the Ladies Guild of the Christian Socialists, a liberal religious movement which "had started small cooperatives with the object of circumventing the most apparent social liability of capitalism: The exploitation of labour."³

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² Boyd, Nancy; *Three Victorian Women Who Changed Their World*; Oxford University Press; New York; 1982; p.96

³ Boyd; p.98
It was with the Christian Socialists that Octavia started to appreciate the problems of the very poor through the lectures given by the group’s leaders and by working with the workers, although her primary interest during her early tenure with the Christians was her painting which was to soon attract the attention of her future benefactor and friend, John Ruskin.

As a result of her mother’s initiative, and because she displayed an amazing precociousness, Octavia became a manager in the toy factory of the Ladies Guild at the age of fourteen, and by seventeen was running the whole operation; responsible for everything from dealing with worker problems to marketing the toys.

Octavia Hill’s interests and work always seemed to build upon one another. After realizing the need for education among the workers at the Guild, Octavia started a school which was mainly attended by children of employees. In addition to the traditional coursework, students participated in physical education, and "were encouraged to get to know their neighbours, many of whom lived on the edge of poverty."^4

After a few years at the Nottingham Place School, and after a number of instances of pupils parents fainting while picking up their children, Octavia began to feel that education of poor children was not sufficient to change their dreadful conditions, or for that matter the conditions of their parents. Instead, Octavia Hill felt obligated to do something more. In her mind the next step was to try and improve the living conditions of the very poor in London through investing in housing and enhancing its quality.

With the help of her former painting instructor and critic John Ruskin, Hill purchased three of the worst tenement buildings in London in 1864. In return for his support, Octavia promised Ruskin a four percent return on his investment, the normal

^4 Boyd: p.106
expected return for persons who invested in philanthropic housing ventures at the time. However, Ruskin was taking a greater risk than most investors because the difference between Hill’s operation and other mid 19th century housing societies’ was that "the only enterprises that deliberately sought a less respectable class were those identified with Octavia Hill."^5

**Management: The Octavia Hill Way**

It was in these three buildings that Octavia Hill was to develop her unique and later to be world famous management style. While some authors claim that Hill came into the housing business knowing exactly what she wanted to do, her writing from one year to the next suggests otherwise. Hill developed her management system over time, willing to throw out things which didn’t work and to try new approaches. In short she was pragmatic, and not set in her ways. Yet, the one factor which stood out in any changes in management style, was that new ideas and formulations came only from Octavia Hill, and were then passed along to her workers to implement. Hill’s organization was the epitome of ‘top-down’.

Hill’s system of management was built on her belief that,

"The people’s homes are bad, partly because they are badly built and arranged; they are tenfold worse because the tenants’ habits and lives are what they are. Transplant them to-morrow to healthy and commodious homes, and they would pollute and destroy them."^6

Therefore, it was Octavia’s estimation that to reconstruct and sanitize housing was not enough to improve the lives of the poor, but that a system of services or controls

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^5 Owen; p.387

^6 Hill, Octavia; *Homes of the London Poor*; Macmillan &Co.; London; 1883; p.10
including "friendly visiting" and strong rules on payment of rent and cleanliness, must be put in place which would eventually help improve the individual in the housing. As David Owen wrote in _English Philanthropy_, "Octavia Hill never sentimentalized the poor, but neither did she shrink from rau cous, destructive applicants when she came to select her tenants,"⁷ since she believed that her social services or controls, would eventually overcome any moral deprivation which might beseech them.

In addition to the tenants following a set of rules, Hill expected her managers to follow an even more stringent set of standards.

The role of the volunteer manager according to Hill included, "collecting rent, reporting to the Guardians, visiting for the School Board, the collection of savings, or any other requisite duty." However, "the personal influence which she exercises is not prominently brought before herself or the poor." The manager therefore was required to tow the fine line between guidance and patronizing control, and in the end, if the manager was able to effectively do this, "the supervision would die down, and give place insensibly to the simple intercourse with one another that seems natural to neighbours."⁸

Octavia Hill’s ‘system’ of how managers should act with tenants and how tenants should respond was no secret, and was in fact, proclaimed in numerous articles and books written by Hill and her colleagues.

Through these writings, Octavia Hill has been looked at by historians and housing and social service professionals, in order to examine both the woman and her contributions to Victorian England.

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⁷ Owen; p.389
⁸ Hill; p.11
Paul Spicker, a Professor of Social Policy, wrote in the British Journal, Housing, in June of 1985 that Octavia Hill had "four aims in her management":

- To free tenants from bad landlords who were poor collectors of rent and neglected repairs.
- To encourage tenants to stay away from other lodgers whom she considered ‘degraded’.
- To help tenants gain good housekeeping skills, and to help residents get rid of the dirt they had gotten used to living in.
- And, finally to ‘rouse habits of industry and effort in tenants’. 9

While Spicker states that the first aim was admirable, he considers the additional three as evidence of Hill’s omnipresent patronizing and paternalistic control which she imposed upon her tenants.

Yet, looking closer at the Hill management system (the word ‘system’ has been used because that is exactly what it was; a systematically imposed program developed, taught, and learnt by managers and tenants alike) the lines do not seem so clear between patronizing control and the encouragement of self-help. In addition, many of Hill’s principals were at odds with each other, particularly in regards to the role a housing manager should play, friendly visitor or strict disciplinarian.

It would seem that Hill lays out ten stated or verifiable Principles rather than "four aims" which have been viewed as overly restrictive or rather non imposing depending upon the frame of reference Hill is viewed from.

9 Spicker, Paul; Legacy of Octavia Hill; Housing; June 1985; p.39
Octavia Hill’s Ten Principles

1. Rent must be paid on time! Hill required door to door rent collection once a week and expected her tenants to have the rent ready, or be ready to vacate the room or apartment. There were no exceptions because Hill felt that timely payment, "has given them (the tenants) a dignity and glad feeling of honourable behaviour which has much more than compensated for the apparent harshness of the rule."10

2. "It is far better to give work than either money or goods."11 It was Hill’s contention that alms giving would drive tenants to become dependent upon the giver rather than encourage self-help. However, she would regularly provide employment in slack seasons, and helped men find work when they were having trouble doing so themselves. The only time when this rule was violated was with elderly or very ill tenants who had been long term residents, for whom Hill would make exceptions.

3. One of the manager’s principal duties was to "strengthen by sympathy and counsel the energetic effort which shall bear fruit in time to come"12 or, to become a tenant’s friend rather than an imposer of one’s own will. Only by letting tenants know that you are making suggestions with their best interests at heart, can the manager encourage significant change.

10 Hill; p. 19
11 Hill; p.37
12 Hill; p.37
4. Managers should "remember that each man has his own view of his life, and must be free to fulfill it; that in many ways he is a far better judge of it than we." So Octavia taught her workers that "our work is rather to bring him to the point of considering, and to the spirit of judging rightly, than to consider or judge for him."13

5. No matter how poor, tenants should be encouraged to save money. Hill actually had her workers go door to door every week to see if the tenants wanted to give the manager money which would promptly be put in a bank account for them.

6. Children should be provided with organized recreation programs, which would be an addition to their traditional education. Hill felt that organized games gave children the discipline they would need to attend and excel in school.

7. Open public spaces must be provided near poor people's homes to give to give them the opportunity to recreate when they were not working. Hill or her managers would often take the children to the zoo or rowing in Regent's Park to get them away from the everyday squaller they were accustomed to. Furthermore, Hill spent much of her time in the 1880's and 90's trying to convince Parliament to build new parks in and around London.

13 Hill; p.37
8. Community spaces must be provided, where various groups can get together, and have the good tenants influence the bad, and have older one’s council the younger one’s.

9. A family’s background should be checked before renting a room. Although, a bad recommendation from a former landlord was never the sole reason for turning down a prospective tenant’s application.

10. Government should not be involved in the building or management of housing, because the people of England could both provide the funding and volunteers necessary to eradicate the slums.

If the manager is able to effectively deal with the first nine principals, and the English Government was willing to stay out of the housing business, Hill envisioned significant progress being made in solving a great number of problems associated with Great Britain’s poorest citizens.

Due to a lack of private benefactors and volunteer managers, Hill’s management practice was only to spread so far, not being able to house even 1% of the country’s poor. Ironically, it was this inability of Hill and other building societies to house more than a fraction of England’s poor, that increasingly implored Parliament to get government involved in the business of housing, the one thing Hill fought against so vociferously. By the beginning of World War I, the impact and need for England’s philanthropic building societies was no longer discussed because a radically new idea, public housing, loomed on the horizon.
Octavia Hill in Perspective

Because Octavia Hill was one of, if not the first, housing reformer to systematically try to deal with the problems of housing for the very poor, she has been examined and re-examined by a large number of authors looking at her through their various "lenses."\textsuperscript{14}

Paul Spicker, with his four ‘aims’ has taken a critical view of Octavia Hill, not only in her time and place, but within the context of what he perceives modern British Housing Authorities have adapted from her management style. Spicker claims that Octavia Hill’s "principals were misconceived at the time she formed them," because "debt and bad housing were the result of poverty, not indolence."\textsuperscript{15} He goes on to say that many modern housing authorities are as shortsighted as Octavia Hill, because of their insistence on the rent being paid on time, and their infatuation with cleanliness, without looking at the intrinsic reasons why tenants can’t pay or not as clean as they should be.

On the other side of the same issue have been individuals that claim that modern housing authorities could benefit from some of Octavia Hill’s ‘old style’ housing management. In a reply to Spicker’s article, D Tucker the Director of the Octavia Hill and Rowe Housing Trust takes deference with Spicker, and argues that many of Octavia Hill’s principals were built on the realization that shelter was far from the only need of the poor.\textsuperscript{16} She points to the need for present day management to inform their tenants about the complicated range of welfare benefits in Great Britain, and the council Octavia

\textsuperscript{14} For a deeper discussion of lenses and their impact on analysis and policy see Rein, Martin; From Policy to Practice; ME Sharpe; Armonk NY; 1983
\textsuperscript{15} Spicker; p.39
\textsuperscript{16} See letters to editor; Lost Opportunities; Housing; August 1985; p.11
Hill and her ladies gave tenants on managing on very small amounts of money. Tucker goes on to say that part of the problem with Spicker's criticism of the Octavia Hill system of management was his contention that friendly visiting was paternalistic. Rather, Tucker argues that friendly visitors actually filled "the need for tenants to have someone to whom they can relate" which in essence treats all tenants as individuals.

While Spicker and Tucker argue about Hill from a management perspective, others have looked at her as just the leader of one of many philanthropies, a religious figure, a feminist, as a boss and friend, or as a early link in a chain which would begin a movement of housing programs from England to the United States.

David Owen in his English Philanthropy 1660-1960, views Hill as a contributor to the early housing movement in the mid to late 1800's, but certainly does not see her as the sole influence which led to the Housing Act of 1919, and the establishment of Public Housing in Great Britain. In fact, Owen states that "Her own work placed Octavia Hill not in the vanguard of the main army but...in charge of a diversionary operation." Owen saw Hill as a "benovolant despot", who ruled over her tenants and managers with a strong hand, and says that her managers could better be described as "social workers, who used their weekly call for the rent as a channel for establishing friendly relations with the tenants and discovering how they could best be helped to self-respect and independence."

Other authors have seen Hill from a religious perspective. Hill for sure was influenced by her strong belief in God and in her moral obligation to help the poor.

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17 ibid; p.11
18 Owen; p.387
19 Owen; p.389
20 see Boyd, Nancy; Three Victorian Women Who Changed Their World; 1982
Throughout her life Octavia Hill talked about the importance of religion in her work, and the belief in the moral goodness of man despite his condition. However, there is interestingly a lack of mention of Hill imposing these religious beliefs on her tenants. To be sure, Hill would not shy away from religious inquiries by her residents, but she never forced her belief on them, a further example of Hill's respect for a tenant's right to privacy and space.

The Hill method of management has also been written about by Ellen Chase, an American who worked as a manager for Octavia Hill for five years in London. Chase's book gives some evidence to the fact that, despite the training of managers in the Octavia Hill method, workers outside of her immediate control did not always follow the precepts set down by Hill. This was the case particularly in regard to tenant selection and eviction. While Octavia Hill was willing to deal with problem families, Chase describes a system of creaming, where problem tenants who were of trouble to management were evicted, non-dependent upon the payment of rent. This was not to say that the housing went to a different class of tenant than it was intended, rather only the very poorest who were also easy to handle were rented to.

Finally, Lawrence Friedman in his *Government and Slum Housing* sees Hill in light of how her system influenced the model tenements in the United States. Although Friedman saw Hill as a creamer who "kept only those who paid their rent and responded to her moral and social advances" he acknowledged that Hill had a significant influence in early housing ventures in the United States in the form of the Octavia Hill Society of Philadelphia which in turn, eventually strongly influenced the model tenement movement in New York whose workers and benefactors had a major role in getting the federal

21 Friedman, Lawrence; *Government and Slum Housing*; Amco Press; 1968; p.77
government involved in housing during the mid to late 1930’s.

While each author has seen Octavia Hill from relatively different angles, there is a clear lack of discussion of what the Hill system taken in total was all about. While Spicker and Tucker argue about how Hill should be viewed, as a totalitarian manager or as a close friend of tenants who just wanted to help them help themselves, they ignore the fact that the great irony in Hill’s work was that she was both of these; a ‘hard nosed’ manager who realized that doing an effective job in poor housing meant being a good friend and helping tenants help themselves. Owen comes closest in his assessment of Hill as a "benevolent despot," but fails to see the Hill system in its entirety by looking at the manager basically as a social worker.

The difficulty of the task given by Octavia Hill to her managers what not that they had to be a good rent collector and bookkeeper or an effective friendly visitor, rather it was a that they were required to be both at the same time. Seemingly conflictual principals would have to be resolved with both the business side and social side of the management task remaining intact. How, on the one hand can a manager demand rent from a family whose main earner has been ill, while at the same time try to help the tenants get the medical care they need?

Octavia Hill’s answer to these seemingly unsolvable situations was that people will always find the rent, as long as he/she understands you have their best interests at heart. Yet families, no matter how pious and forthright would be evicted if the rent money was not in the managers hand every week.

Octavia Hill and her managers would be overjoyed when tenants came to them for help which had little or nothing to do with housing. They saw this as a sign that their system was working, and by all accounts managers often turned out to be of significant
help to families. While some authors have accused Octavia Hill of being overbearing and unbending in her social aims as she was with her rent collection, this conclusion does not seem to be supported by the facts. One of Hill’s overriding principals, which appears in her writing again and again, is the fact that managers can encourage families to take a particular course of action, but only with the understanding that tenants knew what was best for themselves, and the manager should only advise when called on to do so.

The Hill volunteer was manager and social worker wrapped into one. Neither role outweighed the other, although Hill constantly stated that the later was always easier than the former. And, while there is no hard data available which could tell us what effect Hill and her managers had on the lives of her tenants, it would only seem that they were relatively successful in helping those residents, not evicted for non-payment, become economically and socially mobile.

Octavia Hill’s management system did not stop at the borders of Great Britain. People from France, Germany, and the United States, by the 1890’s, had become interested in transplanting it in their own cities, sometimes for the mere fact that it was systematic and could be taught and learnt rather easily by a large number of people.

Octavia Hill In the United States

Methods of housing management similar to Octavia Hill’s appear in the United States during the early 20th century in two distinct forms. The first is through the Octavia Hill Association of Philadelphia, which wholeheartedly adapted the Octavia Hill method of housing management and transplanted it from London to Philadelphia. The second form of housing venture which had programs similar to Octavia Hill’s, was found in model tenement in New York City and Chicago although these did not always
consciously borrow from Octavia Hill.

The Octavia Hill Association, which is nearing its 100th year of operation, was at the time of inception, a near perfect replica of Hill's organization in London. Founded in 1896 by the Civic Club of Philadelphia to "improve the living conditions of the poorer residence districts of the City of Philadelphia," it employed the same principals and methods used by Hill herself. While not much is written on the Association, some early authors tried to sketch out what type of tenants would best be served by the Octavia Hill method of housing in America. Writing in 1919, Edith Elmer Wood said that the,

"Octavia Hill idea...has a most useful function to perform in subnormal or misfit groups, including under the later such non-English speaking immigrants as need a temporarily paternalistic treatment," but speaking on its limitations, Wood stated that, "to link it up with housing reform in general would be most unfortunate, the relationship it seeks to establish, save for the exceptional classes mentioned, would be undemocratic, un-American, and certain to be resented in proportion to the intelligence and independence of the tenant."^{23}

So while the Octavia Hill method was still accepted in 1919 by the vanguard of housing reform for some troublesome groups including recent immigrants, the control imposed on tenants was considered overkill for the average unskilled laborer in the United States.

A more benign version of the Octavia Hill method, which was much more acceptable to Mrs. Wood and her colleagues during the 1910's and 1920's was found in some model tenement in New York and Chicago, using a system which Roy Lubove has termed the "retail method of housing reform," whose premise was that "the wages and

^{22} Octavia Hill Association Inc.; Articles of Incorporation; 1896

^{23} Wood, Edith Elmer; *Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner*: The Macmillan Co.; New York; 1919; p.110
hours laws had their share in the rehabilitation of the individual and the reconstruction of
the slum, but they could not substitute for personal sympathy, understanding and
friendship." 24

In addition, Friedman finds that those enterprises involved in the model tenement
movement were of a wide variety with, "some more sociological than Miss Hill’s, some
less" but also that, "except for extreme followers of the Octavia Hill plan, they did not
meddle excessively in people’s lives." 25

The model tenement, while providing many of the same services in addition to
shelter which Hill provided, differed in the role the manager and housing worker was
supposed to play. First, while a worker lived with the tenants, they were discouraged
from watching over residents, as Hill was often accused of doing. Instead, they were
supposed to play the benign role of friendly neighbor (as opposed to friendly visitor)
when called upon to do so by tenants. Secondly, and much to the dismay of some of the
early social reformers, particularly Mary Richmond, was the professionalization and
specialization of people who worked in the model tenements and settlement houses.
Richmond in her own writings and as viewed by Lubove felt that voluntary workers who
were generalists would do a much better job with the poor, than specialized
professionals. Richmond felt a volunteer would give more care than someone paid to do
the same job, and therefore would be a more effective social workers. 26

Due to the lack of volunteers, and because of the general professionalization of
social work in America, the model tenements and settlement houses increasingly relied

24 Lubove, Roy; The Progressive And The Slums; University of Pittsburgh Press; 1962; p.185
25 Friedman; p.78
26 See Richmond, Mary; The Long View; New York; 1930
on paid social workers to act as the service provider to tenants. These social workers provided many of the same services a Hill manager would, with the notable exception of handling the day to day management of the buildings. Management was now left up to a housing worker or manager who worried about collecting rent, maintaining the buildings, and concerning herself with the tenement or settlement house’s financial situation. In addition to the clear lack of voluntary workers at the turn of the century who were willing to work in innercity housing philanthropies, Lubove finds a need for professionalization because "As social problems increased in scope and complexity welfare agencies were forced to rely increasingly upon a new breed of philanthropist - the full time salaried professional" who would spend all of her time working in the settlement house or model tenement.

While, the model tenement had similarities to Octavia Hill’s system there were two distinct characteristics in the provision of social services and in management which set them apart from the Octavia Hill method. First, it was less restrictive. Rules for tenants were not as plentiful in the model tenement as they were with Octavia Hill, and tenants were assumed to be able to help themselves with little influence or proding by the service worker, although the social worker was ready to be called upon to help solve any problems which might arise.

The second major difference between Hill’s management system and the early model tenement was that, while Hill’s managers were generalists and voluntary, the model tenement worker was professional and increasingly more specialized. By the end of World War I the role of each group in housing reform was basically defined. The manager would deal with the business side of housing, the social worker would deal with

27 Lubove: p.186
the human side, and the lawyers would handle the legislation. This is not to say that each group did not work closely together on almost every topic, because they did, since they often worked in the same organizations and had the same goals. Yet, unlike Hill and her ladies who dealt with everything from tenant problems to lobbying for change in the poor housing laws, different types of housing workers were now slotted to do particular tasks.

Overall, the commitment of all housing reformers was still focused. As Lubove puts it, "if the commitment of organized social work (in the broad sense) can be summarized into a single concept, it would be the universal attainment of a normal standard of living," something Octavia Hill was most concerned with. Except the process by which this normal standard of living was to be obtained was now altered.

Road to Public Housing and The New Deal

The changes in housing management and social service provision for tenants which occurred during the model tenement and settlement house era were to continue their evolution until the Great Depression of 1929, when economic and governmental changes moved housing and social service programs into a radically different forum.

While the absence of government involvement in housing development and management, except in regulation, was the norm before 1930, the Depression forced government at all levels into the business of housing. No longer could philanthropies survive without governmental funding. The capital formerly provided by benefactors and financiers was now lacking.

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28 Lubove; p.187
By 1934 the Works Projects Administration (WPA) was well into building a number of demonstration housing projects around the country, funded by the recently formed Federal Housing Administration, and owned by localities. New York City, Syracuse, and other municipalities had already set up housing authorities for the purpose of constructing and managing housing for the depression worker and his family. And, New York State was in the process of passing legislation which would encourage municipalities across the State to set up their own housing authorities and begin the construction of locally owned projects.

Housing reformers from the model tenement began to envolve themselves in the public housing movement. What was to come out of the efforts of the Depression era housing reformer was the Housing Act of 1937, which established the first nationwide federally funded public housing programs, the impact of which, on the role of social services in housing, will be discussed in the next chapter. Yet, there was no doubt that the type, need, and implementation of social services in the recently formed public housing authorities was going to be very different than in Octavia Hill’s time or even in the settlement houses and model tenements.

The federal government not only assumed more power, but was also more specialized. As Arnold Howitt writes, "under the pressure of a national economic crisis the federal government vastly expanded the scope of its domestic programs including aid to state and local governments," and "as a result, permanent grant programs began to develop substantial bodies of administrative regulations" requiring increased specialization and expertise. This was the era of the Executive Branch, where different agencies were set up in large buildings spread all over Washington to deal with specific

29 Howitt, Arnold; Managing Federalism: Studies in Intergovernmental Relations; CQ Press; 1984; p.5
tasks. Housing programs were administered out of the Department of the Interior, while most social services were funded through the Department of Health. Furthermore, the specific programs which were developed in these large buildings sometime overlapped in the constituency served, particularly programs aimed at eradicating the slums, often not developed and implemented in consultation with the other groups working on related problems due to a lack of proximity.

The people who designed social service programs and the people who made management policy were no longer able to easily communicate with each other. Now, decisions were made in Washington, by large agencies lacking coordination in which each was responsible for solving one part of the national slum problem. The role which social services played in public housing was going to change in this environment.

This is not to say that public housing and social services necessarily had to be at odds, quite to the contrary, but adjustments had to be made. As Charles Ascher wrote in 1934, that because "the first distinction between public housing and most commercial private housing for low income families is the continuing interest of the state in the housing," there would be an insurance of "a lasting interest in the well being of tenants."30 Yet, as we will see in the next two chapters, individuals involved in public housing management and those who worked in social service provision would spend the better part of the next fifty years trying to figure out how they could once again combine their talents and expertise, as had Octavia Hill.

The next two chapters ask five questions about the role of social services in public housing from 1937 until the present. Different periods in the public housing experience

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30 Ascher, Charles S.; *The Housing Authority And The Housed: Law And Contemporary Problems*; March 1934; vol. 1 #2; p.250
in the United States yield different answers to each of the questions because as the program evolved the implementation of social services changed with it.

1. **Whom are the services for?** Were social services for tenants who are in "specific categories of the needy, eg. fatherless children, the blind, elderly, and the disabled," the submerged middle class: "lower class in income, but middle class in values and aspirations,"31 or were services for the undeserving poor who were lazy or shiftless, poor housekeepers, substance abusers, and welfare cases, or caused housing authorities problems because they were a drain on resources.

2. **What does the term "social service" mean?** Did social services mean amenities for the submerged middle class like daycare and little league programs? Did Services mean Information & Referral where social workers tied tenants into social services outside of the housing authority projects? Or did services include groupwork and casework for ‘hard core’, problem families, and those deserving poor who could not help themselves?

3. **Where were social services provided?** On or Off site.

4. **How were social services brought to tenants?** Did outside social service agencies provide the services to housing authority tenants, or did housing authorities hire their own social workers?

5. **Finally, Why did changes in social service provision occur at certain times over the past 54 years of the public housing program?**

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31 Friedman; p.133
CHAPTER 2:

1937 - 1960: Old Methods to New Tenants

This chapter examines the role social services played in public housing from 1937 until 1961 with the election of President Kennedy. The period from 1961 to the present will be looked at in Chapter 3, with the rise of civil rights, and the increasing emphasis placed on tenant organizing as a social service tool used to help public housing residents. This chapter describes a system, which by the 1950’s, administered social services and housing programs separately and with different goals and methods, causing conflict and friction between the two fields. Services were always a part of public housing, but the form they took, their relative importance to the housing authority administrators, and their effectiveness, varied widely in time and place. For instance, in the thirties, tenant or social services meant any program in public housing which improved the conditions residents lived in, like recreation programs and community space. By the 1950’s "social services" took on a very different connotation, and usually referred to what was done by social workers for families that were problems to the authority, or for other welfare recipients in the projects. Finally, the chapter looks at how the goals of Congress and the President in each major Housing Act passed from 1937 forward effected the provision of social or tenant services in public housing, although often not consciously aware of the legislation’s impact.
The 1937 Act and Social Services in Early Projects

While housing has been built and owned by government since the early thirties, it was the Housing Act of 1937 which made Public Housing a nationwide reality. The Act’s purpose as stated in its preamble was to "remedy the unsafe and insanitary housing conditions and the acute shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of low income, in rural or urban communities, that are injurious to the health, safety, and morals of the citizens of the Nation." Yet, as we will see, these goals and aims would be more difficult to achieve than the members of the 75th Congress could ever have imagined.

What the Senators and Congressmen did not understand, and were only halfheartedly informed about, was that management of these projects entailed more than the collecting rent and insuring that tenants weren’t over income limits set by the legislation. While all members of Congress were not totally unaware that housing was much more than "bricks and steel", testimony given before Congress between 1936 and 1937 concentrated on four major issues and questions, none of which were directly related to the management of projects or the social requirements of that process:

1. Should the federal government get involved in a large scale public housing program?
2. For whom should this housing be for?
3. How do we finance the program and how much will it cost?
4. And finally, should the housing program be only a urban program or should it be used for rural areas as well?

1 Preamble to Housing Act of 1937
Rarely, in over 500 pages of testimony given before the House and Senate between 1936 and 1937, did testimony focus on the types of programs or services to be provided in projects or how rent would be collected. Rather, it was stated time and time again, if for political reasons alone, that light airy housing in close proximity to employment, shopping, schools, and services would be the cure-all of the slums. As Friedman writes, "some saw in the program the 'beginning of a new era in the economic and social life of America'"\(^2\)

The limited testimony given before Congress in 1936 and 1937 on the social needs of tenants provides some insight into what housing experts judged to be the important services to be integrated in public housing. The testimony also provides views as to how the programs should be financed and run.

In a description of the management and operation of First House, a New York City owned and operated housing project, Langston Post, the Chairman of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), made clear to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor that he felt an improvement in housing quality per se would vastly improve the attitudes and social conditions of tenants. Yet, Post described in addition, services or management practices which some of the Senators did not expect housing authorities to be engaged.

Post described a rent collection policy similar to Octavia Hill's, where rent was collected once a week with "the collector going around to the apartments rather than having the people in to the office to pay up the rent." NYCHA's reasoning for this door to door rent collection was similar to that of Octavia Hill. According to Post, "This is \(^2\)Friedman, Lawrence; Government and Slum Housing; Arno Press; New York; p.116
done for two reasons - One we want to have opportunity to getting into the apartments and see how they are kept, and two, we want to see if we can have a personal contact between the tenant and the proprietor, rather than have it artificial.\(^3\)

As far as services were concerned, Post described things which were mostly for, or revolved around children. Playgrounds were typically placed in every project, so that children could play near to home. In addition, the City "maintained a Kindergarten"\(^4\) on site for the children of residents in the new developments, and working mothers could take their children to "day nurseries" which were provided "not as a condition precedent (for federal funding), but merely a policy which we have adopted there... that there should be a day nursery in all projects." Under questioning, Post conceded that these services might be considered "a quasi-legal obligation on the part of the city," rather than an obligation of the housing authority itself.\(^5\) In fact, most of the services for tenants, including a new health care clinic located across the street from First Houses, were run by other New York City agencies or voluntary organizations, and not the housing authority. So while Congress had no intention of writing these ‘service requirements’ into law, proposed projects without a plan for social service agencies to provide services like schools and health clinics on site or in close proximity, "would not have gone through under this program,"\(^6\) and therefore would not have obtained federal funding in the mid-1930’s.

\(^3\) Post, Langston; *Testimony before Senate Committee on Education and Labor; Housing Act of 1936; 74th Congress; 1936; p.58
\(^4\) Post, Langston; *Testimony before House Committee on Banking and Commerce; To Create A United States Housing Authority; 75th Congress; 1937; p.111
\(^5\) ibid; p.111
\(^6\) Congressman McGanery; *In Testimony by Langston Post before House Committee on Banking and Commerce; To Create A United States Housing Authority; 1937; p.112
Nathan Strauss, a board member of NYCHA, later an Administrator of the United States Housing Authority, testified before the House Banking and Commerce Committee in 1937 that,

"it will be a revelation to anyone who has not previously seem such a group of homes to see what actually takes place in housing projects. I refer not to the mere physical attributes; light, air, equipment of playgrounds, parks, wading pools, and the like. I refer rather, to a difference in the life of the people who live in such a community. I am thinking of the hobby clubs, the community dramatic clubs, the baseball clubs, the lecture groups, and forums on everything from child care to the international situation which arise spontaneously and are organized by the tenants. There is a real rebirth of intimate community life and neighborly spirit."7

According to Strauss, public housing would be the vehicle through which tenants could organize and work together to fill their mutual interests and needs, while the housing authority only had to provide the space needed to allow tenants to create these groups themselves. This made sense since "the potential tenants of public housing....flowed not from the destitute, the descendants of the destitute, the children of Five Pointers, the Negro ghetto dwellers, or the abject poor; it flowed from the submerged and potential middle class,"8 who had the skills and time to organize and run programs for their own and their community’s benefit.

NYCHA annual reports from the mid 1930’s reiterate the sentiments expressed to Congress by both Strauss and Post. While rent was collected once a week by "management aides" who acted as a ‘friendly visitor’, community groups were left to their own devices. Outside agencies or philanthropies provided services like daycare and recreation programs on site, while the housing manager was primarily responsible for

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7 Strauss, Nathan; Testimony before House Committee on Banking and Commerce; To Create A United States Housing Authority; 75th Congress; 1937; p.165
8 Friedman; p.106
maintenance and financial management.

Many housing authorities formed after the 1937 Act closely resembled NYCHA in the services which were provided and how they were administered. While community space and playgrounds were seen as an integral part of public housing, tenants or outside agencies and philanthropies provided for the programs in that space. While, daycare, health clinics, recreation programs, and clubs were never run by the housing authorities themselves, it is important to emphasise that they were present. Despite the reluctance to run the activities, these programs were encouraged to form because the philosophy of housing authorities was that these services or programs should be included in any housing authority whose aim was to "provide healthful and well rounded living conditions for tenants." It was felt that the provision of community space alone would guarantee that there would always be someone or group to fill it. Provide the space and the market would provide the service.

What programs were provided or thought important in public housing, and why they were administered by outside service agencies, was closely tied into the changes in federal and state government in the 1930's, as well as how the 1937 Act was written.

As described in Chapter 1, the role of the federal government had become specialized in purpose. Funding through the Housing Authority of the United States was passed through to local housing authorities for the finance and construction of public housing, not the provision of services. Other federal agencies had the responsibility and funding for social services, which funded state and local agencies with similar purpose. Therefore, although many housing authorities appreciated the importance of programs like daycare and recreation for their projects, authorities did not have the resources or

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9 New York City Housing Authority; Annual Report; 1944; p.12
mandate to provide them. Instead, outside agencies had the federal mandate and funding to bring the services into housing projects.

A more important factor in what services were provided and how they were administered in the early years of public housing, was tied to the 1937 Act itself. What types of social service were provided was clearly dependent upon the types of tenants in public housing. And, since public housing, as set up by the '37 Act, was for the "submerged middle class" and deserving poor, and not the poorest of the poor Americans, what social services meant in public housing in 1937 was very different than what the term social services referred to in the buildings of Octavia Hill or even the model tenement which housed much poorer tenants.

After much debate during 1936 and 1937, Congress decided that Housing Authorities must be self-sufficient, meaning that the majority of tenants in projects had to be regularly employed skilled or unskilled laborers: poor enough to require the subsidized rents, but rich enough to pay the rent out of their own wages. For example, in First House in New York, the average yearly earnings of residents was $1,113.60/year which had to pay an average $21.25/month in rent, translating to 23% of a families yearly income. The breakdowns by professions and stability of employment of tenants clearly shows that the units were not being rented to the poorest New Yorkers. Of 133 tenants, 111 had "steady" employment with 19 residents being "seasonally"employed, and three other unemployed or peddlers. Of those working, fifty nine tenants were skilled workers or professionals, while seventy one others were unskilled or clerical.10

10 Post, Langston; Testimony before House Committee on Banking and Commerce; To Create A United States Housing Authority; 75th Congress; 1937; p.59
While public housing was marketed as a vehicle for slum clearance, it clearly was
not going to reach down to the very poorest in the slums. As Friedman writes,

"The requirement of a rental sufficient to meet expenses would, furthermore, tend to restrict public housing to the honest, working poor. Dependent families, families with no incomes, and problem families would be usually too poor for public housing." And, in fact "in the initial period, housing specialists believed that public housing 'should exclude recipients of relief and be only for self-supporting families who lived in substandard or overcrowded dwellings.'"\(^{11}\)

Therefore, if families in public housing were for the most part the submerged middle class, than the need for some (although not all) of the services Octavia Hill or the model tenements provided was now negated. No longer did tenants need job or moral training because they worked and had what Hill would have considered moral fortitude. Nor would they need alcohol or drug rehabilitation programs, community watch programs, and teenage pregnancy counselling, because in 1937 the tenants in public housing did not have these problems. Instead, persons who would require these services in the 1930's were kept out of public housing as undesirable tenants, and left to fend for themselves in the slums.

What housing authorities did offer their families was significantly more than what was available to them in the slum tenements in which they formerly lived. All families living in public housing developments almost exclusively came from either inner city slum housing in many cases without heat or a bathroom, or from poorly built rural homes.\(^{12}\) Public housing developments on the other hand provided playgrounds and

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\(^{11}\) Friedman; p.131

\(^{12}\) Significant testimony is given before both the House and Senate in 1936 and 1937 sustaining the claim that public housing which had already been built had gone to former slum dweller or persons from substandard rural dwellings. In First House for instance NYCHA inserted testimony showing that over 95% of all residents in the project came from New York City slum areas.
recreation

programs for children directly adjacent to their homes. Schools and health clinics were either in the developments themselves or across the street. Community space was almost always provided so that tenants could meet each other and form interest groups.

Few critics in the late 1930's said that public housing wasn't doing what it had intended to do plus some. Instead, the mandate sent out across the nation by Congress was being filled quite admirably, and tenants were finding that life in the projects was not only better physically than where they had previously lived, but also took into account some of their social needs as well; particularly in the areas of recreation, health, and education. Unfortunately, the success of public housing in both physical and social terms was to be short lived.

The War Years: An Anomaly In Public Housing

Four years after the public housing program began, the United States entered World War II. The event signalled a dramatic turning point for public housing.

During the war, there was a moratorium on construction of new projects since all materials and man power were conserved for the war effort. Due to rationing, there was a severe shortage of housing in the United States, and when public housing units did become available, they were often used to house workers involved in the production of war goods. In addition, housing authorities became responsible for temporary war housing, hastily erected to house factory workers and their families.

Services provided during the War were tied to the War production effort. Since many fathers were fighting in Europe or the Pacific, and mothers were working long
shifts in the factories, child daycare programs were omnipresent in war time public housing. Furthermore, many support groups which helped with children and in times of tragedy, were set up by tenants with family helping family, since most had the common bond of having a father, brother, or son overseas.¹³

If the shortage of housing in the United States was bad during the war, the lack of decent places to live was acute once World War II was over. As Friedman writes, there was a "rush to build housing for veterans and to use existing stocks of public housing for veterans late in the war and early in the postwar period,"¹⁴ but it was not enough to fill the demand.

Immediately after World War II, public housing began to move away from its stated purpose; to house the slum dweller, and instead used to house veterans and their families. Many of these veterans were not in need of even those social services which public housing had to offer. While the playgrounds and health care clinics were a bonus and convenient, daycare was no longer needed since the wives could stay at home with the children, and public housing became only a waystation for veterans, until they could move into a newly built single family home, subsidized by the federal government through low interest rates and tax write offs.

Some housing authorities did provide social services in public housing after the end of the War. In New Orleans in 1945, "a tenant relations department has been set up to provide casework services in cooperation with tenants, management, and community agencies."¹⁵ Yet, New Orleans Housing Authority Annual Reports between 1945-1950

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¹³ New York City Housing Authority; Annual Reports; 1943-1945
¹⁴ Friedman; p.117
¹⁵ Journal of Housing; New Orleans Sets Up Tenant Relations Department; Journal of Housing; April 1945; p.45
give the sense that the work the tenant relations department did immediately after the War was relatively insignificant and unnecessary. The number of cases which tenant relations dealt with was quite large, yet very few contacts were for problems or to refer tenants to outside service agencies. Rather, most contact had to deal with management issues, recreation, or minor infractions of housing authority rules.

Other housing authorities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, and Boston did provide services and hired social service workers, whose job it was to help tenants settle into their new homes in public housing, and find what social services tenants wanted and needed.

According to a member of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, the requirements for the job of the social service worker were "interest in people and a sincere desire to be helpful" but warns that "many social workers tend to pauperize their clients by helping, directing, and attempting to shape their lives for them without giving enough thought to what such persons can do for themselves."16 Like Octavia Hill, the City of Los Angeles taught their workers to be "friendly visitors," but not imposers upon the lives of tenants.

Seattle’s Housing Authority, immediately after the War, saw their role in service provision centering around recreation programs. And, while religious services and athletic events were well attended, health care clinics and adult clubs were underutilized.17 Seattle, like New Orleans was an example of a authority where more mundane community oriented programs were well used, while outside service agencies providing counseling, alcohol rehabilitation, and job training were sporadically used by the tenants.

16 Forster, Dorothy; Adjustment of the Resident to Public Housing; Journal of Housing; December 1946; p.286
17 ibid; p.291
By 1949 many veterans and their families were well on their way to moving out of public housing as quickly as they had moved in. The construction industry was at full speed, building single family homes, and there was little reason for veterans to stay in the projects, when they could have their own yard and playground in the emerging suburbs. The public housing program could now return to its original purpose, the housing of slum dwellers and the eventual clearance of the slums.

**A Change In Tenants and a New Role for Social Services**

The Housing Act of 1949 not only greatly expand the public housing program, it also tried to insure that public housing was for all slum dwellers, not only working class ones. However, the legislative intent and reality were quite different. As Friedman writes,

"In 1949, the federal act was amended to declare that local agencies must not discriminate against families, otherwise eligible for admission...because their incomes are derived in whole or in part from public assistance" but says that "the ideal remained strong that in a healthy housing project and in a healthy society members of the deserving, working poor predominate." [18]

Conflict arose due to the difference between what local housing authorities thought their tenant selection policy should be, and what the federal legislation required in regards to non-discrimination. To discriminate against the poorest slum dwellers in order to keep the rather healthy tenant makeup of the projects would mean giving up federal subsidies in order to keep out welfare tenants. However, housing authorities were unwilling to do this, and began to accept some poorer unemployed families as residents in their developments. Their ambivalence to accept these families as tenants was

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[18] Friedman; p.109
mitigated by the fact that an eviction if needed, was a relatively easy thing to obtain in the 1940’s and 50’s. As Friedman writes, if evictions were not often used, "there may have been a heavy use of threats of eviction." As evidence, Friedman points to a study of nine LHA’s in 1957 showing that "one quarter of all the move outs were by request of management," which at the very least meant that housing authorities were using their police power of eviction or threat of it, much more readily than they had previous to the Housing Act of 1949. However, housing authorities were unable to always purge themselves of problem families, and other problems began to develop after 1949 as well.

An early sign to future troubles which emerged in the early 1950’s and alerted housing authorities to problems ahead, was a steep drop in the use of community space in the projects. A study conducted in the late 1940’s showed that 50 percent of all projects in the United State which had community space had two or fewer programs sponsored by tenants, outside agencies, or the LHA itself, which utilized the community areas. This is in relation to the late 1930’s through the mid-1940’s when cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, and New York were reporting significant activity in community space.

Observers concluded that the underutilization of the space had two causes. First, many housing authorities began to believe that "the original premise on which elaborate community facilities were included in public housing projects was erroneous and ill-conceived" and could be blamed on the early "do-gooders, social workers, and social revolutionaries who made up a sizable percentage of the personnel who first were employed to operate housing projects." Instead, it was now thought that public housing tenants should recreate out among the general community in the city’s parks and other

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19 Friedman: p.134
20 Journal of Housing: July 1950; p.142
places of leisure. Secondly, some housing authorities saw no role for themselves in community activities, despite the fact that outside agencies were not providing activities in these community buildings. As one member of the Denver Housing Authority put it,

"The providing of community building and carrying on of community activities are the responsibilities of such other departments of the city as have highly trained staffs and ample funds. Management staffs attempting to provide community space and coordinate community activities... neglect their major responsibility - that of providing decent, safe, and sanitary homes for low income families."21

The sentiments expressed by this member of the Denver Housing Authority was echoed by many other authorities and their workers. Particularly in the view that it is the outside service providers responsibility to provide programs and not that of the public housing authority.

In many housing authorities across the country, the problem was not a lack of tenants wanting to use the community spaces, but a lack of initiative on the part of local authorities and other city agencies (namely social service agencies) to provide recreation or community programs within public housing. And while this was a rather small issue, or was viewed as such in 1950, it was a foreboding sign concerning how public housing authorities and social service agencies would work together to solve more pressing problems in the future. What was for sure was that management, tenants, and social service agencies each had a role to play in public housing, but no groups role included creating a sense of community amongst public housing residents. Most tenants were supposed to go to work, come home, not bother other tenants and live their lives like any other resident of the city. As H.H. Hedstrom, Executive Director of the Twin Falls Idaho Housing Authority wrote:

21 Journal of Housing; July 1950; p.231
"our policy is to keep our tenants advised of all activities available to them through the city, or any civic, service, or other organization...we have found this practice to be much more workable and successful than our former attempts to supply to educational and recreational needs of our tenants."22

Management was responsible for the physical upkeep and general well being of tenants, but not for creating organizations in the projects. As Robert Sipprell of the Buffalo Housing Authority worried, "Management finds itself in a untenable position if it must encourage groups, seek out leadership, and then find it necessary to file a precept and petition against one of the leaders of the group for failing to pay his rent on time."23

The Social Service Agencies were concerned with the the comfort of tenants and the availability of services, but the views on how and where services should be provided had changed over a ten year period. Many social workers began to share the belief expressed by Grace Coyle a Professor of Group Social Work at Western Reserve University, when she said that, "community recreational and educational programs, are not the function of public housing, unless such housing is built in isolated sections where there is no established community life."24 Rather social workers began to believe that public housing authorities did not constitute communities in of themselves, and tenants should use facilities within the neighborhoods of the cities.

It can be hypothesized that this change in the philosophy concerning on-site vs. neighborhood social services or facilities for public housing tenants, likely had to do with a political problem housing authorities were experiencing in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

22 Hedstrom, H.H.; Six Answers; Journal of Housing; July 1950; p.23
23 Sipprell, Robert; Six Answers; Journal of Housing; July 1950; p.229
24 Coyle, Grace; Social Workers and Public Housing; Journal of Housing; July 1950; p.236
Many Housing Authorities were concerned that communities in which they were building public housing and other urban renewal projects were in most cases opposed to their presence. One of the principal fears of communities was that public housing would cause "invasions of inharmonious groups"\(^{25}\) who would ruin their neighborhoods.

Housing Authorities across the country concentrated considerable resources on public relations, including community days, open houses, exhibits, and billboards, which all extolled the virtues of the public housing program. Marie McGuire of the San Antonio Housing Authority, and latter PHA Commissioner during the Kennedy Administration said that she spent half of her time on public relations in 1951 due to its importance.\(^{26}\)

Yet, the best missionaries of good will for authorities were the tenants. The majority of tenants in public housing in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s were not much different in economic class, race, or background than the people in the surrounding communities. If public housing authorities could show that their tenants were not "inharmonious," but just like the people in the broader community, much of the public relations problem could be dissipated.

The easiest way of getting tenants to mingle with people in the surrounding neighborhoods was to have them use the same facilities, stores, ball fields, churches and synagogues. To provide these things on site would be insular, and would restrict interaction with people from outside the projects. Therefore, it was not in the best political interest of housing authorities to encourage communities in the projects made up of only public housing authority tenants, because this might reinforce negative stereotypes already in the surrounding communities.

\(^{25}\) Journal of Housing; \textit{The Family In The House Next Door}; \textit{Journal of Housing}; January 1950; P.7

\(^{26}\) Journal of Housing; \textit{Public Relations Half the House’s Job}; \textit{Journal of Housing}; 1952; p.440
The rise of a sense of community in the projects which Nathan Strauss portrayed so vividly in his testimony in 1937, had little chance of happening in the 1950's because no one saw their role as community builders for the projects. Not management, not social service agencies, and not even the tenants. By the late 1950's, the strong communities which had been developed in the projects in the 1930's and 1940's were long gone.

In 1958 Harrison Salisbury would write about the mistake housing authorities and social service agencies made by abandoning community facilities in projects. Instead of integrating public housing into the communities, projects became oasises where the only community groups were youth gangs which controlled a few block of turf, and never went much beyond those boundaries.

When "problem families," defined at the time as those families that "are broken families, aged families, or standard families with social or physical problems,"27 became a reality in public housing due to the stipulations in the Housing Act of 1949, housing authorities had to find a way to deal with these tenants. However, LHA's were certainly not surprised about what problems they would be confronting. Many employees had experience with slums, and knew that up until the 1950's, public housing was only for the most able and independent of the slum dwellers. They also knew that there was pathology, severe poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, and disfunctional families; problems which they rarely dealt with, but now would increasingly see in their tenants. How housing authorities across the nation dealt with an influx of "problem families" during the 1950's differed dependent upon location. For instance, while Detroit gave social workers who worked with tenants in the projects "copies of the lease and handbook"28 so they

27 Finiker, David; Public Housing Management Must Accept Family Rehabilitation Responsibility; Journal of Housing; May 1956; p.168
28 Laurence, Cyril; Housing and Community Services; Journal of Housing; January 1952; p.206
could better assist tenants; New York hired staff to "secure public and private social agencies that would operate the community facilities,"\textsuperscript{29} and help identify problem tenants. However, one fact which did not vary from city to city was that housing authorities and outside social service agencies were increasingly in disagreement over who's responsibility problem families were, and how best to utilize their collective resources and expertise to solve the troubles they were facing. But any fears they might have had were tempered by a few facts.

First, authorities had the power of eviction, which as Friedman writes, they were not afraid to threaten or exercise. Secondly, LHA's knew that they still had some control over tenant selection and retention. As Friedman writes "in some cities, such as Chicago, housing managers go to some lengths to keep good stable tenants whose incomes exceed the permissible amount," although this was clearly a violation of federal regulations.\textsuperscript{30} And, while some authorities held on to stable tenants because they thought such families would help influence those with problems, others did it because these tenants rarely caused them headaches.

Yet, the question still remained as to how public housing authorities could best provide for their 'problem tenants' needs, or putting it in less than benevolent terms; how they could insure that problem families were no longer problems to management.

Keeping these tenants out of public housing was no longer a total solution due to the federal regulations, so many housing authorities turned to social service agencies already in the neighborhood, which had experience dealing with the problem family and welfare cases, for help.

\textsuperscript{29} Bruphy, Alice M.; \textit{The "Group Work" Agency}; \textit{Journal of Housing}; February 1950; p.53
\textsuperscript{30} Friedman; p.111
In 1953 The National Association of Housing Officials (NAHO, later to become NAHRO or National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) and the National Conference of Social Work set up a joint committee whose goal it was to "create understanding on the part of both welfare agencies and local housing authorities of the goals of each program...as well as to define and solve specific problems that touch both welfare workers and housers such as rents for relief families, problem families, relocation, and aged families." 

At the local level some housing authorities were also gearing up to find ways of better utilizing social agency services, and to bring the housing authorities and social agencies together to help solve the LHA's problems with tenants. The National Capital Housing Authority for instance, took a "three way approach" to inform their managers about available services as well as "providing an opportunity for welfare agencies to secure firsthand knowledge of our programs." The three steps included; having different social agencies come and talk at monthly meetings of the management staff, encouraging local managers and case workers to discuss particular cases and situations, and finally to encourage managers to "become an integral part of the overall planning for better family living in the community." 

The New York City Housing Authority set up a social and community services unit whose aim was to help "tenants and neighbors of public housing enjoy a good life" as well as to "help problem families" by tying them into services in the community and by encouraging service providers to fund programs on-site. The unit functioned to help

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31 Journal of Housing; Housing and Welfare Are Meeting; Journal of Housing; March 1953; p.80
32 Conlin, Florence T.; Managers, Social Agencies; Journal of Housing; May 1953; p.165
33 New York City Housing Authority; Home Home At Last; 1959; p.8
both tenants and management better understand and relate to each other and to the
outside community. In addition to the social and community services unit, NYCHA set
up a social consultation unit which exclusively dealt with "the less than three per cent" of
families who "represents an obvious danger or whose disruptive behavior seriously
disturbs its neighbors." The social consultation unit helped management make decisions
on the family's tenancy, tried to find new methods to help tenants help themselves, and
improve managements skills in recognizing and handling problem families.34

Problem Families in the 1950's and How PHA's Dealt With Them

From examining reports and writings on services for problem families in public
housing in the 1950's we can make four generalizations about their role and effectiveness
of implementation.

First, problem families until the early 1960's were not significant trouble for
public housing authorities. Most housing authorities estimated that what they considered
"problem families" were somewhere between three and five percent of their respective
tenant population depending upon the city.35 It was also evident that many housing
authorities felt that an influx of problem families would be forthcoming, particularly after
1956 with a increase in urban renewal funding and more stringent relocation
requirements for families displaced by slum clearance. The low percentage of problem
families was for three basic reasons. First, as was described earlier, housing authorities
went to great lengths to retain and recruit what they considered stable families. NYCHA

34 New York City Housing Authority; Home Home at Last; 1959; p.21
35 Various articles in the Journal of Housing, as well as Housing Authority Reports throughout the 1950's
place the number of problem families within the 3 to 5% range. This includes New York, New Orleans and
Cleveland to name a few.
and other authorities would often turn down applicants if they even had an inkling that they might cause management or other tenants trouble, despite non-discrimination clauses which were in the 1949 Housing Act.\textsuperscript{36} Secondly, rents were at a rate where most of the very poorest families in the slums still could not afford public housing, even with public assistance, and were therefore de-facto non eligible. Finally, housing authorities had great control over their tenants, and as Friedman writes, would not be afraid to scare tenants with the threat of eviction.

The second conclusion about social services in public housing during the 1950’s is that social service agencies were seen as totally separate entities from public housing authorities, and the role of the housing authority played in service provision was to either help bring the outside agencies into the projects or tie the tenants into the outside agencies.

While some housing authorities early in the public housing program hired management aides who collected rent and acted as friendly visitors, most authorities in the 1950’s hired staff who would concentrate on tying problem families and other needy families into services in the community or bringing needed services for their problem families to the projects.\textsuperscript{37} These "community support" departments or "management aids" acted as management’s arm to deal with tenants and their problems, but rather than try to solve the problems within the projects, these groups usually acted as intermediaries between tenant, management, and outside social service agencies. The age of the

\textsuperscript{36} see Salisbury, Harrison; p.84

\textsuperscript{37} For instance, NYCHA from 1934 to 1942, collected rent door to door, "after the English System" to check up on the conditions of apartments and to have a personal relationship between tenants and management. After '42 door to door collection was abandoned except for the first year of occupancy because it was seen as overly paternalistic after that initial period. New Orleans also hired women who went door to door to check in on families, but abandoned this practice in the 1950’s except for the cases which they considered problem families.
'friendly visitor' was gone, and what replaced it, due to the needs of management and complexity of the bureaucratic system, were 'units' of public housing authorities that knew how to work within that system.

The third statement which can be made about social services in public housing during this period is that, despite consistent rhetoric about how social service agencies and housing authorities were working well together, there was significant friction surrounding who had the responsibility for the troubles problem families caused other tenants, management, and themselves. The friction is obvious despite articles and reports to the contrary, because all throughout the 1950's, major figures in housing would make pleas for social service agencies and housing authorities to put aside the question of responsibility and find solutions to the plight of the problem family. In 1950, Gladdice Mayo of the Housing Authority of Miami wrote that,

"some of our troubles may be charged to the prevalent and often necessary practice of drawing lines and defining boundaries on jobs... and they (the problems) usually have the do with such matters as lack of understanding of the other fellow’s policies or narrow attitudes of agencies toward housing authorities (and, occasionally, of housing authorities towards agencies)."\(^{38}\)

In 1955 Ellis Ash, The Director of Management for the Housing Authority of Baltimore wrote, "Housing authorities, need to ‘want’ a relationship with community agencies in a wholehearted sense and need to do everything possible to establish the bases for good relationships rather than expect then to be brought about by mere wishing for them."\(^{39}\)

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\(^{38}\) Jenkins, Bette; The "Case Work" Agency; Journal of Housing; March 1950; p.106

\(^{39}\) Ash, Ellis; Housing and Community Services; Journal of Housing; May 1955; p.173
In April of 1957, the Joint Committee on Housing and Welfare of NAHRO and the National Social Welfare Association issued a report which stated that, "The need is urgent...and the time is now...for more and better joint planning and joint action in the slum clearance and city rebuilding on part of the agencies concerned with structures and those concerned with people." The Committee went on to say that there was a true "sense of urgency," because of the large numbers of families being displaced by urban renewal, increasingly taxing the resources of both public housing and service agencies, and not being truly served by either.40

Even as late as 1959, Agnes Meyer an activist and owner of the Washington Post-Time Herald spoke at the 1959 NAHRO conference to encourage housing authorities and social service agencies to work towards fulfilling the needs of public housing’s tenants by overhauling the system through which social services were brought to tenants.41

Evidently, while some housing authorities were claiming great success throughout the 1950’s on how well they worked with social service providers, national figures in the housing and social service fields saw a very different picture, and were worried that as urban renewal was stepped up and more and more "problem families" moved into public housing due to displacement, management would be increasingly not equipped to handle what they would have on their hands.

Finally, there was a significant minority of housing officials and housing authorities who felt authorities should not depend on outside agencies to provide services for their tenants, but should do the work themselves. This view increasingly gained

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40 Joint Committee on Housing and Welfare; "Need is Urgent for Stronger Housing-Welfare Bond"; Journal of Housing; April 1957; p. 134
41 Meyer, Agnes; Remarks before NAHRO Conference; Journal of Housing; December 1959; p.397
credence particularly towards the end of the decade.

At the NAHRO National Conference in 1959 Agnes Meyer urged that "emphasis must be shifted from quantity to quality" by "an increase in staff and to use some of their housing assistance as a nucleus of a social service program which would operate out of the authority itself." She felt this was necessary because there were not "enough trained social workers to supply the need in our many huge public housing projects." In addition, Meyer also pushed for tenant participation in management in order to "give them a share in project management and to break their isolation by closer relationship to the life of the community."42

In 1956, Elizabeth Wood, the former Executive Secretary of the Chicago Housing Authority, spoke about a total revamping of management practices to better serve tenants.

Wood saw public housing in two periods, pre and post 1949. Of the differences she said that "those of us who were with the housing program in the first period have difficulty thinking up any losses that could be counted," while the post-1949 period was best described by "the basic fact that housing authority projects are gathering to themselves a group of families long known to social agencies; families who represent the consolidated failures of social agencies." To deal with the problem of these families, Wood felt that housing authorities must hire workers who would provide "services not to be performed as casework," but "just friendly, firm, paternal (if you wish) visiting; unrelenting in its persistence and significant in and of itself."

42 Meyer, Agnes; Remarks before NAHRO Conference; Journal of Housing; December 1959; p.396-397
Wood continued on to give three reasons to implement this system of ‘visiting’:

1. "It will raise the respect of the neighbors of these problem families."

2. "Special management attention to the problem family will raise the regard of the neighbors for the family itself."

3. And finally, "working persistently with the problem family would give the younger children of the family enough of a contact with orderliness and cleanliness so that they would come to know that such standards are what the community expects of families." 43

Obviously Wood, and to some degree Meyer, were encouraging in the late 1950’s, a program which Octavia Hill and some model tenement workers would have approved of; a model for public housing which would involve the authority itself in providing more than bricks and mortar. Yet, it would take until the late 1970’s or early 1980’s for housing authorities to begin implementing programs like those Wood or Meyer were talking about.

Conclusions

By the early 1960’s, there had been two clearly delineated periods in social service provision in public housing. And, while the strategy was the same during the two periods, namely to rely heavily on outside service agencies to provide for the social welfare of tenants, implementation and effectiveness were different.

The years prior to 1949, saw relative success both in the public housing program in general, as well as with the social programs provided on-site for tenants. Authorities hired staff to do everything from "friendly visiting" to organizing recreation programs,

43 Wood, Elizabeth; Remarks before NAHRO Conference of 1956; Journal of Housing; December 1956
although the funding and usually the running of any other service program was to come from outside sources. The two factors which sets the pre-1949 and post-1949 periods apart was how management viewed social services and their providers, as well as the type of tenants, for which services in the projects were aimed.

In the early years of public housing, the people working in social services and those employed in housing were accustomed to working together from the model tenement and settlement house days. The administrator and board members in the largest cities consisted of the same activists that were fighting in the early 1930’s to get a national housing program passed through Congress. And, though social agencies were given the responsibility of bringing social programs to public housing and their tenants, and housing agencies were given the task of providing safe and sanitary housing for low income people, there was little conflict between the two groups because of a long term familiarity, particularly in the big cities.

The second factor which helped tenant service programs to be regarded as achieving broad success in the early years, was the fact that the tenants who moved into public housing were people who really didn’t need intensive counseling or juvenile delinquency programs, but were helped immensely by being provided with child care, and baseball fields which were not available in the slums. These tenants used the community space because a sense of community was easily established.

The post 1949 period in public housing saw a significant change in how housing officials worked with social service providers, as well as what types of tenant was now the priority of management and social workers in public housing.
By the time of the Housing Act of 1949 there was no longer a close relationship between the housing authorities and social service agencies. As each grew, and the 'old time' housers and social workers started to move up and out of their original positions, a new class of manager and social worker moved in who had never worked with one another in the same organizations before. Each was trained in their own field, and while a good working relationship with agencies or housing authorities was stressed, it could never replicate the earlier period where social workers and housers, came from the same backgrounds and out of the same organizations. As described in a 1963 article in the *Journal of Housing* looking back on the public housing program of the 1950’s,

"Dominated by the economy spirit of the times, the answer to calls for help on social problems was that these were community problems, not housing problems-community agencies would have to cope with the localities ‘troubled families’ (in or out of public housing) by using their own resources: public housing funds had been appropriated to provide buildings, not services."  

The second change which started in 1949, and expanded significantly after 1956 was that housing authorities came to consider social work, and in particular social services provided on site, to mean services mainly for their problem tenants. Managers and social workers began to take a dim view of social programs in public housing for all tenants, like child care and recreation programs, because they felt that the average tenant should integrate into programs in the surrounding neighborhood, making that broader geographic area their community. Housing authorities began to feel the social workers role was only with problemed families, or to put it another way, those families which

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44 "Resentment" was a word often used to describe the relationship between housers and social service workers in the *Journal of Housing* after 1949. In the late 30's and 40's there was never any mention of this word or any other which would signify conflict.

45 *Journal of Housing; Legislative History of Public Housing traced through 25 years; Journal of Housing; No. 8 1962; p.442*
caused the housing authorities trouble. And, since the troubles which problem families caused were difficult ones to work with and solve, friction developed between the agencies which had to house these families, and those that were given the task of looking out for their social well being. While the playgrounds, the health clinics, and schools remained in and around projects, the real emphasis for social workers in LHA’s was placed on doing something about the problem tenant.

The next chapter will discuss two other periods in the history of social services in public housing starting with the mid-1960’s when tenant organizing and participation began to be seen as a better way to deal with problem tenants than earlier methods. However, as we will see, today the debate continues as to what is the best way to deal with troubled families; and interestingly enough, current methods of implementation of services in public housing include a wide range of methods including some of those taught by Octavia Hill.
CHAPTER 3

1961-1991: Traditional Social Service & Tenant Empowerment: Which One or Both?

Social services in public housing authorities from 1961 until the present can be broken into two distinct periods.

The first period was from 1961 until 1981 when the provision of social services for all public housing authority tenants became an important issue in LHA’s again. From the Kennedy Administration through the election of Ronald Reagan as President, there was a constant push from the federal government for housing authorities to provide social services to their tenants, on-site and in the projects. The types of services changed from the early 1960’s to the later part of the decade, but the importance of on-site social programs in the abstract had not diminished. No matter if the types of social programs were group work and casework in the early 1960’s, or tenant organizing and empowerment in the late 1960’s and 70’s, the federal government was always encouraging local housing authorities to get involved in providing them.

The second period, from 1980 on is characterized by confusion around social services in public housing projects. Some authorities continued to do community organizing, some went back to group work and casework, others provided Information & Referral, while another group of housing authorities did away with their social service departments entirely. This period was characterized by a critical lack of federal funding or even auspice for housing authorities to bring social services to their tenants. Housing Authorities for the first time since the 1950’s, were left on their own to decide what, if any, social services they should provide. The only thing the federal government did require of LHA’s, was that they take only the poorest and neediest as tenants, truly
making the projects "housing of last resort."

Today, due to severe problems like Crack, AIDS, and guns which housing authorities are facing, the search at the federal, state, and local levels to find a method to deal with these problems that works has been stepped up.

The Feds Become Interested

In the first years of the Kennedy Administration there was a substantial shift in policy related to service provision for public housing tenants.

The change occurred in 1962 with the setting up of a Joint Task Force under the United States Housing Authority and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The stated purpose of the Task Force was "to search out where and how PHA might join with HEW in bringing rehabilitative help to problem families, as well as more, and better, health, education, and recreation services to all public housing tenants," but the fact of its mere existence was even more important, than its actual impact or scale.

What was described as an "all-out frontal attack on the problems of problem families in public housing projects" was a move by the Joint Task Force to set up demonstration projects in a number of cities across the country in which "social service 'headquarters'" would be established so that, "health, educational, and welfare services can be made available not only to a project's problem families, but to all tenants."  

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1 Journal of Housing; Legislative History of Public Housing Traced Through 25 Years; Journal of Housing; August 1962; p.445
2 Journal of Housing; Housing Welfare Team Up to Bring Social Services to Public Housing; Journal of Housing; March-April 1962; p.121
Services to be provided included everything from anti-juvenile delinquency programs, to the organization of daycare. In addition, a "fulltime, professionally-trained social welfare consultant should continue on the housing authority staff."\(^3\)

The Joint Task Force did not require the provision of social services by local housing authorities or blanket the country with funding for tenant services in housing. Instead, the Task Force, was the first publicized and financed program which any administration had implemented since the Housing Act of 1937, stating that the federal government has an interest in more than the "bricks and mortar" side of public housing.

Through this attempt at interagency cooperation, laws and regulations had a chance of being changed so that social service agencies and housing authorities might better combine their resources and talents to help needy tenants. However, these changes were not going to come easily, as was described in a \textit{Journal of Housing} article in 1962,

"The main stumbling block to moving the demonstration programs along into operation is the complex of regulations that must be aligned to work smoothly together. Every single HEW aid program has its own individual structure in federal law, keyed to its own individual operation."\(^4\)

This regulatory separation of responsibility between HEW and PHA, whose origins were described in Chapter 1, would continue to plague all levels of government attempting to better integrate public housing and social services, just as most attempts at better combining the resources of LHA's and local social services agencies had failed during the 1950's.

The problem was in the rigidity of federal social service funding sources which did not recognize public housing tenant as more than residents of a broader community.

\(^3\) Journal of Housing; \textit{St. Louis Housing Welfare Tie-Up}; \textit{Journal of Housing}; March-April 1962; p.122

\(^4\) Journal of Housing; \textit{Housing Welfare Team Up to Bring Social Services to Public Housing}; \textit{Journal of Housing}; March-April 1962; p.122
While the scale of the Joint Demonstration program was not overly impressive, it was a critical turning point in the relation of social services to public housing authorities because it was the first time the federal government had a stated policy on social services in public housing.

The Joint Task Force's programs were based on cooperation between housing authorities and social service providers, as well as the re-emergence of on site social services for all public housing tenants.

As Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration Marie McGuire stated in 1962, "The success of this program will be in direct proportion to the interest, enthusiasm, and cooperative efforts of the participating local housing authorities and local (social service) agencies."

The effort of the Joint Task Force was a departure from the philosophy of the 1950's when the majority of tenants were supposed to get the services they needed off site, and authorities and social service agencies were often fighting with one another despite pleas for cooperation from leaders in both fields.

What the Joint Task Force was encouraging at the local level resembled the relationship which existed between housing authorities and agencies in the 1930's and 40's, although many of the social services to be provided would be quite different. While social services in the 1930's and 40's meant amenities for a "submerged middle class," the social services in the Task Force's demonstration projects would have a large component devoted to "providing better and more complete and constructive help to welfare recipient families through the programs that are already assisting them, and at the

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5 Journal of Housing; Housing-Welfare team up to bring social services to public housing; Journal of Housing; March-April 1962; p.122
same time, of making a direct assault on the problems of the problem families, whether receiving public assistance or not. Amenities would be part of the demonstration program, but other services directed towards the needs of welfare and problem tenants would now be a substantial part of the social service menu.

**Poorer Tenants - Stricter Regulations**

At the same time the federal government had become interested in social services in public housing projects, the Kennedy Administration (and Johnson and Nixon Administrations after it) was becoming increasingly interested in insuring that the poorest Americans had access to public housing.

The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, as well as the Brooke Amendment of 1971 had a significant effect on public housing authorities across the country.

These legislative initiatives made housing truly for the poorest of the poor Americans. The cost however, was in taking the most profound problems in the slums and transferring them to public housing. No longer could authorities evict families from the projects when they became problems for them; now they were forced to deal with them in-place, although this was not the general intent of the legislation.

The Executive Order on "Equal Opportunity in Housing" in 1962 had the intent of insuring that "federally supported housing projects could not then use race as a criterion in selection of tenants." As a result of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, discrimination on the basis of any factor other than age (for elderly buildings) was against the law. These laws were certainly not cure-all's for integration in public

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6. ibid; p.122
housing, but it made it much more difficult for housing authorities to indiscriminately keep people who they assumed would become one of their problem families out of the projects.

The Brooke Amendment, while not having an immediate impact on the makeup of public housing, "dramatically changed public housing by tapping rents that PHA's charged tenants," and would eventually be blamed by many housing authority administrators for "ruining public housing."7

The Amendment simply changed the way family rent was determined. Rather, than tying the rent into the carrying charges on an apartment, rent was now determined by a family's income. For instance, if the rent on an apartment was set at $400 in 1969, and the family's income was $16,000 or 30% of income; in 1971 (assuming no increase in salary) the family's contribution for rent would be $333/month, or 25%. The extra $67/month which authorities needed to keep the projects running, would have to be made up by some outside contribution, like the federal, state, or city government.

After 1971 almost any family could now move into public housing, since authorities were restricted from discriminating on the basis of any factor, with the exception of criminal records and nonpayment of rent, and families only had to contribute a percentage of their income, non dependent upon the carrying charges of an apartment.

The consequences of these laws operating together was to allow almost anyone who was income eligible, regardless of race, creed and now income to move into public housing. As Frederick Brown recently wrote, "The result was that, during the 1970's

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7 Brown, Frederick; Creating More Dynamic Public Housing: A Modest Proposal; Journal of Housing; November/December 1990; p.310
thousands of 'very low-income' people with limited work and social skills flooded into public housing. The more capable and responsible tenants then began to leave."

There was no better timing for the Joint Task Force and other social service concerns to begin a substantial integration of social service workers and social services into the on-going management efforts of public housing authorities. The troubles housing authorities perceived they were facing with tenants had gotten worse, and even the language used had a more crisis quality to it. No longer was the buzz term "problem family," but social workers and housing managers were talking about the "multi-problemed" families, which "earlier social studies cliche would call a 'hard core'."

The term social service now took on a whole new meaning. In the 1930's and 1940's services meant any program, recreation or otherwise, which made the life of all tenants more comfortable than their former lives in the slums. During the 1950's few social services existed for the general public housing population like recreation programs and childcare, and housing authorities asked social work agencies to concentrate their efforts on working with the problem family, which often involved a get tough policy of evicting tenants who did not follow the authority's rules. By the 1960's and 1970's however, a strict management policy was not enough. Now authorities were forced to deal with problem or multi-problemed families in place. St. Louis was early to come to the realization that they were obligated to work towards solutions for their problem families which did not include evicting them before other avenues to solve problems were exhausted. By 1963 the infamous Pruitt-Igo projects had two social service centers, where caseworkers worked on-site, "to bring caseworkers in closer contact with public

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8 ibid; p.310
9 Salisbury; Harrison; The Shook-Up Generation; Harper & Row; New York; 1958; p.119
assistance recipients and of reducing the case load of individual welfare workers."\textsuperscript{10}

The cooperative effort to bring social services to tenants which was pushed by the Joint Task Force, was becoming more palatable to housing authorities throughout the early 1960's. Since Authorities could no longer indiscriminately purge themselves of what they perceived to be their problem tenants, they had to find effective methods of dealing with them in place. Social services which were geared to dealing with specific problems tenant’s had, seemed a logical place to turn.

By the late 1960’s however, the social service world, the emphasis in rhetoric and funding from the federal government, the War on Poverty, and the Civil Rights and Poor People’s movement changed the definition of what social services meant for the poor and the problem family.

Social services would still be on-site in public housing projects, yet "social services" now meant community organizing and outreach which was advocacy for tenants even when it meant being an adversary to management.

In the 1950’s, a change in the tenant population, and philosophy in housing authorities and social service agencies concerning the way to tie public housing tenants into social services affected the way public housing was linked to services. The change in social service provision in the late 1960’s had to do with factors exogenous to housing authorities and social service agencies. The types of tenants that were in public housing in 1962 when the Joint Task Force was formed, and in 1966-67 when tenant organizing became the social service of choice, had not changed. However, vast changes in civil rights, philosophy on community participation, and the War on Poverty at the federal level, had an overwhelming impact on both housing authorities and social service

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Journal of Housing; St. Louis Housing Welfare Tie-Up; Journal of Housing;} March-April 1962; p.123
agencies around the country.

Civil Rights, The War on Poverty, and Public Housing

Terms like "a piece of the action" or "control by the people" began to be taken on as catch phrases by a new kind of social worker, and housing authorities were strongly encouraged and funded by the federal government to hire tenant organizers, and to include tenants into the decision making process of the authorities. As Edward White, Executive Director of The Housing Authority of New Haven wrote, "It really does not matter how we title this phenomenon; the fact is that it has become unmistakably clear that every public official; every institution, and indeed any bureaucracy whether public or private, large or small, cannot function effectively without developing a strategy of involvement with its constituents."11

Concurrent with the rise of tenant involvement and tenant organizing, was a waning in the use of traditional social services, and in particular casework. Part of the reason for the change from traditional casework, to tenant organizing and participation in housing authorities had to do with the external changes which were going on throughout the country. Organizing and casework could be thought of as at odds with each other. How could a social worker on the one hand talk about empowerment issues and tenant participation, while on the other play the role of "paternal friendly visitor," making "suggestions" to families on ways of bettering their lives. The first assumes people can do it themselves or together, the later model says people need a big brother or guiding hand.

11 White, Edward; Tenant Participation in Public Housing Management; Journal of Housing; August 1969; p.416
Casework and Group work had come under fire from inside the Social Service world in the late 1950's and early 1960's, due to its paternalistic overtures, and because it put the social worker in the role of psychoanalyst for the poor, something many progressive leaders in the social work field did not think was included in the job description of a social worker. One of the most influential articles in the late 1950's on this subject, was Barbara Wootton's "Daddy Knows Best," in which she made the argument that social workers should not be "amateur psychoanalysts," but rather professionals who know the in's and out's of a complex bureaucratic system in order to help guide clients.12

Significantly, the tenant organizing/community participation movement got housing authorities back in the business of outreach, although in a different form and for ostensibly a different reason than housing authorities were doing in the thirties with a 'rent girl', or how Octavia Hill’s friendly visitors worked in the 1860’s.

Housing Authorities were training tenants to reach out to one another to get involved in their communities and to organize around things which affected their lives. The welcome wagon, the credit union, and the mass meetings were all ways of reviving that sense of community which began to slip away in the early 1950’s

The second reason for the changes in social service provision was that funding for casework within public housing was no longer available in the late 1960’s. Federal funding for most types of social services in public housing had changed to be almost exclusively earmarked for tenant organizing, tenant councils, and the construction of community spaces where these groups could meet and hold activities.13

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12 Wootton, Barbara; *Daddy Knows Best; The Twentieth Century*; vol. 166; 1959; p.259
13 Section 703 of the Housing Act of 1965 provided funding for the construction of community space in the projects to be used by tenant groups.
Tenant participation and organizing had taken root by the late 1960's in varying degrees in public housing authorities across the United States. Yet, organizing was controversial in many cities because instead of building a cooperative relationship between managers and social workers, the social worker acted as an advocate for tenants even when it meant fighting management.

New Haven CT, took the idea of tenant participation quite seriously. Two housing authority residents were appointed to the housing authority board, and the authority hired organizers who were funded through grants from the federal government. In addition, through "a combination of mass meetings and smaller committee meetings, each community drew up proposals for physical modernization of its project and suggestions for policy changes applicable to all projects,"\textsuperscript{14} which resulted in substantial changes to the previous modernization plans. By involving tenants in management, the New Haven Housing Authority was attempting "to make each citizen a responsible part of the process that governs his life."\textsuperscript{15}

In New York, where violence and other crime was no stranger to public housing residents, NYCHA started voluntary patrol squads of residents which were responsible for helping the police protect the projects in which they lived. Over three thousand tenants participated, and were heralded as residents who were taking a proactive stand to protect their homes.

New York also set up the Tenant Organization Division in 1962, which did everything from "prepare and disseminate technical materials for management staff and for tenants" to "providing information about and to promote interest in the formation of

\textsuperscript{14} ibid; p.418
\textsuperscript{15} ibid; p.419
credit unions." The department encouraged tenants to organize a welcome wagon, as well as set up courses in leadership training and housekeeping.

However, other housing authorities did not really accept the importance of tenant participation in management, or were uncomfortable and naive about methods of implementation. Tenant organizing in some cities was seen as a hinderence to the public housing program rather than a benefit to tenants.

For instance, in 1969 Ronald L. Brignac, the former Deputy Executive Director of the New Orleans Housing Authority, speaking before the NAHRO Conference "got a big laugh and big hand," for his "impromptu remarks" on the substantial limitations of tenant participation in public housing. Brignac focused in on the negatives of tenant participation in regards to the siting of new public housing developments. Brignac never talked about the impact tenant participation had on the participants, only how it negatively effected the process and those working in public housing. Brignac summed up his feelings on the involvement of tenants in decision making with the following: "As I say, in New Orleans we're involved. We're involved so deep, we may all drown... You can ask my friend Dick Jones in San Antonio who is the only person outside the field of football coaching that has ever been hanged in effigy, and you can't get more involved than that." 17

So while the federal government was encouraging local housing authorities in the late 1960's and early 1970's to do tenant organizing and encourage tenant participation, some housing authorities rejected the idea as a positive move forward and only halfheartedly implemented the programs. Although due to the way federal funding was

16 Preston, David and Lewis, Martha; Citizen Participation; Journal of Housing; No. 8 1963; p.472
17 Brignac, Ronald L.; Public Housing Official Reacts to Citizen Participation Messages with One Man Drama; Journal of Housing; November 1969; p.605
channeled during the War on Poverty, and because the foundations of the civil rights and poor people’s movement were built on self-help and empowerment of the poor, it was very difficult for housing authorities to do much more than tenant organizing and tenant participation programs even if they wanted to. The funding and political auspice to bring casework and group work into the projects just did not exist.

Tenant Organizing and tenant participation in many housing authorities continues to be an important part of the social service programs. Boston for instance, hires tenants organizers to get their residents involved in the community, and to help tenant to build their own support networks. Yet, many housing authorities in the early 1980’s started to change or expand the function of their social or tenant service departments. The tenant organizing model had not disappeared, but things in housing authorities were becoming worse not better, and some local housing authorities began to reorganize their tenant service departments because they felt there was more to a social service program than only the organization of tenants, and the federal government had stopped providing guidance and funding.

The Revisionist Period

For many housing authorities, the 1970’s was the low point for public housing in the United States.

As Frederick Brown writes of the decade, "The housing authorities were left with less revenues to serve a more needy population. Housing authorities also became more and more dependent on HUD subsidies. These subsidies were much less than, and not related to actual PHA operating expenses."

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18 Cambridge, Chattanooga, New York City are all examples of places where this occurred.
Nicholas Lemann in his article, "Four Generations in the Projects", about Chicago’s Robert Taylor Homes, says that "After several incidences in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s in which Chicago Policemen were fired on by snipers, even police officers became a rare sight. The Illinois Department of Public Aid eventually stopped making home visits and instead merely required residents to get their welfare status recertified every six months."\textsuperscript{20}

In addition to the fiscal and crime problems PHA’s across the United States were experiencing, many housing authorities were increasingly having to deal with a more aged and dependent population including newly deinstitutionalized mental health patients who had priority for public housing units. Tenants were getting poorer, there were less heads of households in the middle age cohorts as long term residents grew older and young mothers started to move into open units, and a higher percentage was considered ‘multi-problemed’, while funding was getting more scarce and the condition of many buildings was rapidly deteriorating.\textsuperscript{21}

Public support for the public housing program had been waning for years, but it began to crumble in the 1970’s as projects became central to the slums, rather than an oasis inside them. Some authorities, like New Orleans and Boston were deemed so bad that court orders appointed Receivers to improve the unconscionable conditions.

The Reagan Administration in 1981 set housing authorities and city social service agencies out on their own to find ways of dealing with the innumerable problems they were facing.

\textsuperscript{19} Brown, Fredrick; p.310  
\textsuperscript{20} Lemann, Nicholas; \textit{Four Generations in the Projects}; \textit{New York Times Magazine}; January 13, 1991;p.36  
\textsuperscript{21} For more information on the reaction of management to deinstitutionalized mental health patients see: Lambert; Paul; \textit{The Cambridge Housing Authority: A Model?}; May 1990; Unpublished.
As Nicholas Lemann writes in his recent article in The Atlantic, "the most significant flurry of social-policy making in the Reagan Administration came at the very beginning, in the form of David Stockman's cuts in federal spending on domestic programs." 22

Housing Authorities were hit particularly hard by these cuts since they didn’t only depend upon their own direct subsidies, but were hurt by cuts that other social programs and agencies experienced, like legal aid and Medicaid, which a vast majority of their tenants were using.

Ironically, the cuts which were made by the Reagan Administration had one bitter sweet outcome: Housing Authorities were now free from federal regulations concerning the use of funding and could now experiment in a variety of areas, including ways of best bringing social services to their tenants, as well as finding ways of making public housing projects decent places to live, although there was often little money to do either.

Despite the fact the Reagan Administration tightened up tenant selection priorities to insure that only the poorest of the poor could get a public housing unit, public housing authorities exercised some other new found freedoms. Since funding was no longer available for social services and tenant organizing throughout the 1980’s, many housing authorities did away with their tenant service department. Billy Cooper of the Chattanooga Housing Authority said that "choices had to be made, and we couldn’t forego modernization and maintenance for social services. The social welfare of tenants is important, but we need to keep the buildings standing." 23

22 Lemann, Nicholas; Fighting the Last War; The Atlantic; February 1991;p.28
23 Telephone Interview with Billy Cooper; March 1991
Another group of housing authorities were relieved that the federal government was no longer pressuring them to take on the role of tenant organizer or social service provider, as they viewed themselves as housers and only housers.

Other housing authorities saw themselves as ‘self-enlightened,’ and believed that they could best help themselves and their tenants by providing some form of social services, as a function of the authority. However, what types of social services they provided, and the method of implementation was different from place to place.

Models for the Eighties: The Reagan Years

Housing authorities which did continue to provide social services to their tenants in the 1980’s despite a lack of funding and direction from the federal government did so with great discretion. They all felt that the provision of social services was an important function of housing authorities, although the who? what? how? and why?’s of social service provision as described at the end of Chapter 1 was now different depending on the authority.

Two examples of very different methods of implementation and reasoning behind keeping a social service component in the housing authority, and type of services provided can be seen in present day Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Executive Office of Communities and Development (EOCD), started a Supportive Services program in 1983, to funnel money to local housing authorities to maintain and support tenant services in the projects.

Once funds are allocated to the local authorities, EOCD exercised little control over how those funds were spent, except to insure that the money was actually used for
social service programs, and not line item operating expenses. Programs which local authorities implemented using the money included everything from tenant organizing, to youth programs.

Cambridge and Boston have used Supportive Services money to bring social services to their tenant in very different ways. The cities, only separated by the easily traversed Charles River, have had an active social or tenant service department in their structure since the early 1980’s.

Cambridge’s Tenant Service Department dates back to 1976 when Harry Spence, then Executive Director of the Authority, decided that Cambridge should get involved in the business of bringing social services to tenants, since outside agencies were doing what he considered a rather poor job of serving the residents. Cambridge, like other housing authorities across the country was having its share of problems in 1976, including the deterioration of buildings, as well as having to house tenants more dependent upon welfare and other social services.

Spence had a strong belief that a Tenant Service Department staffed, run by, and for tenants, would be a real move forward in getting residents involved in the housing authority as well as helping them get actively involved in tying themselves into the services in the community they needed. In short, the Tenant Service Department acted as an advocate for tenants both in housing authority matters and in the broader community.

Soon after Spence left in 1980 to head up the Boston Housing Authority, the emphasis of the Tenant Service Department (TSD) began to change. The new Executive Director staffed the department with more traditionally trained social and caseworkers. No longer was the TSD’s primary role advocacy. Instead the Tenant Service Department changed to act as an arm of management, doing outreach and casework in the projects,
but also playing the ‘good cop’ role to management’s ‘bad cop’. As Joe Rayball, the Manager of Newtown Court, indisputably the Authorities toughest project said, "tenant services pats them in the ass, and I kick them in the ass."^{24}

The Tenant Service Department (TSD), has not only used outside social service agencies for its tenant’s needs, it also has set up and run social programs itself in the projects. For instance, Cambridge’s award winning Workforce Program, an after school teenage program, pays teenage residents to both do homework and learn a trade after school hours and in the summers. The pay is graded according to age, and is geared around keeping kids off the streets while at the same time learning a trade for the future. The Housing Authority hires ‘teachers’ to run the program, help students with their homework, and find employment opportunities for them. By all accounts, Workforce has been enormously successful.

Like housing authorities in the 1950’s, present day management and the TSD experiences tensions with some outside service agencies. However, unlike the 1950’s, rather than only complain that service providers were not doing their fair share with tenants, Cambridge has tried to use their own social workers to fill gaps left by outside service providers. For instance, when one woman’s apartment became an unbearable ‘mess’, and her phone was disconnected for non-payment, she turned to Tenant Services for help. The TSD found that, while the State Department of Mental Health (DMH) and her appointed Psychiatrist were in regular contact with the woman, they had no idea of her phone problems or the situation in her apartment. And despite repeated calls from the social worker in the project to DMH, the problems were never rectified.

^{24} Interview with Joe Rayball; April 1990; Cambridge MA
The TSD filled the gaps in care left by DMH by working out a payment plan with the phone company, and hiring a housekeeper to come into the woman's home four days a week and clean for her. Two other days, a TSD social worker checks up on the woman to see if everything is alright.

These type of social services which Cambridge provides so well, was what Barbara Wootton saw as the "ideal" role for social workers in her writings in the late 1950's. Wootton who lamented the fact that social workers wanted to be viewed as professionals who performed "amateur psychologizing", felt that the "social worker need, above all, a through mastery of the complicated network of the social services," and not only tie the poor into this network, but to "continue to serve those families."25

The Tenant Service Department also does outreach not unlike some housing authorities in the late 1930's and 1940's, and tenant associations in the late 1960's like NYCHA's welcome wagon.

When a new tenant moves into a project, the TSD knocks on the door to introduce itself and explain what services it provides as well as answer any questions the tenants might have. If problems start to develop, there is already a personal relationship in place. Roxanne Davies a Senior Social Worker in one of the projects says that, "If we don't know everyone by name, we at least know what they look like."26

Despite the help the TSD gives to tenants, unquestionably its loyalties lie with management. If an eviction is requested by management, the TSD will do everything in its power to put documentation together which would give the legal department the ability to win the case in front of a judge. Tenant Services is in existence because over

25 Wootton, Barbara; Daddy Knows Best; The Twentieth Century; vol. 166; 1959; p.259
26 Interview with Roxanne Davies; March 1990; Cambridge MA
the years it has been able to make a manager’s job easier, despite the fact that it rarely
deal with two of the biggest problems in the Authority: drugs and violent crime, which
are handled between the Police and management. But, with teenagers, the mentally ill,
and elderly, tenant services is credited with substantial success in taking quite a load off
of managements shoulders leaving them to deal with more pressing problems.

During the past year, Cambridge has had its State funding cut which supported
the Tenant Service Department. And despite its heralded success, the Authority has cut
most of the Department’s programs due to this lack of funding. In the end, the upkeep of
a project’s buildings was deemed more important than the contribution of Tenant
Services.

The Boston Housing Authority has implemented a very different social service
program over the past nine years. When Harry Spence moved from Cambridge to Boston
he took his vision of tenant services, made up of tenants and organizers to advocate for
tenants, with him. This vision included giving funding to Tenant Organizations to hire
tenant organizers and outreach workers who would be answerable to the tenants and not
the BHA. The Organizer’s or outreach workers role is more of an advocate for tenants
and an adversary to management.

This relationship has created some tensions. Organizers are getting paid by the
Housing Authority, albeit in a convoluted way, while at the same time are organizing
against it. Rarely does management feel that they can go to the organizers or outreach
workers and work with them to solve problems, because the relationship is distant at best.

However, these tensions are viewed as a positive aspect of the Community
Service Department by many people in the BHA. Since organizers and outreach workers
have little or no loyalty to management, it is believed that they can really work for the
best interest of tenants. These community workers do not have to fear that tenants will view them as the enemy since they are employed by the tenant groups themselves, which is in contrast to Cambridge as in the case of drugs where Roxanne Davies says, "tenants are afraid to tell us they have a drug problem and need treatment because they think we will tell management who in turn will kick them out."\textsuperscript{27}

The differences in styles and philosophy between Cambridge's TSD and Boston's CSD points to a tension that seems to be inherent in housing authorities which want to bring social services and social workers into their mists. A question exists if it is better to have social workers have a close working relationship with management, and then be suspect with tenants on some sensitive issues as in the case of drugs in Cambridge. Or, should housing authorities give tenants and their representatives the funding to dictate the role of the social service worker, which creates tensions between management and the social service provider, as in the case of Boston? Both Boston's CSD and Cambridge's TSD have had relative success in a number of areas as described above, yet they have failed in others, due to the inherent weakness in either model. As the present structure of housing authorities continues to exist, there will always be tensions between management and tenant. What side the social worker advocates for or is employed by, most certainly puts limits upon what he or she is able to do.

\textbf{Jack Kemp and HUD in the 1990's}

While the federal government was uninterested in the public housing program in the 1980's, the early years of the 1990's has seen a reemergence of HUD directing local authorities in social service provision, although this guidance seems to be in rhetoric.

\textsuperscript{27} Interview with Roxanne Davies; April 1990: Cambridge MA
alone with little funding appropriated.

Jack Kemp, Secretary of HUD and, the General behind the Bush Administration’s new war on poverty or "New Paradigm," has made programs for public housing central to the fight.

Kemp talks generally of "empowerment" of public housing tenants, and "a hand up not a hand out," which in particular has meant tenant management and eventually tenant ownership of the nation’s public housing stock. But behind these broad goals has been an understanding that social services are central to bringing tenants to the point where they can run and own their own projects.

Kemp asks in numerous speeches: "How can people pull themselves up by their bootstraps if they have no boots?"

The recently passed Housing Act of 1990 supported by Kemp, stipulates that every housing authority in the country must implement some type of social service or outreach program into the housing authority by 1993, under the code name of "Family Self-Sufficiency," which includes services such as, "child care, job training, transportation, remedial education, substance abuse treatment, homemaking and parenting, household and property management," or any combination of any hard or soft services which housing authorities feel their tenants need.

Another sign that the Bush Administration is seriously considering new programs to bridge social services and housing is found in the recent cooperation between HUD and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), "to jointly develop and implement initiatives for 'Partnership in Self Reliance', a cooperative inter-agency effort

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28 Low Income Housing Information Service; Overview Summary of The National Affordable Housing Act of 1990; January 1991; p.68
to help homeless and low-income families and individuals move toward independent living and economic independence.”

Although similar to the 1962 Joint Task Force between HEW and PHA, HUD and HHS actions are aimed at getting all housing authorities in the business of providing some type of social services to tenants, not only a few demonstration projects. The method of provision and the types of services HUD and HHS would like housing authorities to provide is still unclear. Yet, any system pushed by the Bush Administration will most certainly encourage "self help" on the part of tenants, and will be inexpensive due to the administrations disdain for big spending programs. Housing Authorities and tenants will be encouraged to bring any social services they think necessary into the projects to solve the problems they are facing as long as those solutions are cheap.

Conclusions

Between 1961 and 1991 there have been two distinct periods of social service provision in public housing authorities.

The first period, from 1961 until 1980, is characterized by the reemergence of social services on site for all tenants, and the federal governments involvement in local management issues related to social programs for public housing residents.

The second period from 1980 until the present was also distinct for two reasons. First, the federal government made major cutbacks in funding for the public housing program, and was no longer interested in management practices at the local level, with the exception of insuring that only the very poorest Americans gained access to public housing units. The second distinction was that there was no overriding theme about the

29 HUD & HHS; Memorandum of Understanding; January 1990; p.1
way to bring social services to tenants. Problems had gotten more severe during the 1980’s with the proliferation of Crack, AIDS, and guns, yet unlike other periods in the history of public housing, there was no general theory about how authorities should work with social service providers to best deal with these problems. Some authorities shared the philosophy of housing authorities in the 1950’s, putting the onus for social service provision on outside agencies off site. Other authorities like Boston hire community organizers to act as advocates for tenants, similar to the housing authorities of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. And, others likes Cambridge, combine Information & Referral programs with actual group and casework, as well as provide amenities like daycare and youth programs like those in the public housing projects of the 1930’s and 40’s.

During the 1960’s and 70’s the federal government encouraged housing authorities to get back into the business of bringing social services to their tenants. In the early 60’s, social services came in the form of multi-service centers in the projects, which provided Information & Referral, Case and Group work, and even the provision of amenities like daycare and recreation programs.

By the late 1960’s and in the 1970’s "social services" meant community organizing. Who social services were for had not changed from the early to late 1960’s. Social Services were for all tenants. But because of the stipulations of the Civil Rights Acts, and Brooke Amendment, a vast majority of tenants by the 1970’s were welfare, problem, or broken families. Issues were the same in the early and late 1960’s: How do we protect our families? How do we keep kids from turning to drugs? How do we teach single teenage mothers to be good parents? Yet, there was a difference in how services would be integrated into the projects, and what services actually meant.
Social services were brought to public housing in the 1960's to benefit both the tenant and management thought the provision of traditional social services like Casework and Group work, as well as amenities. There was cooperation between housing authorities and social service agencies because authorities saw themselves benefiting from the relationship, particularly in regards to problem families which they could no longer indiscriminately throw out of the projects.

By the late 1960's and the early 1970's the What and How of Social Services in public housing changed. Services were still for all tenants and were still provided on site, but now community organizing was the social service of choice in authorities which meant the role of the social worker in relation to management had changed. Now the social worker acted as advocate for tenants, even when that meant being in an adversarial role to management. Cooperation between the social worker and manager was no longer deemed important. The community organizer was evaluated on how well she got tenants together to fight for their rights.

This change in the provision of social services was not due to a change in philosophy in housing authorities as to the best way to bring social programs to residents. Rather exogenous changes through the War on Poverty, Civil Rights and Poor People's Movements, forced tenant organizing on LHA's. Many local authorities were weary of community organizing because it gave tenants a single voice in which to lodge complaints against management, yet outside forces were so strong, authorities which did not want tenant organizing had little choice.

Community organizing and the traditional social services which were encouraged by the Joint Task Force were most certainly different, yet they were similar because of the belief that social services were an important part of public housing, on-site, and for
all tenants. Some housing authorities might have not liked community organizing, but only because it caused friction and slowed down the process. The arguments against it had nothing to do with its merits as a social service, or because of a change in philosophy related to social service provision in the projects.

The second period, from 1981 until the present is best characterized by confusion. No one "model" of social service provision for public housing tenants dominates, and every model which has been examined in this thesis over the nearly sixty years of the public housing program, can now be found in different housing authorities around the country. Boston and Cambridge are fine examples of where jurisdictions adjacent to each other and using the same exact funding source have implemented very different social service programs. Both want to help tenants help themselves, yet as described earlier in this chapter the methods of reaching this end are very different.

The Reagan administration had no interest in or provided money for social programs in public housing. It only wanted to insure that only the most needy had access to public housing units. Problems in public housing were getting worse during the 1970’s partially due to the tenant selection and eviction restriction as set down by the Civil Rights Acts, the Brooke Amendment, and judicial review, which allowed almost any family into public housing and made evictions difficult to obtain. Yet, by requiring targeting to only the poorest of the poor, Reagan’s HUD really made public housing only for those who could not find shelter any place else.

Combine the poorest most multi-problemed tenants with the proliferation of AIDS, Crack, and automatic weapons and a crisis emerged in the projects. However, there was no federal direction in regards to solutions or even funding aimed at working on the problems. Housing Authorities were left out on their own for the first time since
the 1950's to decide what the best course of action was to deal with the problems they were facing.

Some, like Chattanooga TN and Lynn MA reverted back to the 1950's, and provided no social services on site, but wanted outside agencies to deal with their problems and problem tenants.

Places like Cambridge, have programs which combine amenities that tenants want like daycare and health clinics on site, but which also provides group work and Information & Referral like the Joint Task Force was encouraging in the early 1960's.

Boston has a community organizing and outreach program run by tenants, not unlike housing authorities in the late 1960's. Boston has also recently started to bring more amenities to the projects like youth programs and daycare centers because these were the services tenants were requesting to outreach workers and in surveys.30

Today there is no overriding system by which housing authorities provide social services to their tenants. Each LHA borrows from one or more of the earlier periods of the public housing program.

HUD has recently gotten back in the business of guiding housing authorities through rhetoric on how to implement a social service program. The "model" the Bush Administration appears to favor has pieces of many different earlier models. A major part of the HUD "model" includes tenant empowerment and self-help through tenant ownership of public housing projects. Another part includes social services for both "hard core" problems like drugs and illiteracy programs and amenities like daycare and youth programs, which HUD will no longer fund after five years. Yet, funding for these programs today does not seem to be forthcoming, making the HUD model less

30 Boston Housing Authority; A Survey of Tenant Needs in Boston Public Housing; Feb. 1985
compelling with housing authorities which depend on federal monies to implement programs.

Until some organization in federal government is willing to make a commitment in funding as well as rhetoric, the "helter skelter" pattern of social service provision in public housing authorities should continue.
CHAPTER 4

Conclusions

The relationship between public housing authorities and social service providers has gone through a number of transformations since the Housing Act of 1937.

The current methods by which authorities bring social services to their tenants is fragmented on a national scale, but in individual LHA’s can be linked to earlier periods in public housing history. For instance, those authorities that rely on outside agencies to bring social services to their tenants, and see themselves as only "bricks and mortar" operations, resemble authorities from the 1950’s; while housing authorities like Boston look like those in the late 1960’s with their emphasis on tenant organizing and empowerment. Still others have a combination of methods of service provision which borrows from more than one period.

Despite all the differences in methods today, and all the experimentation which is being done in regards to finding effective ways of tackling our toughest and most intrenchable problems, it is quite obvious that many in the public housing world is slowly coming to the conclusion which Octavia Hill came to in the 1860’s: Housing is a Social Service, and social services include housing.

Before arguing a linkage between what Octavia Hill taught in 1860 and what some leaders in the field of housing are pushing for in management practice today, it would be helpful to review the four periods of social service provision in public housing since the Housing Act of 1937, as well as to ask how and why changes occurred at three different junctures in history.
The first period, from the Housing Act of 1937 until Housing Act of 1949, was distinct for two primary reasons. First, was the fact that this was the only time in the history of the public housing program when social services on-site did not include programs for "hard core" or "problem families," but was used to describe a variety of services including daycare, recreation programs, educational facilities, and well-baby clinics for the general public housing population. Second, was the distinction that little tension existed between those providing the social services and those concerned with the upkeep and maintenance of the physical plant.

As described in Chapter 2, the types of social services provided in public housing is dependent upon the characteristics of tenants, and tenants in public housing until 1949 were what Friedman termed the "submerged middle class," or former slum dwellers who were skilled or unskilled laborers, but were caught in slum housing solely due to a lack of decent affordable units in a city. Tenants "flowed not from the destitute, the descendants of the destitute, the children of Five Pointers, the Negro ghetto dwellers, or the abject poor," and therefore did not have need for what later would be termed 'hard core' services like alcohol abuse treatment, or remedial education programs available to other slum dwellers. Public housing authorities did not have to bring 'hard core' social services into public housing because they kept out 'hard core' tenants.

The other notable distinction of the pre-1949 period was that good working relationships between social service providers and housing authorities had less to do with the types of tenants in projects, but was the result of a close familiarity between the two professions before the public housing program began.
Although the expansion of federal, state, and local government in the 1930's necessitated the separation of duties and administrative oversight, as was described by Arnold Howitt in Chapter 1, the people who moved into leadership positions in housing authorities and those who were administrators in social service agencies, came from many of the same organizations and backgrounds in the settlement houses and philanthropic social agencies in the slums.

New York is a perfect example of where this occurred. Nathan Strauss until his appointment as Public Housing Commissioner, Mary K. Simkhovitch, and Langston Post, all early members on board of NYCHA, had served as executives at some of the largest settlement houses or model tenements in the City.

In the social service agencies there were many followers of Mary Richmond, as well as former social workers in the settlement houses. As Mary Richmond had a close working relationship with Larwence Veller during the early years of the century, students of her's had ties to those in the housing profession, and took from Richmond when she said social workers had a "genuine specialty" in housing.

Due to the close relationship between the two professions before the public housing program began, there was little disagreement or conflict between the two groups once public housing began to be built.

The first ten years of public housing saw success in fulfilling almost every physical as well as social goal that it intended to reach exactly because the 'cards were stacked' in public housing favor. A sanitary unit and the social programs in public housing projects were precisely what those moving into the projects needed. The necessary social programs were available because of wide agreement between housing authorities and social service agencies on what was necessary to help new public housing
tenants become more comfortable and self-sufficient in the projects.

The second period, beginning after 1949 until the early 1960’s, is marked by a change in attitude about social services and social workers in the projects, as well as a slowly changing tenant population.

As discussed in Chapter 2, by the late 1940’s and early 1950’s the role of the social worker and social services in housing began to change, manifesting itself in the form of the sporadic use of community space. A change occurred in the philosophy of both housing authority administrators, as well as social service agencies with the feeling that the general tenant population in the projects should be tied into whatever social programs they need including recreation facilities, schools, etc., in the broader community and not in the housing authorities themselves. Therefore, the housing authorities did not encourage outside agencies to come to their projects to provide social service programs, nor did the outside social agencies think it was their place to fill community facilities in the projects just for public housing tenants.

One reason behind the change in philosophy had to do with a real fear by public housing authorities in the early 1950’s that broad public opinion could turn against the public housing and slum clearance programs because of the types of people communities feared would flow into their neighborhoods. Because tenants in public housing were little different then residents in the surrounding communities, public housing authorities could use their tenants as ambassadors who could show the bordering neighborhoods they were normal everyday people. The best way for housing authorities to have their tenants integrate with the surrounding neighborhoods was to have them use the same facilities and services, and therefore, was in the political interest of housing authorities not to provide social services on site.
Social workers by the 1950’s were dealing with what authorities considered their problem families, which included everything from elderly residents to broken families. Due to the change in the types of tenants that social workers in housing authorities were dealing with, the types of social service provided began to change as well. Now social workers were concerned with juvenile delinquency, fatherless children, and "sexual perversion," no longer recreation programs or daycare which the "normal" tenants were supposed to find outside the projects. Concurrent with these changes in the role of the social worker and types of social services provided, the relationships between housing authorities and social service agencies began to deteriorate to the point of arguing over who’s responsibility it was to deal with problem tenants. Social service agencies often felt that housing authorities did not give them an opportunity to work with troublesome tenants which housing authorities would quickly purge themselves of, while LHA’s thought that social service agencies were not doing enough to stop tenants from causing problems.

While problem tenants would be a small proportion of the total tenant population in public housing in the 1950’s due to strict entrance requirements and easily obtained evictions, authorities were still worried that ‘the one bad apple will spoil the barrel’ phenomenon was happening in their projects.

The 1950’s were typified by a change in the focus of social workers and social services on site in public housing to deal with problem tenants, as well as the breakdown of relations between social service agencies and the housing authorities. Both of these changes most likely contributed to the rise of the wasteland projects Harrison Salisbury describes in his *Shook-Up Generation*, by intending to do quite the opposite.
The third period of social service provision in public housing lasted from 1961 to 1980 as described in Chapter 3. The change in attitude of the federal government to get involved in local management issues, including exploring the best ways of bringing social services to public housing tenants, is due to changes which took place in Administration, as well as a perceived and real need for better relationships between housers and social service workers at all levels of government.

The Kennedy Administration unlike Eisenhower's, became interested in management issues and realized a need for better integration and better relations between housing authorities and social workers as a result of the breakdowns in the 1950's. Through demonstration programs the Administration proved that they were committed to finding ways of getting around regulations which limited interagency cooperation, and to bringing social services to all public housing tenants, rather than have tenants search out those services in the communities.

A second factor which was partially responsible for the federal governments involvement in a seemingly local issue was a result of the critique waged at local authorities by leaders in the housing profession like Elizabeth Wood, or those in the popular press like Harrison Salisbury. It was obvious to many Americans by the early 1960's that public housing was getting worse, and housing authorities were failing to provide the decent, safe, and sanitary housing they promised in 1937. In response, the federal government started their trial programs (the Joint Task Force's Demonstration Projects) aimed at bringing many different types of social services back into public housing in order to make projects more livable for all tenants.
Social Services were on site again, and were for all tenants not only problem families or welfare cases. Traditional Services like groupwork and casework, and amenity services like daycare and recreation programs were all part of the social service network in the projects. Managers and social workers were again working in close proximity to each other, and had the cooperation between HEW and PHA to emulate.

Due to exogenous changes around the country in regards to civil and welfare rights, public housing authorities became central in the organization of poor people on a variety of issues. By the late 1960’s, a significant minority if not a majority of tenants in public housing projects in the major cities were very poor and minority. The Civil Rights and Poor People’s movements encouraged these groups to do for themselves, what white or wealthy America had not done for them. Namely to lift themselves out of the ghettos by organizing and demanding what they had been denied. Due to such a concentration of the poor and persons of color in housing authorities, the projects were ripe for experimenting with, and the trial of these new ideas. Funding for social services in public housing projects from the federal government changed from the traditional services that the Joint Task Force was thinking about implementing in 1962, to funding earmarked to hire tenant organizers and the setting up of tenant councils.

Knocking on doors and outreach became a part of public housing again. Establishing a sense of community became important, although unlike the 1930’s and 1940’s the community was not developed around clubs or recreation programs, it was developed around problems inside and outside of the projects like crime, discrimination, and poorly maintained buildings. Casework and Group Work were no longer "ideas in good currency" because they smacked of "Daddy Knows Best," clearly in contradiction to terms like self-help and empowerment.
Some managers obviously felt threatened by tenants organizing, something which they had tried to suppress in the 1950's for fear that residents would organize to fight the authority. However, outside changes were so strong, including the blessing and funding of the federal government, that managers and authority administrators had little choice than to work with the tenant organizations set up in their buildings.

Although, tenant organizing departments and the multi-service centers of the Joint Task Force were different in many ways, they were built on the same foundation.

Although the first effort was dependent upon cooperation between managers and social workers, and the second placed the social worker in the position of advocating for tenants, and often fighting management; both systems were established on the belief that social services were important for all tenants in public housing and should be brought to them on-site.

The 1960's and 70's were unlike the 1950's because of a belief that social programs should be provided in the projects and for all tenants, not only one's which caused housing authorities problems. The 60's and 70's were also different than the 30's and 40's because an increasingly large percentage of tenants were very poor and had problems much more severe than tenants in the early years of the public housing program. Amenities, although important, were no longer enough.

The current period in the relationship between public housing authorities and social services is marked by confusion. This period is unique in the fact there is no overriding theme concerning the provision of social services in public housing. Beginning in the early 1980's and only until the past few months, there has been little federal direction or even interest concerning local management practices and social service provision, except to insure that only the very poorest and "multi-problemed"
tenants were the only one's served by the public housing program, truly making the projects "housing of last resort." For the first time since the 1950's the federal government was not guiding local management practices in one way or another. Yet, unlike the 1950's, thirty years of new regulations and court precedents did not allow public housing management to purge themselves of families which caused them problems, and therefore were require to confront these problems in place an on site. Although most housing authority managers did not see their role as dealing with very problemed families in more innovative ways than eviction, they now had no choice, leadership, or direction from the federal government.

What has resulted is the present day 'helter skelter' pattern of social service provision in housing authorities across the country. Some housing authorities still insist that it is not their job to bring social services to tenants since they are "bricks and mortar" operations. Instead, they complain that the federal government, courts, and social service agencies have left them out to dry.

Other housing authorities like in New York and Cambridge MA have expanded the role of social services in their authorities, and are providing a variety of social service programs themselves instead of always relying on outside social service agencies to do the job.

Yet others, including Boston, have used the tenant empowerment model and outreach to get tenants involved in their communities, while also starting up youth programs for teenagers which provide supervision after-school for job training, and help with homework.
States like Massachusetts have also gotten into funding social services in public housing, by passing funding through to local authorities to set up their own social service units and programs to fill gaps left by outside service providers, as well as build special needs housing for tenants with specific problems who required specialized services like drug treatment or psychological counseling.

Most recently, the federal government has began to talk again about the needs of public housing. One of the main themes of the Affordable Housing Act of 1990 is, as Senator Christopher Bond a Republican from Missouri said "is that the Bill recognizes the fact that Public Housing is not just shelter it is shelter plus."1 It would seem that many Democrats and Republicans alike have come to understand that soft and hard social services such as daycare, housekeeping classes, substance abuse clinics, etc. have a primary and not secondary role in public housing authorities, and although there is only a trickle in terms of funding, strong rhetoric is certainly present.

There is little question that there have been changes in the role of social services in public housing since the Housing Act of 1937.

There is also little question that as the federal government becomes more interested in the role of social services in housing, and housing authorities are increasingly unable to deal with intractable problems, social services will become more and more attractive and authorities will be pressured to play the role of social service provider themselves, particularly for gaps in care from outside agencies.

Yet, despite all the history and change, the question might still remain in the reader's mind as to how Octavia Hill and her cadre of 'ladies’ fits into the greater scheme of things.

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1 Bond, Christopher Senator from Missouri; Speech on Floor of Senate; C-Span; March 26, 1991.
One similarity between Octavia Hill and modern housing authorities which effected the social service provision of both is that, Octavia Hill housed the same class of tenant LHA’s are housing today: The poorest of the poor, who could not find a decent place to live anywhere else. Her tenants had problems with malnutrition, gin, and strange disease; just as tenants in present day housing authority projects are battling crack, AIDS, and violence. Problems might have been worse then, or are more severe now, but there is no question that conditions were less than satisfactory in both periods.

Yet, unlike many housing authorities today, Octavia Hill’s system worked. She got tenants jobs, children went to school, houses were maintained, and her managers had a ‘friendly relationship’ with tenants. The Hill system was a slow process because it depended on the building of trust, but once that trust was established it seemed to work rather well.

Most housing authorities today have not had as much success. Problems seem to keep getting worse not better, and most LHA’s as well as the federal government are scrambling to find a solution.

Some housing authorities have found that what worked for Hill might be a viable solution for them. It is doubtful that more than a handful, realize that they are implementing similar programs to a woman who lived and worked over 120 year ago, but faced with similar problems, they have respond in similar ways.

Although tenant organizing in the Boston Housing Authority would appear on the surface to have nothing in common with Octavia Hill’s system because the social worker a part of management but with tenants, there is some similarity concerning the role of the social worker, and expectations for tenants.
The community organizer or Hill’s managers were responsible for outreach, being a trusted friend of tenants, and bringing tenants into housing authority or building issues by deciding on modernization or building improvements. Yet, the most obvious similarity in philosophy between housing authorities which provide community organizers to their tenant groups and the Octavia Hill system, is that both assume that tenants know what is best for themselves and are responsible for their own fate. Octavia Hill taught her managers that their job was only to bring tenants to the point where they could judge for themselves and act as a good friend rather than impose their own ideas. The organizer is sent out to empower tenants to help themselves, and give them a "hand up, not a hand out," nor to tell tenants what they should and should not do. Tenants if given the skills and power will no longer need an organizer, just as Hill hoped that her managers would fade away and "give place insensibly to the simple intercourse with one another that seems natural to neighbours."

From another frame the Cambridge model also resembles the system of Octavia Hill. Cambridge’s social workers are charged with helping tenants when tenants approach them with problems, just as Octavia Hill’s managers were overjoyed when tenants came to them with troubles not related to housing. Yet, where there are real parallels between the Hill system and the Cambridge model is in the relationship between social worker and manager. Although managers do not act as social workers themselves as in the Hill system, there is little question that Cambridge’s TSD is only an extension of management. Just like with Octavia Hill, there is no conflict between tenant and social worker because in practice they share a holistic and symbiotic relationship one providing certain skills the other lacks. While the social worker and manager is not the same person, they act in tandem and for the support of each other. The TSD is in place for the
benefit of tenants, but when conflict arises between tenants and management their loyalties most certainly lie with the later. Likewise, no matter how much sympathy Hill’s managers had for tenants, tenants would be evicted if rent was not paid every week.

It would seem that if the Cambridge and tenant organizing models were combined we would end up with a management program with many of the same pieces of Octavia Hill’s. However this would be an impossible accomplishment in the current environment.

The relationship between manager and tenant has been built over the past sixty years on an adversarial basis. From the very beginning tenants would have have to subject themselves to yearly income checks to insure that they were not over income limits set down by the Housing Act of 1937. Managers were charged with keeping projects clean and sanitary, and tenants who might cause a mess were the enemy. If the social worker was cooperating with management it meant she was helping him insure that the projects were clean, safe and sanitary. If the social worker was an advocate for tenants, it meant she was clearly fighting for the rights of tenants with disregard for the manager. The social worker in present day housing authorities can not do both.

Some housing authorities are using methods similar to those used by Octavia Hill because they work. Cambridge has long been heralded as a model authority and Boston has seen success with their programs over the past five years. Yet, because much of the effectiveness of the Octavia Hill system rested on the friendly relationship between manager and tenant, housing authorities today will never be as effective as Hill until they are able to break down barriers between management and residents and bring the two together to work on problems they jointly face. Possibly the horror of crack and violence in projects will have the unintended but positive effect of bringing tenants and managers together to find solutions to problems which have a debilitating effect on both.
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