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THE IMPORTANCE OF CLASS

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The Importance Of Class

Class can best be understood as emerging from the complex interrelationship of work and home life. Problems, limitations, and opportunities at the workplace generate behavioral adaptations that extend into the home, creating the shared lifestyles, childrearing practices, inter-generational education and employment experiences, and common consumption patterns that constitute and reproduce a class.[1] These adaptations are forged within a larger social and spatial structure of class segregation (Soja, 1983). The working class performs the direct economic production and low-level service, clerical, and administrative work[2] of society and tends to live in "lower class" neighborhoods.

Overseeing the work of this army of factory operatives, construction workers, janitors, delivery drivers, secretaries, and waitresses is a professional-managerial class (PMC). The PMC performs organizational, administrative, and management functions and tends to live in "up scale" neighborhoods.[3] The Ehrenreichs, popularizers of the term PMC, note that the working class view the professional-managerial class "with hostility and fear as well as envy and respect" (1979, p. 17).

To many professionals, the differences described here are not sufficient to sustain the contention that professionals are in a class separate from the working class.[4] Most professionals are, after all, employees with little control over the direction and nature of policies made by the upper class, large corporations, or government elites. They argue that in the deep structure of society there is no difference. However, in the behavioral world in which planners operate, this cannot be said. In this world, seldom do these two classes, the PMC and the working-class, meet on equal, unified class terms.

The Ehrenreichs (p. 17) argue that in "real life contact" one finds that a "relation of control" characterizes the PMC/working-class relationship. This control is both objective in the relative power of the two classes in society and subjective in the sense that both classes are socialized to accept their relative positions.

This paper examines an extraordinary case study of working-class controlled community planning in order to analyze the nature of the PMC/ working-class conflict which often gets in the way of planning efforts. It is rare that a working-class community gains control and still rarer to find studies of such incidents.

Before presenting the case study, major elements of the literature on community planning efforts from a class perspective will be reviewed and the behavioral differences that are at the root of the problem will be discussed.

Planning And Class

Herbert Gans, in his famous study of urban renewal in the West End of Boston (1962), warned about planners' distorted view of class. He called for planners to "give up [their class-biased] methods and symbols internalized through years of training and practice" and exchange their traditional ways for "new approaches" catering more to the needs of the working-class (p. 276). Gans described the "distorted picture of the class structure" which portrays the working class "as a frustrated version of the middle class." This distorted professional viewpoint, in Gans' view, prevented the establishment of professional-client relationships based on "respect for the client" and free of manipulation, patronization, and blame (Gans, 1962, pp. 269, 274).

Gordon Fellman's (1973) book on the Boston area freeway dispute known as the "Inner Belt" controversy continued Gans' themes. This project threatened massive displacement of people in a great many working-class communities surrounding downtown Boston. The communities joined together with the assistance of a Boston area advocacy planning group known as Urban Planning Aid (UPA) to successfully fight off the threat.[5] It was Fellman's involvement with UPA that led him to assess the class basis of such planning efforts.

Fellman argued that professionals in UPA dominated the planning process. Echoing Gans' findings ten years earlier, Fellman found that professionals were uncomfortable with working-class values, behaviors, and lifestyles. Not surprisingly, professionals tended to gravitate to people and situations with which they were most comfortable and familiar, i.e., fellow professionals on the opposing side. He contended that the working class, conditioned by its oppression, was immobilized by feelings of powerlessness, fatalism, and a cynical faith in society.

Further, Fellman found that the working-class residents of the proposed Inner Belt were intimidated by, and resentful of, the sophisticated professionals of UPA, and dropped out of the struggle. Unable to understand or pierce the veil of apparent indifference, apathy, and powerlessness of working-class people, the professionals failed to organize community people or effectively involve them in the process. The result was that the professionals simply took over the struggle on behalf of the community.

Marlejeena Repo (1977) made a similar finding in her study of a typical advocacy planning urban renewal dispute in Toronto, Canada. She also argued that professionals are often unfamiliar with the working class and view community issues as devoid of class content. Like Gans and Fellman, Repo argued that professionals tend to impose middle-class values on the planning process and thereby alienate the working class.

She added her belief that professionals, uncomfortable with the working class, often attacked potential working-class clients. According to Repo, professionals undermined the working-class planning effort by seeking out and aligning themselves with "the most downtrodden elements" in the community. It was her hypothesis that the "poor," often in a dependency relationship with professionals, are more accustomed to professional domination of the issues.[6]

Understanding The PMC/Working-Class Conflict

In order to better understand the substantive nature of the PMC/working-class conflict, four dichotomous behavioral tendencies have been identified: *style of conceptualization and interaction, security and opportunity, behavioral consistency,* and *orientation to planning.* These tendencies will be discussed and then used to analyze the case study.

Style of Conceptualization and Interaction

Class background tends to influence a person's style of conceptualization and interaction. The harsh, matter-of-fact lifestyle of the working class leads most working-class people to conceptualize phenomena in terms of observable cause-and-effect relationships. Little in their experience encourages the development of abstract, theoretical reasoning (Miller *et al.,* 1979). A working-class child's early life at home and school are often structured to prepare the child for the harsh, routinized drudgery of work that requires obedience and the ability to endure physical and psychologically oppressive conditions (Kohn, 1969, 1979; Miller *et al.,* 1979). At neither home, where the destructive nature of work often intrudes (Sennett and Cobb, 1972), nor school, is the development of individualization, personality, or interactional abilities stressed (Rubin, 1976).

In contrast, among the PMC, the emphasis from childhood through college and into one's career is on the development of the intellect, personality, and the refinement of interactional skills (Bernstein, 1973; Bledstein, 1976). Parents seek to "enrich" the child's environment to teach him or her to handle the greater autonomy professionals often have over their work. The emphasis is not on dealing with harsh realities, but rather on "emotional management" and the projection of acceptable emotional attitudes

and feelings (Hochschild, 1979).

These differences contribute to working-class people feeling that "circles are being talked around their heads" and either rebelling or withdrawing from the planning process (Repo, 1977; Rubin, 1976). In contrast to the professional image of dispassionate rationality and technical competence, working-class people are often rough, blunt, and emotionally intense (Halle, 1984; Miller and Reissman, 1964). Due to their dependence on relatives and peer groups, and their ties to fellow workers, working-class people tend to assess people on their character and integrity (Gans, 1962). The professional, concentrating on concepts and theories, may be unable to function on this personal level and is upset by the community's apparent lack of interest in his or her "ideas" (Fellman, 1973).

Security and Opportunity

A major source of the differences and tensions between professionals and the working class is the sense of autonomy and control over life that each group feels. For the working class, life is more of a struggle for economic survival. They usually earn less than professionals, have less job security, and derive less satisfaction from their work (Levison, 1974; Kallenberg and Griffin, 1980). The working class is usually more dependent on relatives, friends, and co-workers for practical and emotional support than professionals (Komarovsky, 1962; Shostak, 1969; Gans, 1962; Sennett and Cobb, 1972). They do their own home and car repairs, and make limited use of professional and other types of services on which the PMC often relies (Handell and Rainwater, 1964; Patterson, 1964; the Ehrenreichs, 1979).

This orientation to life has two important consequences for the planning process. First, the working-class community member may tend to be either more cautious and conservative or more willing to take risks than the planner would prefer. Working-class people are typically less interested in aesthetic considerations or political causes and more interested in immediate concrete solutions to the practical problems they face. However, as indicated by studies of working-class strikes (Hyman, 1977; Lane and Roberts, 1971; Gorz, 1985), the working class can seize the initiative and take significant risks when their security and dignity are threatened.

Second, the survival orientation of the working class predisposes them to collective, egalitarian, and cooperative planning approaches. To be sure, the working-class community members want to maximize their individual gains, but not at the expense of jeopardizing their support system. To rise too far above one's family, friends, and fellow workers may cause the loss of those

support systems (Sennett and Cobb, 1972). Consequently, community people may be reluctant to take on leadership, associate too much with professionals, or set their ambitions too high. Moreover, community members are often acutely aware of the paucity of their personal resources, and recognize the limited chances of an individual successfully prevailing against alien and hostile bureaucracies (Gans, 1962; Fellman, 1973).

Planners, on the other hand, existing in a world of greater opportunity and security, tend to propose conceptual strategies that are appropriate for their world to deal with the issues. Often these plans, while having a certain professional grandeur, do not present solutions to either immediate working-class needs or the longer-term desires of working-class communities. It is important to note that it is not the grandeur of the plans that presents the problem, but that they lack the close fit working-class communities seek.

When, in this situation, the planners' strategies are received by the community with skepticism and do not receive the respect the planners believe they deserve, the planners may feel perplexed and personally rejected. The planners cannot see the problem and are often shocked when the community rejects what seems to the planner to be a conceptually grand strategy in favor of something, grand or otherwise, that is more addressed to enhancing community survival and often preserving things as they are (Gans, 1962; Fellman, 1973; Repo, 1977).

Behavioral Consistency

Working-class people can exhibit profoundly contradictory attitudes and behaviors. For example, they can appear sensitive and socially aware in one instance and racist or nationally chauvinistic the next. Whatever the inner feelings of the PMC, they are less likely to show these mood or behavioral shifts. Much of their life is devoted to projecting the right image and making the right impression (Hochschild, 1979). The different interaction styles of the two classes have already been discussed. Here the relative lack of economic success of the working-class which accentuates these differences must be added. Sennett and Cobb (1973) found, for example, that the working class is internally torn between blaming themselves for their apparent failure to succeed in a land of immense opportunity and their recognition that society is unjust (see also Hochschild, 1978).

The resultant inconsistency of working-class behavior can be extremely unsettling to planners. This is because planners tend to evaluate working-class people by PMC standards and are often led into a subtle acting out of PMC feelings of superiority, resulting in an alienation of the working-class community.[7] Particularly on

questions of racism or sexism, lashing out, and prejudiced statements by working-class people, planners become too quickly convinced that their polite, consistent silence is indicative that they are not racist or sexist. There is little evidence that, between the two classes, such a difference exists.

Orientation to Planning

Professionals, including planners, justify their intervention in other people's problems by claiming to have specialized knowledge and technical skill (Hughes, 1963). The style of most planners assumes the application of this knowledge and skill in a professionally responsible manner. Planners would like to have the freedom to take the initiative and plan creatively without irrational constraints. In a way, the more the planners "care," the more freedom they want, and the more responsibility they would like to take on. This caring, this drive for taking responsibility, leads most planners to want to control the planning process.

Professionals have many devices with which they may attempt to control the planning process. Some of them were examined in the review of the class-related planning literature. Planners may set up bureaucratic procedures, redefine the community's problems to better fit their expertise, or prefer the companionship of other professionals above the client, whether these professionals are on their side or not. All of these approaches tend to intimidate and discourage working-class participation.

The drive for control may also lead the professionals outside their area of expertise into areas of goal-setting and policy-making which may be more appropriately conducted by the client. This is a common critique of planners, but in most instances, the planner working for government or a private firm is in a much meeker position. In the case of the working-class community, the planner may more easily come to dominate.

If the working-class community does not withdraw from the planning process, it will attempt to change the style of the planner.[8] Initially, this means curbing the planner's autonomy, much like what happens in many other planning situations. However, working-class people usually have little experience in managing professionals and may try to control the planner in the way that a supervisor controls a worker. At times this treatment can be harsh. To many working-class people, someone who sits at a desk all day, writing, talking on the phone, etc., may not appear to be working, and certainly not working enough to earn the "high" salary the professional is paid (Le Masters, 1975; Halle, 1984).

The community may also try and get the planner off "big ideas" (policy) and down to the nitty-gritty. This means a meticulous,

painstaking, and challenging review of the details of any proposed plans. The working-class participants may attempt to slow the process down, end the feeling of circles being talked around their heads, and insist upon understanding every step in the process before it is taken.

This limiting of autonomy and slowing down of the process may demoralize even the most sympathetic planner. Some may be driven off, while others may simply withdraw and take a passive role in the planning process. While, in some professional environments, salary level and status replace autonomy as motivators, community planners rarely have either of these compensating benefits.

Working Class Planning In Action

Background

Many of the issues discussed in this paper have been worked through in the Route 2 project located in the Echo Park-Silverlake district of Los Angeles, California. This is a racially mixed, working-class area close to downtown and under gentrification pressure. The Route 2 project, as the name suggests, has taken place in a 2.4-mile-long proposed freeway corridor purchased by the state in the late 1960s and early 1970s to extend the Route 2 freeway. In 1975, the freeway extension plan was abandoned. The state had operated the housing located in the corridor as rental housing while awaiting its demolition for the construction of the freeway. With the abandonment of the freeway extension, the state set out to sell the property.

The residents of the area had another idea. They urged the state to sell the housing to the tenants. When the state said no, the tenants, with their security threatened, took action in working-class, collective style. They organized the Route 2 Tenants Association and set about changing the state's mind. After years of protest, rent strikes, lobbying, and litigation, the tenants won. Legislation was passed calling for the sale of the property, at affordable prices, to a community development corporation organized by the tenants to buy the 87 parcels of land containing 276 housing units, rehabilitate the units, and operate them as limited-equity cooperatives.[9]

The residents of Route 2 are primarily working-class families with average incomes of approximately $12,000 a year. About two-thirds of the families are Latinos. About a quarter are Anglo (many of whom are ethnically identified) and the remainder are, in equal percentages, Blacks or Asians. As a group, they have been very aggressive in furthering their goals, particularly when it comes to their dealings with professionals, whether from the state

or in their own employ.

Their initial energy for this "do-it-yourself" project came from an early encounter with consultants hired by the City of Los Angeles to "solve" the Route 2 problem. At a mass meeting, the consultants suggested converting the property to nonprofit rental housing in a fashion that would have led to control by authorities outside the community and displacement of many residents. The suggestion of exchanging one landlord for another and displacing even a single resident angered those in attendance and resulted in the idea of forming "our own" development corporation. Over the protests of city staff and other supporting professionals, the tenants set out to chart their own course. This assertion of community control, a working-class style of planning forged in this early encounter, was to become the trademark of the project and the source of repeated friction between residents and professionals.

Interaction with Outside Professionals

The void left by the city was picked up by the state's housing staff. Although a number of similar relationship-threatening conflicts occurred with the state staff, they stuck it out, often being accused of "going native" by their home office in Sacramento. Three major conflicts were indicative of the kinds of problems the professionals and residents had to work through. The first involved the decision by the residents to conduct a rent strike. The second was a refusal by the residents to engage in a large-scale new construction effort. The third was over the composition of the board of the development corporation.

The state's transportation division had been operating the property with the intent of tearing it down. A great deal of needed maintenance had been deferred, and the condition of much of the property was well below code. The state housing staff wanted to put off the resolution of this problem until full-scale rehabilitation began, but, from the residents' point of view, the problem needed immediate attention. When the transportation agency attempted to raise rents in the middle of negotiations to buy the property, the residents decided on a rent strike. The state housing staff was horrified. The strike could have disrupted the brokering they had been doing with the transportation agency and ruined the whole deal. They threatened to walk.

The rent-striking tenants responded by organizing tours of the dilapidated housing for the state staff and anyone else who would look. The tours were so embarrassing that even the state transportation officials had to admit that immediate action was necessary. The housing professionals didn't abandon the project and the state budget was amended, calling for large-scale

expenditures to bring the property up to habitable standards pending its sale.

This demonstrates both the desire of working-class people to deal first with immediate practical needs and their willingness to take extraordinary risks. It also sets these tendencies against the focus professionals have on the "big picture" and the ease with which they can overlook the details of everyday life that working-class people face. Professionals like the consistency of keeping their eye on the ball and not getting side-tracked on the "other issues," the immediate issues working-class people believe must be addressed first. The insult of receiving a tenure-threatening rent increase, given the dilapidated conditions of the property, was an issue of "dignity" that transcended overall strategy. It had to be addressed regardless of the risk if the project was to have integrity from a working-class perspective.

The second conflict was typical of the pragmatic/ideological disagreements that can happen between professionals and working-class people. There is a tendency on the part of state housing professionals to see housing in terms of units and to measure the success of projects in numeric terms. These professionals saw in Route 2 an opportunity to address the shortage of low-income housing. In Route 2, there was a serious overcrowding problem as well as problems with the physical conditions of the units. It was believed that new housing would have to be built if the "no displacement" pledge that came to govern the project was to be kept. But, how much was needed by the community was never considered by the professionals.

The state housing staff wanted the then-fledgling and staffless community housing corporation to engage in an aggressive building program to meet any possible relocation need. A consultant was brought in to package about 100 units of Section 8 new-construction housing on vacant lots scattered throughout the corridor. The residents listened, but, after reflection, rejected the idea. The residents were more cautious than the professionals.

The extent of the need had never been established, and the residents felt they were getting in over their heads at a very early stage. They also believed that their very good relationships with local homeowner groups could be threatened by moving too quickly. Instead, they opted for an initial 16-unit project which was built and proved adequate for relocation needs. However, the state staff was furious and accused the residents of narrow-minded conservatism and insensitivity to the poor. The Section 8 new-construction program was ended and the opportunity to build affordable housing lost. Maximizing the production of affordable housing had never been the goal of the residents. Their goal was very immediate and pragmatic. The professionals' goals were

more policy-based.

The third conflict over the composition of the board of the development corporation both pre-dated and post-dated the new construction fight. The state staff wanted a number of positions on the board for "outside experts." The leadership of the residents wanted none of this. The state staff kept sending sympathetic professionals to the residents and the residents kept coming up with reasons for rejecting them. In the end, only one outsider survived and was placed on the board.[10]

Still, the effort to encircle the unruly people with professionals continued. The option to purchase the property was conditioned on the corporation maintaining a professional staff and setting up an advisory board of professionals. The first condition was met.

The second one was met only on paper. The community, having gained a degree of control over the planning process, was not going to give it up. They had become aware of the professionals' style of planning. They were not going to risk their homes to that planning process. They wanted the project done as they conceived it—in a working-class style of planning.

Interactions with the Community Staff

The Route 2 Tenants Association transformed itself into the Route 2 Community Housing Corporation (R2CHC) when it came time to buy, rehabilitate, and convert the state's property to limited-equity cooperatives. Acting as R2CHC, the community was able to obtain funding and hire its own professional staff to carry out its plan in its style. This transition to a community staff from reliance on outside professionals did not stop the conflict. In fact, it may have intensified the problems.

Very little discretion or autonomy was given to the corporation staff. No one was hired without board interview and approval. All checks, regardless of the amount, had to be signed by officers of the corporation. And, in working-class planning style, major documents were approved only after detailed and painstaking word-by-word examinations at board meetings.

Even with all this, the residents still felt that the planners sometimes "talked circles around their heads." With all of the control they had and all that they were learning, they still did not completely trust their own abilities in quick interaction with the professionals. To protect themselves, they periodically called meetings, called "no-staff raps," where the staff was asked *not* to attend. The no-staff raps usually dealt with questions relating to the goals of the project and served to keep the residents on their own path, averting any tendencies to yield unthinkingly to the professional's advice on what "had to be done" to make the project work.

The corporation staff had a hard time with the rules of doing business at Route 2, particularly the "no-staff raps." They were giving their all to try to "do the project right" as instructed by the board, and they felt betrayed by their exclusion. On top of this, they were often attacked by individual residents for not working, although they put in long hours trying to figure out how to put together these scattered site cooperatives. The residents saw them sitting around the office talking to one another on the phone, i.e., what many professionals do. It didn't look like work to the residents, and they expressed their views. Many residents also didn't see how this kind of work drew what they saw as such large salaries (as with most organizations, the salaries were about two-thirds of the going professional rates).

The interactions were sometimes rough, and much of the staff developed an embattled mentality. They collectivized in response to the exclusion from meetings, tried to develop strategies in their own meetings in an effort to get their way, attacked the credibility of particularly troublesome residents (bosses), and found support from outside professionals who urged them to assert themselves and get control of the situation; all very worker-like responses.

Community-Staff Conflict

Two particularly bitter conflicts arose during this stage of the project: one over the structure of the cooperatives and another over affirmative action. The staff's job was mind-boggling. No one in California had put together a project the way the residents wanted to do it. Outside professionals were almost unanimous in telling the staff that it couldn't be done. Organizing the five separate cooperatives at once with the level of participation demanded seemed overwhelming, and the staff proposed instead that all the corridor become one big cooperative. The board reacted by saying that the staff's solution to this problem did not fit the needs of the community. They felt that, although it sounded like an obvious solution to the problem, a more than two-mile-long scattered-site cooperative that passed over many separate neighborhoods would never work socially. The staff responded with, "It can't be done any other way,". in an attempt to define the community's problem in order to solve the staff's problem. The board rejoined, as they often did, that it would be done as they wanted or not at all.

The board's position was that it was their homes and their lives so the choice should be put to them. As the president of the board often said in response to this ultimate professional threat of technical infeasibility, "We have been poor all of our lives. If this project works or not, we will still be poor. You have got to understand that to us this project is not worth doing if it is not done right." This willingness to risk failure often seemed to

unnerve the professionals, putting them on the defensive many times throughout the project and blunting the normal sharp dominating edge of expertise.

After a number of stormy sessions on this particular issue, a solution was found in the federation of the five cooperatives, a five-in-one concept with interlocking co-op boards and a central federation board that became the board of the development corporation. This meant that the staff still had to package five cooperatives, but that, for many matters, they could find agreement at a single meeting rather than five (in all, there are about 20 meetings a month in Route 2, with corporate and individual co-op board and committee meetings).

This solution, more complex than the original staff solution, is an example of a planning outcome more in tune with the community's needs and desires. While certainly it is not impossible for professionals to find such solutions on their own, it is extremely difficult for someone from the PMC world to confront the problem from a community point of view. It takes a lot for both sides to reach across class barriers and communicate all aspects of the problem if such a creative solution is to be reached.

As seen here, such a confrontation can be extraordinarily painful. The temptation for the professionals to employ various professional power devices to avoid such interactions is great. If the professionals had continued to insist that it be done their way, the process could have failed. To the credit of both the community and the planners, it did not.

The conflict over affirmative action was, in some ways, a replay of the conflict over new construction which the community had with the planners from the state. Again, the planners appeared to be to the left of the community. Although Latinos made up a majority of the residents, they were always under-represented in the leadership of the project (this was not the case with Blacks and Asians). Many reasons can be found for the low Latino participation, not the least of which was language (two thirds of the Latino residents did not speak English), in a situation calling for detailed scrutiny of many technical documents. It was hard enough for the people to grasp the terminology in English, much less find ways to accurately translate it into Spanish.

Bilingual staff members were always sought, particularly for the organizing positions. They were not easy to find. The project was speculative, the salaries were low, and the working conditions were rough. Bilingual Latinos were hired as organizers with the hope that they could increase Latino involvement, but none were fully successful. The board complained about this failure and was told by the staff that it was because the salaries were too low (another very worker-like response). The board voted to raise the

organizers' pay. Then the organizers complained that they were getting absorbed in technical development work as "gophers" for the development staff. In response, the board separated out the organizing function to give it more autonomy. Still, there were no appreciable results. Finally, after several years of frustration, the board began to fire and replace the organizing staff.

The staff reacted again with "the salaries are too low" and the battle was joined. The board called for results for the whole Latino population and not just the Latinos on the staff. The members of the staff countered by attacking the board as racist, under the banner of affirmative action. It was the closest the board and staff ever came to a total breakdown in their relationship, with one staff member calling for a strike, another doing his best organizing by organizing some of the Latino population against the board, and some board members saying they were ready to accept mass resignations from the staff.

In the end, the organizing staff left and new organizers were hired. The new organizing staff, which was told to produce or suffer the fate of their predecessors, largely solved the problem of increasing Latino involvement.[11] The critical attitude of the professionals was based on a symbolic and theoretical concept of race relations that was not grounded in the reality of working-class existence. The residents of Route 2 were living highly integrated lives in one of the few racially integrated neighborhoods in Los Angeles. They occasionally expressed their frustrations about the non-involvement of the Latinos in "racist" terms. They wanted results. On very practical terms, they were getting tired of the burden of running the co-ops and wanted to find a way for the Latinos to get more involved and carry their share of the load, and they were not going to let symbolism stand in their way as professionals too often do.

Even with all the control the members of the board exercised, the professionals, with their technical knowledge and skill, still have had a great deal of power in the development of the project. But the ultimate power is held by the board. In the day-to-day operation of the corporation, the result is that power is more balanced than in many other similar situations. The staff has, on occasion, used its control of information in typical planner fashion to attempt to move the project in a direction they felt was necessary. The board has also given the staff broad discretion, within the constraints discussed in this paper, on many important topics such as the technical details of the financing of the project.

In many ways, the staff members who stayed with the project to its successful completion adjusted to a less autonomous role of "skilled worker." Their adjustment has its plusses and minuses. On the positive side, the people realized much of their vision and

are, without doubt, empowered. On the negative side, the staff became somewhat gun-shy of taking individual, entrepreneurial initiative. They even, at times, became reticent about expressing opinions at all. On more than one occasion, board members have had to drag recommendations out of staff members who saw their role as limited to presenting problems for solution by the board or, at most, presenting alternative possible solutions. Of course, this has contributed to the further development of the capacity of the people to make their own decisions. What is not known is what opportunities might have been lost.

Conclusion

The Route 2 experience is unusual.[12] It is an example of working-class people gaining a large measure of control over both their lives and their staff. As *both* clients and bosses, they were much more aware than either clients or bosses normally are of the content of many policy choices usually left in the professional domain. This knowledge, together with a grounded willingness to risk, allowed them to control. In this case, it worked out well. Of course, there are no guarantees that all of the elements present in this case will be present in the next, or that success will always result. Still, this case illustrates that working-class people and professional planners can develop a planning proces that gives the working class significant power to shape its own urban space.

This study shows that, as the literature indicates, working-class and professional planning styles often conflict. This conflict must be and can be mediated in the search for successful community planning. Whether, in the metaphors of the 1960s, planners choose to work "with" or "for" a working-class community, they must understand the rules of the game. The process is likely to be rough, and much of the interaction may lack the polish of usual professional practice, but planners must be willing to acknowledge the limits of their expertise. Personal and professional ethics are essential, but planners must be sure that class bias is not permeating those ethics and leading professionals to make hasty judgments about matters they do not fully understand. Further, professionals must think through the questions of professional autonomy and control presented by community planning practice, and examine whether class-related prejudices, rather than the correctness of their ideas, are causing them to avoid "troublesome" clients and seek out a more manipulable clientele.

Perhaps most importantly, this exploration teaches planners that they must look very closely at what they are doing when they enter a working-class community. In the early days of Route 2, there were meetings in which more professionals with "good" ideas attended than community people. When it became clear

that the people did not want these good ideas but were looking for people to help actualize their own ideas, most of the professionals departed. Those that remained took up the challenge of doing what in the experience of the professionals had not been done and what conventional wisdom said could not be done. It was difficult and full of risk, but those who stayed responded to the challenge and made it work.

Professionals often apply what they have learned regardless of its true applicability. If planners are to work successfully with working-class communities, this cannot be their approach. Planners must take situations as they find them and start from there. Only when planners look past their class screens is this possible. Hopefully, this article will motivate those who are already inclined toward this style of planning to give it a try.

NOTES

1. Working-class employment is lower paying, less stable, and more vulnerable to automation than professional work. Working-class jobs are characterized by tight supervision, highly rationalized work processes, and minimal opportunities for worker creativity (Braverman, 1974; Shostak, 1969; Levison, 1974). Blue collar work is physically destructive, with approximately 100,000 job-related deaths annually (Berman, 1978). With opportunities for upward mobility severely limited, it is hardly surprising that workers derive less satisfaction from their jobs than professionals (Rinehart, 1971; Vannerman, 1977; Hout, 1984; Kallenberg and Griffin, 1980).

2. Despite outward appearances of being more professional, low-level clerical and service sector jobs are characterized by low-skill, rationalized, and increasingly automated work processes. Not surprisingly, the research of Jackman and Jackman 1983, pp. 93-94, found "no support for the view that the class identification of manual workers is fundamentally different from that of non-manual workers."

3. For example, PMC neighborhoods are usually segregated from working-class neighborhoods and receive better public services (Levison, 1974; Goodman, 1971). In public education, PMC schools provide more individualized attention and emphasize the intellectual and creative development of the student. Working-class schools stress discipline, conformity, and vocational education (Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

4. See Walker (1979) for a complete treatment of this debate. A major reason class is not always clearly seen is what Parker (1972) terms the "myth" of the middle-class. This myth, abetted by a plethora of social science research, has portrayed the U.S. as a land of immense opportunity, dominated by a large, prosperous, relatively homogenous middle class, in which preoccupation with status had replaced class identification (Reissman, 1959). Research on the class structure has often been imprecise, focusing on the study of status ranking and superficial aggregate income and occupational status variables (Huber and Form, 1973). Census data, for example, has used broad classifications that do not distinguish between blue collar and white collar jobs within a category and has erroneously classified some blue collar jobs as professional (Levison, 1974; Spencer, 1977). Research, according to Spencer, p. 10, has been characterized by an overreliance on survey research despite "the blue-collar workers' deep-seated mistrust of investigators." Indeed, the very lack of working-class involvement in the design and implementation of research raises serious questions of ethnocentricity and bias (Broadhead and Rist, 1978).

5. The term advocacy was popularized by Paul Davidoff in his 1965 article on the topic. Davidoff had a broad conception of pluralistic planning with planners representing all sides in a dispute, but the term became associated with planners working with low-income and minority communities against the establishment. It was not a class-based concept although the critiques we are describing saw it in these terms.

6. Repo argues that professionals seek out the poor because the poor, who make up most of the clientele of various government and private social service agencies, are accustomed to deferring to professionals and have internalized middle-class values of individualism.

7. A major factor contributing to this problem is the class segregation of higher education (Useem and Miller, 1981; Bowles and Gintis, 1973; Karabel, 1974). Historically, higher education has served as a vehicle through which the middle class has acquired professional employment. As a consequence, individualism, conservatism, faith in rationality and science, and belief in the perfectability of society have permeated higher education (Bledstein, 1976; Larson, 1977).

8. Levison (1974) cites a number of studies that show the working class to be slightly more liberal politically than the middle class.

9. This point was brought out in another case study of controlled community planning; see Fraser (1972).

10. In the limited equity cooperative, residents buy a share of stock in the cooperative and receive the right to occupy a unit and to

jointly manage the cooperative with fellow residents. Under California law the equity build-up on the share is limited to a percentage equal to an index such as the Consumer Price Index. This prevents speculative resale of the units and keeps the cost of the shares down. California provides strong legal safeguards to preserve democratic control of the cooperative by the residents—e.g. one person/one vote regardless of the number of shares held, etc.

11. Co-author Allan Heskin was this person. He has served on the board since 1979. The board was originally made up of activists from the group's tenant association. It was transformed over time to include and be dominated by representatives of each cooperative created in the project. This paper is the first of a series on the Route 2 project.

12. For a full discussion of how the Latino involvement problem was solved, see "Learning About Bilingual, Multicultural Organizing" by Allan Heskin and Robert Heffner, Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, U.C.L.A., April 28, 1986.

13. For a discussion of why this community acts so aggressively and was willing to take risks see "The Dialectics of Community Planning," Allan Heskin and Dewey Bandy, Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, U.C.L.A., 1986.

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