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EHEP BD REVIEW OF DRAFT DISCUSSION GUIDE

~~DISCUSSION~~

MIKE ANDERSON

Looks like a CURA person doing ^{HHH unphreyerque} study for CURA
Needs to be worked on by someone
doing a study guide for a study circle

Answers, not thoughts
Phrased more w/ questions

Didn't have the central questions at its heart
Too Myron Orfield esq
People going to get lost in way presented

"This is the truth" vs. "this is someone's perspective"

Didn't feel like alternatives but this is
the way it is

Everybody should be talking to QUESTION =

What is impact of housing segregation on...
What do we do to enhance life opport. for kids
in our regi

needs to be less abstract =

Acknowledge - real people doing real things
on this

POSITION OF NAACP is lacking in this report.

SUMMARY =

What are clear positions people have
Look at options
Make clear their central question -

BARB

Do we want policy outcome?

What do need to fulfill ideals of American society? Integration.

MATT

No continuity w/ message of Dec. kickoff

JOSIE

Expressions of yesterday's gp. similar to today's
Went into constructive conversation

All we've been saying is not making a diff
because talking to each other.

Get other voices around table

Serve as a model for how you do that
Or find the models

Bring conservative broa or sisters in
until agree on what central questions
are.

Got to be real & in a way that
is a discussion guide

Seek out different / not stacked deck

JOHN POWELL

MITCH PEARESTEIN

Get different voices

JERRY TIMIAN

Straw dogs, half portions
Facts, Facts, Facts

JO SIE JOHNSON

Talked about — last Fall's lab mtg.
Move away from Title, Beyond Busing
Metropolitan Livable Communities Act
[Livable Communities] Act

Create themes, comm. rich w/ community
diversity
Title & arg. is 30 yr. old

JIM HILBERT

a little bit of surprise about DG.

The idea we can honestly set-together
Matt Little & Mitch Pearlstein

Idea is to bring everybody to the table
How present different schools of thought
or choice w/o irritating people.

MATT LITTLE

Start w/ central reality: Then =

What is best for correction of problem?

ask. something is wrong & something needs to be done.

MIKE

not look at LCA

use it as a theme, integrated

TITLE: "LIVABLE COMMUNITIES?"

Important support for comm to deal w/
one of our most basic ~~needs~~

need to do it right.

agree on question we want to ask?

Go to comm. who represent those different
views → get their responses.

JOSIE

Len offered to assist in dev. of this.

need to connect language that people
can connect to?

MIKE

Here is what the current environment
looks like? Here is what is going on?

Look at same set of facts —
then get different perspectives

BARB

Powell - we don't all mean same thing
about same terms. Assimilate

Conversation must get to "white power"

MISSED CONVERSATION

JERRY

Set up what seem like irresolvable
issues ^{or} paradoxes.

We are at odds w/

Mediation ~~the~~ point of view

GEORGINA

No citing of Gary Orfield
notion of racism got washed over

Here are the problems. Here's what we know?
Here's the question?

PARTICIPANTS =

They need to read the materials
Operate on informed knowledge

We're blaming the victim all over again.
Problems are about race \pm class.

PUT THE MATERIALS ON THE INTERNET
Go to E-DEMOCRACY

NAMES OF PEOPLE

GEORGINA

Business Roundtable, Duane Benson
Chamber of Commerce
Business

What are people stuck on?
What are people saying?

C³ REVIEW OF DISCUSSION GUIDE

JOSIE

FORMAT

Presentation

Principally here. Has little education

Clarity of what we're doing & why

Purpose of various message

How encouraging people toward dialogue

BACKGROUND

Here is how community is thinking about these issues

Getting people to think "beyond business"
Encourage negative debate & discussion.

Encour. people to think about relat. hseap.,
educ & qual. of life.

Issues the state is dealing with.

How build on what is ^{already} developed
vs. going back

Let's go forward —

Language very important.

- Begin w/
- Metro Livable Communities legislation
 - V5. Busing

Give them talking points
Issues - Here are the
pts - here are the pts.

Bringing it up to date - things that
help cont. discussion about bus.
and so

Based on old arguments + discussion.

Move from bld in argumentative
discussion → to bld-on/focus on
livable communities.

Missing from the Guide -

Forward; purpose of the guide
Lay out the perspective

HOPE

MPLS
PLAN

* Format Issue

Too dense

Synthesize info. into bullets

Simplify the language

How get a hold of this.

* Reframe the debate

Recast the language

Quality of life enriched by
diversity + density (all kinds)
not just affordable hmg.

* Hmg. is overbearing

Connect between qual. of
life + children's educ. exp

[Wm Julius Wilson's wk]
Recast the debate.

at both

1) Cultural

2) ~~Sub~~ Structural

} Dynamic
Between

* Why is "separate but equal" never
Pick up on arguments.

Flesh out discussion in choice #1

WKS HBT

How incl. or incorporate the "contemporary
discussions."

LEN

blue sheet - OK

DG → lightning rod; discussion
killer

People will argue w/ doc. w/o
Is going to get everyone inflamed.

Whether discuss. nec.

Why we decided on frame we have
of choices

Put the articles in each of the
3 choices vs. our analysis.

Writer defend a position she doesn't
understand

* Frame the discuss. quest. we have
for this.

* Get the articles to go w/ this.

OUTLINE

Questions to be asked.

Go to primary sources to put them in

STRUCTURE THE PROCESS

Here are the issues. need to have the
issues discussed.

Need to have the pts that are critical

* Somebody in process needs to be perceived as "honest broker."
- M. PR.

JEREMY

If there are the answers, what are the questions?

see p. 3 — Get up front.

See a "stacked deck"
Conservative pts. of view

Peter Bell 822-8939 (H) 661-6581 (O)

Kathy Kenten 926-9828 (H/O)

Ian Maitland

Ron Abrams (Legislator)

Mitch Pearlstein / Jeff ^{*} Peter Zeller ^{Drop off next version of}

If don't have "lay in" from conservat. pts of view —

Will get one-sided conversation

"The liberal line"

won't get credible result

Modeling for ourselves

IDEA

Invite the different pts of view to the table. Have a ^{open} public discussion, w/ these people.

Not just core cities, but also core cities + first tier suburbs.

FORWARD

Metro area is at a cross roads —
at a crisis pt., a turning pt.

① Everybody can agree something upon.

Realization

② What you do to grapple w/ that?

Say in introduct.

a) They are suffering

b) We are all suffering

Cost to business.

If go out where we are, we will
~~we~~ do damage.

Going in wrong direction too fast.

JIM D

Impact on school

What we want school to do / need more

Move David Park comment up front

#1 & #3, on one continuum
MOBILITY & EMPOWERMENT

#2 / COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY
INDIVIDUAL

& What's needed!

Not do the old discussion over & over
again; we've been thru it.

Need to be realistic about good
people out there / just worried about NIMBY
need to talk about these things
in non-emotional way.

Want to hear all pts of view
because we want to learn from
each other.

JIM H.

Creating false dichotomy.

Synergy → necessary.

More speed → brings danger too!

People may not realize severity of issues
& connection

How lay out prob. as we're talking about

Fear
Equality

DICK - NOTES

What is agenda — to not help whole
community so come forth w/ answer.

How market can help deal w/ urban issues

What is discussion about?

What is outcome?

Agreement

FACT SHEET

WKSHEET WKS—

W/ KEY QUESTIONS

W/ REV. #2

What are costs + consequences
we are willing to accept.

A BASIC FORWARD.

POLARIZATION

How does it affect schools

" " " qual. of life

Matter of organizing it a little differently -

Make it as simple as possible.
and stimulate thought

Get people to

RESEARCH

relat. between concentration of poverty & school
as

Cary Orfield

Nancy Denton

Get more of the comm. dialogue -

Can expose people → to the fact.

A FAIR, HONEST DISCUSSION --

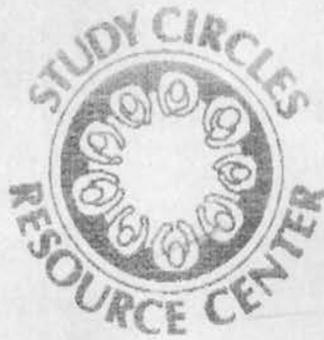
~~ED~~ * Eudora; E-Mail

* Start talking about ^{Package?} to Graphic Designer
- SCRC -

Would they help track down articles on
pts of view

Would they be willing to help ~~to~~ do
graphics of study guide

EDITORS/



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 PO Box 203, 697 Pomfret St.
 Pomfret, CT 06258

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From: Matt Leightinger

Number of pages (including this page): 9

Comments:

INTRODUCTION

A Changing Region

Every year, the Twin Cities are ranked high on the list of America's most livable cities. Compared to standards used to judge major urban centers across the nation--job growth, low crime rates, good schools and social services, access to lakes and parks--the Twin Cities region is a good place to live. We are not, however, without serious and growing problems. The Twin Cities is now beginning to struggle with many of the same problems that have led to severe urban decay in other major metropolitan centers across America. Deepening poverty, an aging housing stock, overburdened schools, and fear of crime are rapidly changing our region's landscape. And while it is easy to believe that these problems are unique to the central cities, they are not.

Over the last few decades, poverty has concentrated in the core of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Throughout the 1980s, the core gained 30,000 poor people, while its total population grew by less than 10,000 people. This suggests several things. First, people who were above the poverty line slipped below it during years of wage erosion and a stagnant economy. Second, once individuals reach a certain income level, they are often -- and understandably -- "pulled" out to the suburbs, where there is more space, bigger and newer houses, lower property taxes, lower crime rates, and better schools. Meanwhile, low-income families have few choices but to locate in the central cities, particularly given the limited public transportation in the region and a lack of affordable housing in the suburbs. This shift is further illustrated by the fact that the rest of the region grew by more 293,000 persons, only 7.5% of whom are poor. According to the 1990 census, the central cities had 28% of the region's population but 60% of its poor.

It is not just because poverty has concentrated in the core that we should be concerned, however. The poverty rate is growing and spreading. In 1979, 11 Twin Cities census tracts with a lower poverty rate in earlier years saw 25% or more of their populations sink below the poverty line. In the 80s, the spread of poverty accelerated sharply. Thirty-eight more tracts in the core area reached the 25% level. This doubled the poverty both in terms of population and area involved. Out of 121 census tracts in the core area, 105 saw their poverty rates increase.¹ This trend has continued. Today it is not just the central cities that are affected. Poverty and disinvestment are beginning to spread into inner-ring suburbs, too.

In fact, since it seems to be popular among a certain set of people, while over two-thirds of the people living in poverty are white, it is very clear that people of color are the hardest hit. Absolute numbers often mask this reality for people of color because they still constitute such a small percentage of Minnesota's total population. While the region's minority population grew by 81% during the 1980s, they still constitute only 9.3% of the region's total population--65% of which live in the central cities.² In the core area of the central city, however, poverty rates for African Americans (44%), American Indians (56%), Asians (62%) and Hispanic residents (31%) were dramatically higher than poverty rates for whites (18%).³

The Impact on Schools

Perhaps nowhere is this racial and economic isolation more evident than in the public schools. The table below gives the percentage of students passing the 1996 Minnesota Basic Skills Test for all districts in the seven-county region. While test scores may be a crude measure

¹Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress*. November 1992. p. 8.

²United Way Minneapolis Area. *The Face of the Twin Cities: Another Look*. 1995. p. 8.

³Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress*. November 1992. p. 14.

of achievement, they do provide some insight on how various communities are doing in relationship to one another. Furthermore, many believe that the scores act as a proxy to the opportunities that are available to students in each community. As illustrated below, Minneapolis schools rank the lowest with only 42% of its students passing the math test and 37% passing the reading test. Minneapolis schools *do* have the highest per pupil expenditures (\$9,136) within the seven county region, but they also have the highest percentage of students living in poverty. Approximately 60% of students in the district are receiving free or reduced-price lunches--a federal program available for children in families below the poverty line. Furthermore, 63% of Minneapolis' student body are children of color.

As a result, it only makes sense that Minneapolis schools are spending more Children are spending more." *are spending more.*

who come to school hungry, chronically sick, emotionally starved, and mentally fatigued will have a far more difficult time concentrating and learning than children who do not face the constant worries and pressures of living in poverty. As a result, resources in poor districts often get diverted toward things such as free and reduced lunch programs, special education services, and bilingual education. While these services are vitally important to children from poor households, they are also very costly. When schools must spend significant proportions of their budgets on simply getting their students to the "starting line," they often fall short of the finish line. *-keep alive the possibility that there is waste & inefficiency in the system.*

What is Our Mandate For Public Schools?

We proclaim to be a nation founded on the principle of equality of opportunity. But for this to be a reality, don't we first have to assure equality of educational opportunity? Since its inception, the public school has been thought of as a major instrument through which equality of opportunity would be ensured. One of the most persuasive arguments for the establishment of public schools was that such schooling "would open a gateway to opportunity that would otherwise be closed to many youngsters, and that education would eliminate or dwarf the social inequities which plague other nations."⁴ Public schools in America were chartered to do the important work of American society. They were established to create and maintain a nation dedicated to certain shared principles and values--things such as individual freedom and justice. They were established to develop a citizenry capable of self-government and to ensure social unity and order. What happened to these ideals? Have we given up on them or are they no longer appropriate? Without equal educational opportunities, are we acquiescing to a society in which economic privilege and political power are determined by heredity? To a society in which the children of the rich are inherit advantage?

I think you should delete these. They cross the line into a biased voice.

Quality public schools and equality of educational opportunity are essential in providing information and developing skills essential to both individual economic enterprise and general prosperity. At the beginning of the century, dropping out and low educational attainment were not necessarily problems as there were other paths to self-sufficiency. Today, however, the world we live in is much different. Advances in technology and shifts in the labor market have largely eliminated the need for unskilled labor. In order to maintain a productive and profitable economy, as well as to be able to compete globally, there is a greater need for *all* individuals to become more literate and for a larger proportion to develop advanced skills. Yet so often we seem to live in a myopic society, and perhaps nowhere is this short-sightedness costing us more than with our indifference towards the education of other people's children. By limiting the resources available to schools, we are putting the future of this nation at risk by literally ensuring that large numbers of children leave school uneducated and unprepared to be productive members of society. The population of white Minnesotans between the ages of 15-19 is projected to decrease by 6% between 1995 and 2015. For African Americans, it is projected that the same population will

Stating the values is enough.

⁴ Tesconi, Jr., Charles A. and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr. Education for Whom? NY: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1974. p 15

increase by 187%, while American Indians, Asian Americans, and Hispanic/Latino Americans will increase by 61%, 111%, and 128%, respectively. This averages out to be an increase of 122% for communities of color.⁵ If the quality of education that we offer to poor children and children of color do not change within the next twenty years, will these student be prepared to enter the work force and become productive members of society?

The Search For Solutions

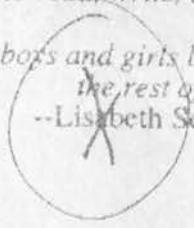
There is considerable evidence that the differences between white people and people of color in school performance and economic prosperity are remnants of past and present segregation. The economic and racial polarization of our communities puts the health and stability of the entire region at risk. Although there is widespread agreement that something ought to be done, there is little agreement about what that "something" is. People advocate different strategies or solutions depending on how they perceive or "diagnose" the problem.

Economic and racial isolation is an "octopus" of a problem that will have to be approached from many different angles. No one policy or solution is broad enough to tackle all of its complex components. In the pages that follow are three perspectives on economic and racial isolation, each of which leads to a different prescription about what should be done. The perspectives are in no way mutually exclusive; indeed, different perspectives have different merits and elements of several approaches may be needed. Furthermore, these perspectives are not the only perspectives on the topic. Rather, they are intended simply to function as a framework for discussion.

If we are to halt the increasing polarization of this region before it is too late, we must begin by finding common ground. Which diagnosis of the problem is most accurate? What prescriptions are most promising? And perhaps most importantly, which costs and consequences are we willing to accept?

*"In today's world, a youngster who leaves school unable to read, write, and do simple arithmetic faces a bleak future. When a substantial portion of boys and girls leave school uneducated, the rest of us face a bleak future."
--Lisbeth Schorr, Within Our Reach*

If you are going to use these, try for an ideological balance of sources.



⁵Urban Coalition. *Statement from Citizen's League Communities of Color*. 13 December 1996

(b) Avoid stereotyping; teach children to be concerned with the content of a person's character.

(c) When groups mark special occasions or celebrate holidays, find out what the celebration is about. What do Yom Kippur, Kwanzaa, Easter, and Ramadan mean to the people who observe them? Talk with your children about the meanings of holidays.

- Welcome new neighbors, and seek out opportunities to meet newcomers in the community. Reach out especially if they are people from a different background than yours.
 - Before you barbecue, ask yourself what national holidays mean -- July 4th, Washington's Birthday, Lincoln's Birthday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and more. What do these holidays commemorate? In an age as diverse as ours, are these days important for something besides leisure time? Ask others what they think.
 - Have an open block party in your neighborhood. Ask guests to bring a favorite traditional dish from their family's heritages.
 - Start a neighborhood "community service project" that includes young people from all backgrounds.
5. *What can we do in our community to create a common life?*
- Make study circles an ongoing part of the community, on all sorts of issues. Include community groups of all kinds as study circle sponsors, so that all community members will know that they are welcome to take part. Media participation can also promote widespread involvement: in some places radio and TV stations run public service announcements to encourage participation in the study circles, and newspapers print supportive editorials.
 - Convene community-wide cultural development planning. This could be an effective way to channel the energy generated by a successful round of community conversations about cultural identity and diversity. This process could draw out a range of community members' ideas about how they'd like to see cultural life change.

- Encourage the newspaper to write a series of stories that documents the history of the community. Who has settled in the community, and why? How have groups related to each other? Some newspapers have done extensive series on current-day relations between racial and ethnic groups.
- Start a community arts project. Use the arts and media as ways for people to express themselves and their own cultural identities. Community arts projects can take many forms: photo-text exhibits; video and audio "speak outs"; murals and other pieces of public art. In some communities, short plays have been "discussion starters" for community conversations.
- If there are ongoing tensions between groups in the community, leaders from these groups can form an alliance to discuss ways of working together. One example of this is in New York, where African-American and Korean-American leaders formed "The Black/Korean Mediation Project."
- Teach young people about diversity by helping them learn about the art that comes out of different traditions. For example, The Baltimore Learning Network, run by community volunteers, coordinates projects that link the schools to the city's cultural institutions.
- Sponsor cultural outings for multicultural groups of students, where the groups can visit sites that help them learn about each other's backgrounds.
- Sponsor projects where community members from all backgrounds will have opportunities to work together and break down patterns of segregation. For example, organize park cleanups in areas that are usually segregated.
- Hold a film festival that highlights diversity issues. One example of this took place in Glen Ridge, NJ, as a result of a study circle program on race relations.
- Encourage and support civic leaders who are out front on the issues of diversity, who understand the importance of addressing these issues honestly and with everyone's involvement.



Session 4

Making a difference: What can we do in our community?

As the challenges to education grow, many community members and community groups are finding ways to help schools meet those challenges. At the same time, many schools are finding ways to reach out to their communities. All kinds of people and groups are making a difference in education.

This session describes some of the ways we can improve education - in our homes and neighborhoods, in our schools, and in the organizations we belong to. It provides an opportunity for you to think about new ways to get involved.

Coming together to learn from each other and develop our ideas about education is a critical form of action. Finding ways to continue this dialogue and to include more community members is a valuable next step. In some communities, study circles lead to action groups, where some of the participants implement the ideas they develop during their study circle.

What can we do in our homes and neighborhoods to improve education?

Whether as parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, godparents, day care providers, or neighbors, many people come into regular contact with young people. While people may endorse different parenting practices, practically everyone agrees that the most decisive factor in a young person's life is the presence of caring adults.

In addition to "being there" for a young person, there are many ways that parents and other mentors can contribute to a youngster's education:

- Read to and talk with the children in your life. After they can read by themselves, keep reading together, and talking with them about what they're reading and what they think.
- Model civil, honest, respectful, and responsible behavior toward others, and expect the same from young people.
- Listen to and talk with the young people in your life - about their concerns, their friends, what is happening in school, what they are learning and want to learn, their homework, and what they are watching on television.
- Share your ideas with your children and other young people in your life, and ask them what they think.

Discussion questions

1. What can we do in our own homes to improve education? What can we do as individuals?
2. What are the channels of communication between the schools and the community? How might those be improved?
3. What is already going on in the community in terms of improving education? What organizations - businesses, civic organizations, nonprofits - are involved in improving education? What other organizations might help, and how can we approach them?
4. How have communities similar to ours effectively addressed challenges like the ones we face? How can we learn more about those efforts, and how can we use what we learn?
5. What are the strengths of our community and our schools? What assets have gone untapped? How can we put those assets to work?
6. What steps do we want to take? What type of support or help do we need to take these steps?

Session 4 - Making a difference: What can we do in our community?

- Get to know the children in your neighborhood, and help others do the same by organizing small-scale neighborhood events.
- Get together with other parents in your child's classroom and talk about your concerns and ideas.
- Attend teacher conferences and parent nights, and try to keep in regular contact with teachers and the school.
- Go to teachers and administrators with your questions and concerns on a regular basis. Ask about what your child is learning, how he or she is doing, and what you can do to help.
- Many communities offer parenting seminars, English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, and refresher classes in math and English so that parents can understand what their kids are learning. Participate in the classes you think will help you.

How can schools connect to the community?

Many teachers would like to see more parents and other community members supporting education and becoming involved in the schools.

The most common frustration teachers have with parent groups is that they usually represent only a small part of the school's parents. Often racial and ethnic minorities are underrepresented, few parents from low-income families attend, and women vastly outnumber men.

Following are ways that actual schools have successfully reached out to parents, including some parents who might not usually get involved:

- The Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project provides English as a Second Language workshops after school for non-English-speaking parents, using other parents as volunteers. The workshops have boosted attendance at parent group meetings and strengthened communication between teachers and individual parents.
- A Philadelphia school realized that many of its parents weren't attending "back to school night" because it wasn't providing them with informa-

Lessons from the Community

I went everywhere with my parents and was under the watchful eye of members of the congregation and community who were my extended parents. They kept me when my parents went out of town, they reported on and chided me when I strayed from the straight and narrow of community expectations, and they basked in and supported my achievements when I did well. Doing well, they made clear, meant high academic achievement, playing piano in Sunday school or singing or participating in other church activities, being helpful to somebody, displaying good manners (which is nothing more than consideration toward others), and reading.

My sister Olive reminded me recently that the only time our father would not give us a chore ("Can't you find something constructive to do?" was his most common refrain) was when we were reading. So we all read a lot! We learned early what our parents and extended community "parents" valued.

Children were taught - not by sermonizing, but by personal example - that nothing was too lowly to do. I remember a debate my parents had when I was eight or nine as to whether I was too young to go with my older brother, Harry, to help clean the bed and bedsores of a very sick, poor woman. I went and learned just how much the smallest helping hands and kindness can mean to a person in need.

- Marian Wright Edelman
*The Measure of Our Success:
A Letter to My Children and Yours*

tion they could use. The parent group organized a seminar called "How to Help Your Child Succeed With Homework," and attendance at the event increased ten-fold.

- Parents at Croton-Harmon High School in New York held discussion groups centering on the question, "What should our graduates know and be able to do?" The opportunity to talk broadly about goals brought out many parents who had not been involved in the school before.
- Family Math Night at P.S. 146 in East Harlem has been a big success. Parents and students

- learn math together and parents learn how to help with homework.
- Buffalo's Chapter 1 Parent Resource Center provides a place for regular meetings between parents and teachers, provides materials and information for parents to take home, and gives parents an opportunity to practice new skills and meet other parents.
- The Minneapolis Public Schools used study circles to involve parents and other community members in deciding whether to adopt school choice, maintain the current system, or create a couple of magnet schools and leave the rest of the system the same. Forty study circles met for several sessions, and influenced new performance standards and planning initiatives for the school district.

Schools often seem isolated from their communities. Keeping school buildings open after the school day and making the school facilities available for other community functions can help more parents and community members feel a connection to the school. Schools around the country are using innovative ways to make the school a community center:

- School District Four in New York City has a lively after-school program that includes a seven-week summer camp for children and adults, and a variety of tutorial and recreational activities for people of all ages.
- In Rockville, Maryland, senior citizens read stories and play games with young schoolchildren after school and on Saturdays, through a program administered by the local Senior Center.
- Thayer High School in Winchester, New Hampshire, brings in community members who are knowledgeable in particular fields to serve on juries for student academic exhibitions.
- The School-Based Youth Services Program in New Jersey has established "one-stop centers" at 29 high schools to provide health services, job training and counseling, mental health counseling, and child care. Making the school the center for social services strengthens the link between schools and parents.

"Old-Fashioned Democratic Virtues"

After a decade of education reform efforts, most high schools remain about the same, and some college educators claim that the writing and thinking skills of entering freshmen continue to get worse every year. . . .

I believe that we are running out of time. What we need to improve schools are not new policy gimmicks, a national curriculum, or more multiple-choice tests, but rather some old-fashioned democratic virtues - courageous leadership, greater clarity and consensus about goals, and many kinds of cooperative ventures to develop new strategies. The high school of the future must be invented in many individual schools and towns by groups of active citizens working together to define and teach real adult competencies, to create community, and to express more active caring for the next generation.

- Tony Wagner

"Improving High Schools: The Case for New Goals and Strategies"
Phi Delta Kappan, May 1993

How can community organizations connect with the schools?

Most community members belong to many different organizations within the community. They work for a business, government, or nonprofit organization; they belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque; they are students at or alumni of local universities; they belong to a civic organization or political party; or they participate in some kind of club or recreation league. We can help education meet new challenges by enlisting the help of these and other community organizations.

- Most of the students at Messalonskee High School in Oakland, Maine, are involved in public service projects. They host block parties, raise money for children in poverty, and volunteer at homeless shelters. Most of their "team leaders" are adult volunteers from the community.
- The Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce created a Partners-in-Education program that links local

Session 4 - Making a difference: What can we do in our community?

businesses to individual schools for a year of on-going activities, including apprenticeships, instruction in technology, factory tours, and classroom presentations.

- Members of the First Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, arranged to guide field trips and do arts and crafts workshops with children at a local school which had a high number of low-income families. They have also organized a consortium of local organizations such as the YWCA and the Lion's Club to provide services for the children.
- The Baltimore Learning Network, run by community volunteers, coordinates projects that link the schools to the city's cultural institutions. The Network makes it possible for students to spend time at the aquarium, the science center, the zoo, museums, libraries, theaters, businesses, and government agencies.

INTRODUCTION

A Changing Region

Every year, the Twin Cities are ranked high on the list of America's most livable cities. Compared to standards used to judge major urban centers across the nation--job growth, low crime rates, good schools and social services, access to lakes and parks--the Twin Cities region is a good place to live. We are not, however, without serious and growing problems. The Twin Cities is now beginning to struggle with many of the same problems that have led to severe urban decay in other major metropolitan centers across America. Deepening poverty, an aging housing stock, overburdened schools, and fear of crime are rapidly changing our region's landscape. And while it is easy to believe that these problems are unique to the central cities, they are not.

Over the last few decades, poverty has concentrated in the core of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Throughout the 1980s, the core gained 30,000 poor people, while its total population grew by less than 10,000 people. This suggests several things. First, people who were above the poverty line slipped below it during years of wage erosion and a stagnant economy. Second, once individuals reach a certain income level, they are often -- and understandably -- "pulled" out to the suburbs, where there is more space, bigger and newer houses, lower property taxes, lower crime rates, and better schools. Meanwhile, low-income families have few choices but to locate in the central cities, particularly given the limited public transportation in the region and a lack of affordable housing in the suburbs. This shift is further illustrated by the fact that the rest of the region grew by more 293,000 persons, only 7.5% of whom are poor. According to the 1990 census, the central cities had 28% of the region's population but 60% of its poor.

It is not just because poverty has concentrated in the core that we should be concerned, however. The poverty rate is growing and spreading. In 1979, 11 Twin Cities census tracts with a lower poverty rate in earlier years saw 25% or more of their populations sink below the poverty line. In the 80s, the spread of poverty accelerated sharply. Thirty-eight more tracts in the core area reached the 25% level. This doubled the poverty both in terms of population and area involved. Out of 121 census tracts in the core area, 105 saw their poverty rates increase.¹ This trend has continued. Today it is not just the central cities that are affected. Poverty and disinvestment are beginning to spread into inner-ring suburbs, too.

While over two-thirds of the people living in poverty are white, it is very clear that people of color are the hardest hit. Absolute numbers often mask this reality for people of color because they still constitute such a small percentage of Minnesota's total population. While the region's minority population grew by 81% during the 1980s, they still constitute only 9.3% of the region's total population--65% of which live in the central cities.² In the core area of the central city, however, poverty rates for African Americans (44%), American Indians (56%), Asians (62%) and Hispanic residents (31%) were dramatically higher than poverty rates for whites (18%).³

The Impact on Schools

Perhaps nowhere is this racial and economic isolation more evident than in the public schools. The table below gives the percentage of students passing the 1996 Minnesota Basic Skills Test for all districts in the seven-country region. While test scores may be a crude measure

¹Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress*. November 1992. p. 8.

²United Way Minneapolis Area. *The Face of the Twin Cities: Another Look*. 1995. p.8.

³Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress*. November 1992. p. 14.

increase by 187%, while American Indians, Asian Americans, and Hispanic/Latino Americans will increase by 61%, 111%, and 128%, respectively. This averages out to be an increase of 122% for communities of color.⁵ If the quality of education that we offer to poor children and children of color ~~do~~ ^{does} not change within the next twenty years, will these student be prepared to enter the work force and become productive members of society?

The Search For Solutions

There is considerable evidence that the differences between white people and people of color in school performance and economic prosperity are remnants of past and present segregation. The economic and racial polarization of our communities puts the health and stability of the entire region at risk. Although there is widespread agreement that something ought to be done, there is little agreement about what that "something" is. People advocate different strategies or solutions depending on how they perceive or "diagnose" the problem.

Economic and racial isolation is an "octopus" of a problem that will have to be approached from many different angles. No one policy or solution is broad enough to tackle all of its complex components. In the pages that follow are three perspectives on economic and racial isolation, each of which leads to a different prescription about what should be done. The perspectives are in no way mutually exclusive; indeed, different perspectives have different merits and elements of several approaches may be needed. Furthermore, these perspectives are not the only perspectives on the topic. Rather, they are intended simply to function as a framework for discussion.

If we are to halt the increasing polarization of this region before it is too late, we must begin by finding common ground. Which diagnosis of the problem is most accurate? What prescriptions are most promising? And perhaps most importantly, which costs and consequences are we willing to accept?

"In today's world, a youngster who leaves school unable to read, write, and do simple arithmetic faces a bleak future; When a substantial portion of boys and girls leave school uneducated, the rest of us face a bleak future."
--Lisabeth Schon, *Within Our Reach*

⁵Urban Coalition. *Statement from Citizen's League Communities of Color*. 13 December 1996.

A Strong Foundation

The intersection of race and poverty is very real. Nonetheless, over two-thirds of the people living in poverty in this region are white. This is not good news--it merely serves to remind us that our region is not only segregated by race, but by class as well. Racial and economic segregation damages the entire metropolitan region--both the urban core and the suburbs. A strong and prosperous core is key to the health of the entire region, for without the city, there would be no suburbs. Suburban communities benefit from the unique economic and cultural opportunities that only large urban centers can provide. Segregation, however, prevents wealth accumulation by residents of isolated, poor communities, thereby establishing major barriers to market participation. And indeed it is not only individuals who suffer. Metropolitan regions as a whole suffer when large percentages of people do not have the skills necessary to participate in the economy as workers, consumers, and citizens. In other words, providing a token few individuals with more opportunities and choices--greater "mobility"--will do little good for the region if the communities that are left behind remain poor and isolated.

Education and Job Training ^(d)

Society has changed substantially in recent decades. Advances in technology and shifts in the labor market have largely eliminated the need for unskilled labor. In order to be self-sufficient in today's world, education or vocation training is absolutely essential.

The greatest concentration of jobs in this region is in the core. As of the early 1990s, it had approximately 374,000 jobs, more than 2.8 jobs for each of its 133,000 households.⁴ Nonetheless, the core has the highest rates of unemployment and poverty in the region. Why? Because there is a serious mismatch between the skills and knowledge of low-income core residents and the skills and knowledge required by available jobs. The jobs available in the core--which contains not only two downtowns but the University of Minnesota, the Midway area, and the Capitol complex--are highly professional. As a result, jobs are typically filled by suburban commuters. This is one side of the story.

On the other hand, while the central cities still maintains the largest percentage of jobs, job growth in the central cities has virtually come to a halt. The region's economy is rapidly becoming suburbanized. The suburbs captured almost 98% percent of job growth in the 1980s--66% of which went to the fast growing outer-ring suburbs.⁵

⁴Metropolitan Council, *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Strain*, 1992, p. 18.

⁵Ibid., p. 18.

What's the Prescription?

If we are to strengthen our core, it is imperative that we focus on job training and placement programs for the unskilled inhabitants of the core. Moreover, we must start preparing "tomorrow's workers" today by providing quality educational opportunities for *all* children. Currently Minneapolis and St. Paul have the highest drop-out rates and lowest achievement scores of all school districts in the seven county region. This suggests that we need to focus on equalizing resources between suburban and urban schools, through some sort of revenue-sharing plan or suburban-urban transfer. As well, we could redirect funds earmarked for busing to improve neighborhood schools in the central cities.

It is also essential that we reverse the outflow of economic activity to the suburbs. Due to changes in technology and transportation structures, large firms no longer find it necessary to locate in the central cities. As a result, more and more companies are relocating to the suburbs. To prevent this flight of capital as well as to entice capital back into the cities, redevelopment grants and loans as well as tax exemptions--the distinguishing tool of urban enterprise zones--could be used. Beyond providing more job opportunities for the urban poor, an influx of capital into the central cities would help compensate for the deteriorating urban tax base.

What Critics Say

- Pumping money into the central cities is not the answer because it is prohibitively expensive. When poverty is so concentrated, using money to tackle the problem is like throwing it down a black hole because it is absorbed so quickly. Given the fact that many of these communities are in serious debt, it would take an impossible amount of money to revitalize their economies. It isn't realistic to believe that we can generate that much investment, particularly as it will largely have to come in the form of transfers from the suburbs.
- Creating "enterprise zones" is not an effective way to stimulate economic activity and create jobs in the urban core. Enterprise zones are not pro-labor or pro-community, but pro-profit. Jobs are not guaranteed to go to the urban poor; they can (and very often are) filled by suburban commuters. Moreover, the communities providing the tax-exemption must provide resources to compensate for the tax expenditure granted to the enterprise zone--either through increased tax burdens or decreased services.
- In order to create more regional stability, our communities need to be more economically and racially diverse. Building up infrastructure in the cities will do little good if our communities are still divided along and race and class lines.
- The only way to break down the social hierarchy that currently exists is to integrate. People of color need to enter into the economic and social mainstream where they will have more access to good jobs and good schools. Equally important, white folks must diversify and expand their understanding of people of color. If we continue to stay apart, the structure of the "racial other" goes unchecked.

- People need to have real choices about where they live. Since a majority of the new jobs are in the suburbs, and because we have limited mass transit in the region, there needs to be more low-income housing in the suburbs.
- Does not this program argue for more segregation by maintaining the separateness of racial communities. What are the consequences of this separateness. If separateness is a desirable outcome why is it that successful members of racial communities have chosen to leave their communities in the city for the suburbs, or other areas of the city.
- What are the consequences of continued concentrations of poverty.

that is,
economically
successful

"It is the Alexandrian solution: cut the knot, for there is no way to untie it."⁷

"The most troubling aspect of American social policy toward the poor in the late twentieth-century America is not how much it costs, but what it has bought."

--Charles Murray,
Losing Ground

The Culture of Poverty

Spending on social programs has steadily increased since America first began waging its "war on poverty." Public assistance costs were thirteen times higher in 1980 than they were in 1950 (in constant dollars). Education costs in 1980 were 24 times their 1950 cost, while housing costs were 129 times their 1950 cost. Overall, civilian social welfare costs increased by twenty times. During that same period, however, the United States population increased by one half.⁸ Clearly, a fundamental change took place in American social policy. But why hasn't this investment paid off?

As some suggest, this investment has not paid off because a certain class of people will always be poor regardless of their external circumstances. People are stuck in a self-perpetuating cycle of disadvantage because poverty traits are transmitted intergenerationally. Research shows that this "culture of poverty" transcends regional, rural/urban, and national differences, and that everywhere individuals stuck in this culture of poverty show "striking similarities in family structure, interpersonal relations, time orientation, value systems, and patterns of spending."⁹ This culture is characterized by things such as (1) hopelessness, indifference, alienation, apathy, and a lack of effective participation or integration into the social and economic fabric of society; (2) a present-tense time orientation; (3) cynicism and mistrust of those in authority; (4) strong feelings of marginality, helplessness, dependence, and inferiority; (5) lack of impulse control and the inability to defer gratification; (8) the absence of childhood as a specially protected and prolonged state, and thus early initiation into free sexual unions or consensual marriages; (9) a high incident in the abandonment of wives and children; (10) a matriarchal family structure; and (11) a minimum level of organization beyond the nuclear or extended family, a low level of community organization, and a strong sense of territoriality.¹⁰ This is not the same type of poverty found among those who have experienced the loss of a breadwinner, are involuntary unemployed, or are ill. The poverty that these people endure is typically not enduring and self-perpetuating but rather temporary. Approximately only 20% of those living below the poverty line are actually trapped in the culture of poverty, but indeed this 20% is largely why our

⁷Ibid pp 227-228.

⁸Ibid. p. 14. (From Office of Research and Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1981*. Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, 1982.)

⁹Karger, Howard Jacob and David Stoesz. *American Social Welfare Policy*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group, 1994.

¹⁰Ibid. p. 148.

increased investments have *not* paid off. An expensive program such as Section 8--one that costs approximately \$6000 per year per family--is a futile effort because those in the culture of poverty will remain poor whether they live in core of whether they live in the Eden Prairie. Improvements in environment will superficially affect their poverty, but only a change in values and family structure can help break the cycle of disadvantage.

The project in Chicago which was a result of a lawsuit against the housing

"The Poverty of Values"

History is replete with individuals who have climbed their way out of poverty. But what is it that allows some people to hurdle life's barriers while others consistently stumble?

General Colin Powell grew up in Harlem and the South Bronx, two of America's very poorest and crime-ridden neighborhoods. He was not an exceptionally gifted student nor a star athlete, but he was a hard-worker. In 1989, the 52-year-old was appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The youngest man and first African-American ever to hold that position, Colin Powell is greatly respected by the American public. When asked the secret of his success, Powell gives a definitive response: "My family." In his own words, "The worst kind of poverty is not economic poverty. It is the poverty of values."¹¹

Today, one out of every four children is born to a single mother. A third of these single mothers are teenagers.¹² Studies show that children in single-parent families are more likely to have problems. They tend to do more poorly in school and are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol. They typically earn less and are more likely to become single parents themselves. This breakdown of values is ultimately what causes the perpetuation of poverty. Children do not have role-models and thus do not learn how to be disciplined and self-sufficient.

Our current public policies and practices counteract traditional American values of hard-work, self-sufficiency, and strong, two-parent families. Aid to Families with Dependent Children, for example, allows a woman to have a child out of wedlock with no conceivable way of supporting that child. No-fault divorce laws are another example: by allowing couples to easily get divorces, they place a low value on family and marriage. Our current laws and practices need to be restructured to encourage two-parent families and family values.

The Impact on Schools

Perhaps nowhere has the break-down of the family structure had a stronger impact than on our schools. People often voice dissatisfaction with the public schools, but schools nowadays are asked to do the impossible: they are asked not only to educate children, but raise them, protect them, and discipline them too. Schools are asked to provide children with their breakfast and lunch, their after-school activities, their values and morals. Teachers are forced to discipline children who cause disruptions and create problems. They must spend extra time helping children with assignments who get no help at home. Where are the parents? When teachers are asked to take on so many other roles, it seriously diminishes their capacity to do their primary function: teach.

Authenticity of Chi. would seem to contradict this -- Contradict.

¹¹National Issues Forums. *The Troubled American Family*. 1995. p. 7.

¹²Ibid. p. 7.

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Not ironically, it is in the best schools that we see the most two-parent families. In these schools, teachers are free to teach without constantly having to deal with disruptions and incomplete assignments. Indeed, many studies have found that it is not the amount of money that a school spends that has the greatest impact on educational achievement, but rather the socioeconomic make-up of the students. In 1964, John Hopkins sociologist James Coleman conducted an extensive study of equality of educational opportunity in America. When measured by the "input" criteria, Coleman found that differences in the quality of schools was not very closely related to differences in student achievement. Instead, he found social class mix to be the crucial factor in explaining differences in achievement. Children from low socioeconomic backgrounds--regardless of race--improved when studying along side of children from a mixture of *social* classes. This may be because children from middle- and upper-class families typically have a different values system and receive discipline and instruction at home. The crucial point, according to Coleman, is that "schools have little influence on a youngster's achievement that is independent of his social, economic, and cultural background."¹³ Our own experience in the Twin Cities seems to confirm Coleman's point. While the Minneapolis school district is the highest spending district in the region, it also has the lowest achievement rates (as measured by the Minnesota Basic Skills Tests). It also has more children living with only one parent (46.2%) than with two parents (42.5%).¹⁴

Using Market Mechanisms to Improve Opportunities

Despite the best of intentions, government intervention in markets such as education and housing has produced less-than-desired results and numerous unintended consequences. Public housing stands out as one infamous example. While the original housing constructed under the Housing Act of 1949 consisted predominantly of low-rise, two- and three-story apartment buildings, and while the first tenants of public housing apartments were predominantly young, employed, working-class families, beginning in the mid-1950s, public housing underwent a dramatic shift. Higher urban land costs led to more and more high-rise buildings. Architectural designs took little account of the needs of families with children (apartments had few bedrooms and little recreational space). Municipal housing authorities and elected officials decided to concentrate the buildings. In some instances, design standards were even lowered to make public housing less attractive to force more reliance on the public sector.¹⁵ Eventually, large numbers of poor families began to crowd into the projects. In many communities, "the projects" became a code for poverty, crime, and despair. Today, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is thought by many to be the largest slum-lord in the country.

Public education stands out in the mind of many as another bureaucratic failure. Again, despite the best intentions, political institutions burden schools with excessive bureaucratic redtape, inhibit effective organization, stifle innovation and flexibility, and thereby impede student achievement. People nowadays consider private schools to be a beacon of excellence.

¹³ Fesconi, Jr. Charles A. and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr. *Education For Whom?* NY: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1974. p. 23.

¹⁴ The Urban Coalition. *Minneapolis Public School Neighborhood Student Data, 1995-96*. p. 42.

¹⁵ Egan, John, et al. *Housing and Public Policy: A Role for Mediating Structures*. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1981. p. 16.

The main difference, many contend, is that private schools maintain a safe and disciplined environment in which people can learn, and that teachers engage parents more fully in their children's education.

From an institutional perspective, however, private schools are successful for a different reason. They are successful because the market mechanism of competition ensures that parents have more control than they do in public schools. Private schools have the incentive to please their "customers" and respond to their wants and needs lest they should take their "business" elsewhere. In contrast, public schools are democratically governed; they are represented by varied interests all vying for control over and within the system. A single school is governed by a huge and heterogeneous constituency comprised of politicians, administrators, teachers, and various groups at all levels. Parents and students are but a small part of this constituency. And because political resources are distributed unequally and the interests of the politically powerful do not always, if even occasionally, parallel the interests of the average citizen, parents wants and needs are often considered last. Low-income families are particularly disempowered. While wealthy parents might in fact choose to remove their children from public schools and send them to private schools, or they perhaps might even choose to move to a different neighborhood, poor families have no such recourse. Because of the steep financial costs of alternatives, public schools can attract and keep students without being particularly good at educating them.

These two anecdotes on housing and education suggest that we must reverse the policies of the last fifty years. The government has grown steadily larger and more intrusive, spending more and more money to tackle problems that simply cannot be solved with money. To avoid the mistakes of the past, we need policies that encourage self-sufficiency and maximize individual choice. Recognizing that many jobs today do not pay livable wages, it may be an appropriate policy for the government to subsidize low-income families with vouchers for housing and education, but that is where government intervention should end. The market should then take over. For example, it is inefficient and intrusive for governments to mandate "fair share" housing policies. There will obviously be a greater demand for low-income housing in some areas than in others, and the market is by far more accurate and efficient in measuring that demand than the government. Where there is sufficient demand, suppliers will appear. Individuals who are motivated and responsible will take advantage of the opportunities created through voucher systems, but it is otherwise inappropriate and unnatural (and expensive) for the government to try and help those who do not want to be helped and who are unwilling to "help themselves."

What Critics Say

- Less than half of the jobs in Minnesota pay a livable wage. Sixty-one percent of Minnesota's 85,348 families in poverty have at least one person in the work force. Approximately 400,000 Minnesotans lack health coverage--72% of which are in the work force.¹⁶ If we want to create less dependency on the government and more dependency on the market and on the individual, we have to create a market system which allows responsible people to survive.
- Discrimination remains a significant barrier for people of color, no matter how "responsible" they are.
- Poor people do not have the time or money to lobby for their interests and rights. The wealthy, on the other hand, abuse their power and continue to get richer at the expense of the poor. The new Twins stadium is one example of how the needs and wants of the wealthy are considered above those of the poor.
- Everyone in this country receives government benefits of some sort. Whether it is in the form of a check or a tax deduction is immaterial. In fact, the federal government spends \$66 billion a year on mortgage-interest and property tax deductions for homeowners--two-thirds of which goes to families with incomes over \$75,000.¹⁷ This is more than *four times* as much as is spent on low-income housing programs.
- The poor will always be with us; a reserve labor pool is essential to capitalism. The chief function of social programs is to regulate labor. When mass unemployment leads to outbreaks of turmoil, relief programs are initiated or expanded to absorb/control the turmoil and restore order. As turmoil subsides or as labor is needed, the relief programs contract, expelling those who are needed back into the labor market. Responsibility has nothing to do with it.
- The problem with social welfare policies in this country is not that we've done too much--creating dependency--but that we've done too little. The actual amount spent on programs like AFDC is very small. If we truly want to help people get back on their feet again, we need to invest more in these programs.
- The *laissez-faire* approach of the last part of the narrative does not reflect the reason people have moved to the suburbs. E.g. Moore Grove. Although a private developer may want to construct low to moderate income housing, the local government may not permit such construction. There does need to be a balance b/w public and private, but complete abdication of responsibility is also inappropriate.

¹⁶ United Way of Minneapolis Area. The Face of the Twin Cities: Another Look. 1995. p. 9.

¹⁷ DeParle, Jason. The Year that Housing Died. The New York Times Magazine. 20 October 1996. p. 53.

Mobility: Creating Choices

No Turning Back?

*"Forty percent of America's cities are programmed to fail. Gary, Camden, and East St. Louis are already clinically dead. Bridgeport, Newark, Hartford, Cleveland, and Detroit are on life support systems. New York, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, and Philadelphia are sinking. Through seemingly healthy, Boston, Minneapolis, and Atlanta are already infected."*¹

David Rusk, urban policy expert and author of Cities Without Suburbs, visited the Twin Cities a few years ago. He warned that Minneapolis and St. Paul were headed down the same one-way track that cities like Detroit and Cleveland have already traveled. The basic pattern remains the same: poverty concentrates in the core, middle class flight accelerates, and the core is left with a higher percentage of poor families but less resources to meet their needs. As a result, we end up with a polarization of the region along race and class lines.

"Inelastic" cities that are unable to expand their city limits are programmed to fail, according to Rusk, because they become "their own suburbs' poorhouse."² For many reasons -- a lack of affordable housing in the suburbs, limited mass transit in the region, discrimination in lending and realty markets, myopic city politics, racism -- low-income families in the Twin Cities have remained trapped within city limits, and largely, within certain neighborhoods. When poverty is concentrated, it exacerbates a myriad of other problems: poor schools, crime, unemployment, drugs, dependency, and illegitimacy. The most effective solution is simply to get people out of the ghettos and into neighborhoods with good schools and job opportunities.

Poor Communities = Poor Schools

Education is typically viewed as the path to self-sufficiency. History is rife with examples of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who pulled themselves up "by the bootstraps" and out of poverty. Clarence Thomas and Colin Powell -- prominent, successful, national figures. Through hard work and dedication, these two individuals defied the odds. But unfortunately, those odds are hard to beat. These men are statistical anomalies. The reality is that for children who grow up in poor families and live in poor communities, the odds of escaping those deprivations are infinitesimal. A school may be a child's only hope for a transcendent future, and when that school is overcrowded, impersonal, and gray as well, hope fades fast. At the very minimum, then, we must assure that children have access to good schools.

In Minnesota, many options currently allow families to choose their school. The "open enrollment" option, for example, allows students aged 5 to 18 to transfer to public schools outside of their residential district unless the receiving district does not have room or the transfer will have a negative impact on desegregation efforts. Currently less than 2% of all students take advantage of this option.³ A major obstacle for poor families, however, is the fact that transportation is not provided for students using the open enrollment option. If the family does not have a car, and because public transportation is not available to all areas within the suburbs, choices are effectively limited. Moreover, some parents may be unwilling or unable to invest the time and money seeking

¹ Rusk, David. "Without Urban-Suburban Unity, Cities Future Looks Bleak." Pioneer Press, 10 June 1994.

² Ibid.

³ The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. School Choice. Princeton, NJ. The Carnegie Foundation, 1992.

out a quality school for their child. As a result, transportation subsidies and extensive outreach programs are vital if school choice programs are to provide options to the families who need them most. *Additionally, because tax dollars follow the student their current district may not be forthcoming with information regarding the program.*

Busing, of course, is another way in which we have traditionally attempted to provide low-income and minority students more opportunities in education. For more than 30 years now, cities across America have engaged in extensive busing efforts to create more culturally and economically diverse classrooms. Some people feel the results have been costly and largely ineffective, but a significant number of people still express strong support for desegregated schools. Research has shown that desegregation has modest positive effects on the achievement of black students, while having no negative affect on white student achievement.⁴ Furthermore, students attending integrated schools have a better chance of attending selective colleges, majoring in technical fields, and working/living in integrated settings.⁵ And while raising the achievement of children of color is important, equally important is how children are socialized to become the next generation of adults. Thus even if no gains in achievement were evident, one might still argue that busing is a worthwhile endeavor.

Desegregation proponents argue that the failure of desegregation-based education strategies to produce better academic results, particularly in regard to students of color, comes from its incompleteness. For example, we haven't done enough in our schools to make students of color feel welcomed and valued. There is a lack of diversity among the teaching staff in the region, and staff development efforts to help all staff develop skills, knowledge, and strategies to work with students from various cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds have not been made. Moreover, even though schools may be desegregated, classrooms often are not. Once desegregated by school, children are often "re-segregated" by a tracking system that assigns minority children to the least challenging, least interesting classes, often taught by the least experienced or least motivated teachers. In other words, we should actually *try* busing before we condemn it.

Overall, however, a child's educational opportunities and achievement depends on the entire spectrum of resources available through their *whole* environment: home, school, and neighborhood. How they speak and think, how they interact with others, their goals and dreams ... these things depend on where a child lives, and thus, how he or she sees the world. Is it hopeful and bright? Is it dangerous and threatening? Is it gray and sad? Even if one part of a child's spectrum thrives, it will, on average, not be sufficient to counter the impacts of the other two. This is not to say, of course, that we should abandon short-term desegregation strategies such as busing, but if we are ever going to make *real* changes, we will need to "exchange rose-colored glasses for binoculars and move from the false hope of a quick fix to slow but steady improvements in the long term."⁶ That is to say, if we want desegregated schools, we need desegregated neighborhoods.

Barriers to Choice

The Twin Cities economy is increasingly becoming suburbanized. The region gained 225,000 new jobs in the 1980s, only 5,400 of which went to the central cities. As a result, there is a significant spatial mismatch between those who need the jobs and where the jobs are actually located. More than one in four households in the core lack a vehicle, making it largely impossible for low-income families to take advantage of job opportunities in the suburbs. For minorities, the percentages are substantially higher: 47% of African-American households, 56% of Native

⁴ Minneapolis Public Schools, *Quality Schools Report*, 17 April 1993, p. 24.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 24.

⁶ O'Connor, Debra, *Promises Unfulfilled*, St. Paul Pioneer Press, 11 May 1995, p. 10A.

American households, and 36% of Asian households lack a vehicle.⁷ Bus routes do serve the developing suburbs but only go to a limited number of locations and with much less frequency. Increasingly, the distance between job locations and people's homes is a major barrier of economic opportunity.

Perhaps the biggest barrier to low-income families, however, is the lack of affordable housing in the suburbs. Seventy-one percent of the rental units affordable to very low-income renters⁸ and nearly two-thirds of the homes valued at \$60,000 or less were located in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Furthermore, the central city and the inner-ring suburbs possess a majority of the region's subsidized housing. While the central cities' share of all subsidized housing in the region has declined from 90% in the early 1970s to 65% today, the fact remains that low-income families still have a limited number of choices of where to live.⁹

There are many reasons why there is a shortage of affordable housing in the suburbs. Perhaps the biggest reason: zoning laws that prohibit the construction of low- and middle-income housing. Because so many vital services (such as education) are funded through property taxes, municipalities have an incentive to keep low-cost developments out of their communities. "Exclusionary zoning" occurs when municipalities increase the required standards of housing quality beyond those necessary for health and safety standards. Examples include specifications of minimum square footage for new homes and lots, prohibitions on multi-family housing units, maximum densities limitations, and garage requirements. For example, while the Metropolitan Council's Advisory Standard for minimum lot size (for single family housing) is 7,500 square feet, Minnetonka has a minimum lot size of 22,000 square feet. As well, Lakeville requires that each single family site provide space for a three-car garage regardless of whether the garage is constructed.¹⁰ Though land costs, building costs, and utility connection costs, these requirements contribute significantly to the cost of a house.

Housing is a basic human need that changes with people's age and economic condition. Over their life span, people's needs change in respect to housing type, size, price, and location. As a result, exclusionary zoning not only keeps people out of communities, it actually "squeezes" established community members out as their circumstances or needs change. For example, when people retire and suddenly find themselves on fixed budgets, they may have to leave the community altogether if they cannot find housing which meets their needs. Hence it is not just low-wage workers who need housing options, but the elderly, young people such as students, and people going through life changes, such as women who become single moms after a divorce.

Other barriers for low-income and minority households include discrimination in lending markets. "Redlining," or the refusal by banks or companies to issue loans or insurance on property in certain neighborhoods, occurs quite frequently. The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston claims that people of color are sixty percent more like to be rejected for loans for home purchase, improvement, or refinancing than similarly situated white applicants (controlling for financial, employment and neighborhood characteristics).¹¹ The incidence of racial discrimination specifically in the Twin Cities home mortgage lending market is well documented. Recent statistical analysis found that approximately 70% of the disparity between home mortgage loans rejection

⁷ Metropolitan Council, Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress, 18 November 1992, p. 20

⁸ Low income renters are those at 30% of the median income.

⁹ *Ibid* p. 1-2.

¹⁰ Lukermann, Barbara and Michael Kane, Land Use Practices: Exclusionary Zoning, de Facto or de Jure? Center For Urban and Regional Affairs, p. 17-18.

¹¹ The Institute on Race and Poverty, Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation, (Executive Summary), 1996, p. 6.

rates of nonwhites and whites is due to the unequal treatment of similarly qualified loan applicants.¹²

Discrimination in the rental market is also severe. A review of seventy-one fair housing audits conducted in cities across the nation throughout the 1980s found that blacks seeking homes for sale encountered a 20% chance of discrimination (on average) while blacks seeking rental units faced a 50% chance of discrimination.¹³ Similar discrimination exists for Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. A recent study conducted by the Minnesota Fair Housing Center on the rental practice in two Minneapolis Communities found the incidence of discrimination to be even higher. The MFHC conducted a series of survey tests in the Northeast and Southwest neighborhoods, and found that a total of 72.2% of the cases received different treatment based on race, family status, or public assistance status. In 55.5% of the survey tests, applicants received less favorable treatment based on race.¹⁴ There was a range of discriminatory behavior uncovered: more information was offered to white testers than testers of color, white testers were encourage to fill out applications right away while testers of color were not encouraged to do so, agents not showing up for testers of color, units being unavailable for testers of color but available for white testers, testers of color being shown inferior units, and more burdensome terms and conditions for testers of color.¹⁵

What's the Prescription? *David?*

To prevent local governments from acting like monopolies, housing policies should be made at least in part on a regional level. A national myth holds that small government is better than big government. But according to Dean Rusk, our national reality is that small governments act to exclude racial and economic groups. "Broad-based government can promote diversity. In short, multiple, independent suburbs are machines to keep poor blacks and Latinos trapped in inner cities away from middle class America."¹⁶ The power now held by dozens of independent, local governments should be placed in the hands of an effective, accountable, elected metropolitan government.

At the very least, however, suburbs need to accept their "fair share" of responsibility for creating affordable housing. It is to their own benefit to provide life-cycle housing in a range of types and prices for their own community members as well as individuals wanting to re-locate closer to job opportunities. To prevent creating new pockets of poverty in the suburbs, low-income housing should be scattered throughout neighborhoods and communities. When poverty is not concentrated, it tends to mitigate many of the other problems often associated with poverty, such as crime and declining property values. In order to get suburbs to comply, special incentives may be needed. If tax incentives are not strong enough, mandatory policies with penalties for noncompliance could be adopted.

¹²The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation. 1996. p. 54. (From Tze Chan and Samuel L. Myers, Jr., "Racial Discrimination in Housing Markets: Accounting for Credit Risk," *Social Science Quarterly*, Volume 76, No. 3, September 1995 and *Disparities in Mortgage Lending in the Upper Midwest Summary of the Results Using 1992 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data*.)

¹³The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation. 1996. p. 35.

¹⁴Minnesota Fair Housing Center. *Housing Discrimination: A Report on the Rental Practices in Two Minneapolis Communities*. December 1996. p. 9.

¹⁵Minnesota Fair Housing Center. *Housing Discrimination: A Report on the Rental Practices in Two Minneapolis Communities*. December 1996. p. 10.

¹⁶Rusk, Dean. *Without Urban-Suburban Unity, Cities Future Looks Bleak*, Pioneer Press, 10 June 1994.

Incentives directly to developers are another possible option. The state of Massachusetts, for example, adopted guidelines in 1969 requiring local governments to take regional needs into effect in the implementation of local planning and development standards in its "Anti-Snob Zoning Law." The law allows developers of projects that are at least 30 percent low-income affordable to bypass local planning commissions in securing permits. Developers have won most of the appeals filed as a result of the law, and some 20,000 units of affordable housing have been created.¹⁷ Massachusetts also withholds federal and state assistance grants from municipalities that implement exclusionary zoning ordinances or unreasonable restrictions on private developments of low-income housing.¹⁸

Another possibility includes replacing exclusionary zoning with "inclusionary" zoning. Density bonuses and mandatory set-asides are two of the main instruments of inclusionary zoning. Density bonuses increase the permitted density of a development as the amount of affordable housing increases. Mandatory set-asides require developers to reserve a certain portion of units in each development for low- or moderate-income residents.¹⁹

On the flip side, the government needs to expand voucher programs and lending programs to enhance the purchasing power of low-income households. As well, the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws is critical. Housing audits, such as the one recently conducted by the MFHC, is one important and relatively inexpensive method of checking discrimination in the housing market. Courts rely on evidence gathered in such tests to determine if violations of the fair housing laws have occurred. An ongoing, comprehensive program of random testing with penalties for violators ought to be enacted.

Finally, community outreach efforts should be made to integrate new residents and make them feel a part of the community. Home-improvement training programs and seminars could be implemented to help new residents maintain their property. Mentoring programs would help the new residents learn what healthy communities demand in terms of values and responsibilities.

Gatreaux Mobility

Isn't one concern w/ Gatreaux that the participants are highly screened. It's a very selective process to get into the program. One consequence is the program is largely to the relative success of a plan in Chicago that grew out of a 1966 lawsuit. Residents of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)--led by Dorothy Gautreaux--charged that the CHA reinforced segregation by locating nearly all public housing in overwhelmingly African American neighborhoods. The plaintiffs successfully sued to force HUD and the CHA to fund a rent-subsidy voucher program throughout the six-county Chicago area.

The Gatreaux Assisted Housing Program is the oldest and most renowned of the special mobility programs. Northwestern University sociologist James Rosenbaum and his colleagues found that improvements in economic outcomes for parents and educational outcomes for children are associated with enhanced opportunities in neighborhoods less severely impacted by poverty. Specifically, they found that children who had grown up in the suburbs were more likely to have completed high school, attended college, be employed, and earn higher wages.

Minneapolis, St. Paul, and a number of inner-ring suburbs already meet or exceed their share of affordable housing unit in the metropolitan area. Other communities, however, fall

¹⁷ The Institute on Race and Poverty, Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education, and Persistent Segregation, 1996, p. 34 (From Sylvia Lewis, "A Parallel Experience," in *Planning* 58 (May 1992): 14)

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35. (From Justin D. Cummin, *Recasting the Share: Toward Housing Law and Principled Social Policy*,

54 *Law and Ineq.* J. 339, 364, 1996.)

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

The other is the remaining concentration of non-candidates in the old neighborhood.

substantially short. The lack of affordable housing in the suburbs is one of the largest barriers to economic opportunity faced by low-income households.

What is "affordable housing"?

Under standards established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, housing is classified as "affordable" if it consumes no more than 30% of a household's income.²⁰ Housing that exceeds 50% of income is defined as a severe cost burden. According to the 1990 Census, the region faces a serious need for affordable housing. There is a current shortage of over 36,800 units which would be considered affordable to low-income renters at the 30% benchmark. This shortage may even be understated as it fails to consider the current mismatch between low-income households and affordable housing units. Many of the units deemed affordable for low-income households are actually occupied by households with higher incomes. As a result, large percentages of the Minneapolis and St. Paul poor face severe housing cost burdens. In 1990, 76% of the region's low-income renters (84,000 households) paid 30% or more of their income on rent, while 43% of these low-income households (48,000) paid over 50% of their income on rent.²¹

While the central cities still has the largest concentration of jobs, the fast-growing suburbs captured two-thirds of net-job growth in the 1980s. This trend is projected to continue on into the next decade.

Critics Say

- "The solution to pollution is not dilution." It is better to help people where they are than disperse poverty into other communities. Instead of making other communities worse, we need to clean up the bad neighborhoods. (An influx of low-income families could lead to increased crime in the suburbs. As well, low-income home-owners and tenants of low-income housing projects who do not maintain their property will lower surrounding property values.)
- People move to the suburbs to escape crime and bad schools. It is not fair or realistic to expect suburban residents to take these problems on again.
- "Transplanted" low-income families may not share the same values as existing residents, as a result, they may feel alienated and cause problems.
- Efforts to desegregate neighborhoods and schools with high proportions of minorities assume that it is better to live and go to school in majority white settings. This is disrespectful of the strengths of communities of color. Furthermore, people of color need to remain together in order to preserve their culture and maintain their political representation.
- "Mobility" may heighten racial tensions and lead to more racist encounters and attacks. Public transportation in suburbs does not provide 24 hour, 7 day-a-week service. The suburbs are not geared for families without vehicles.
- Dispersing poverty may help the few, token families who are lucky enough to escape the ghettos, but it does little for the people, schools, and deteriorated neighborhoods that are left behind. Even under the most renowned mobility program of all, the Gautreaux program in

²⁰Until 1981, housing was considered affordable by HUD if it consumed no more than 25% of assisted household income. This benchmark was raised to 30% under federal budget reductions in 1981.

²¹Metropolitan Council, Housing Policies for the 1990s, February 1994, p. 2.

FACSIMILE**DATE:** 2-23-97**TO:** Dick Little**Number of Pages:** 3**FROM:** Ruth Anne Olson
Phone: 724-0979
Fax: 724-8848
E-Mail: olson248@tc.umn.edu

If not all pages are received, please call 724-0979.

Dick ...

Thanks for the opportunity to look over the discussion guide. I regret deeply that I will be out of town and unable to attend the review meeting on Wednesday. I'm confident that I would learn much from other people's experience and ideas. And my suggestions would be much better communicated in dialogue, rather than through this limited one-sided presentation on paper.

I'll do the best I can with the limited time that I can give to this at the moment. I'll focus on two major themes plus a couple of small details.

First, I'm concerned that the very nature of this document defines who will be heard in these discussions.

This document is very academic and linear in its argument and presentation. It's technical, it's long and its format (at least in this draft form) provides little relief from the complexity of information trying to be relayed. Put boldly, this presentation would be a significant turn-off to virtually all the people that I would think of inviting to a community circle.

On one simple level, it would certainly exclude people who are not fully-fluent in written English including *lots* of folks who are among our most-important resources in understanding these issues.

Maybe harder to understand is the notion that it also stands out as being a very "cultural" document -- the kind of thing that would say immediately to many of my colleagues that community circles are a "white" thing. White culture is setting the parameters. We'll invite others in as participants or

Forum afterward

- some way for "reporting out" so stakeholders can hear what ideas are being generated → connection between citizens & leaders.

- Smattering of things people can do.

Matrix - too rigid?

Study circle → how you might want to organize your sessions (forward)

— they decide

Q's

- What perspectives are missing?
- What ideas should be included?

What points do you agree with / what don't you agree with?

Confronting racism

- race relations high on agenda
- part of 1 & 3 or whole other perspective

→ systemic & institutional racism

guests in this conversation, but our culture -- our traditional ways of doing things -- form the rules of the discussion.

Let me be clear that this issue has nothing to do with education level or ability, for the people I'm thinking about would have no trouble reading and understanding the document. But it has everything to do with authentic diversity, which I think you hope to have at the heart of the community circles. It's the same issue that prevents schools and lots of other organizations from engaging parents or other people of color beyond those who are willing (and good at) assuming our white academic rules.

This is very hard -- maybe impossible -- to explain in writing, but I think the issue I'm trying to raise has everything to do with *vision*. If these community circles were all you want them to be, then who would be around the table? What experience would they bring? How would they be engaged? What would people learn from each other? In what ways would people leave the conversations different from how they came into it? I don't in any way mean to be disrespectful of the work and reflective thinking that have gone into this document. In fact, I mean to pay the effort the highest compliment, by saying that I think that it can be more than it is. And I think the way to get from here to there is by reflecting back on the vision that underlies this work, and then to consider ways to provide information that will support that vision.

I find all of the diagnostic choices to be incomplete, as none gives a strong presentation of the fundamental problems *within* schools that have to be addressed.

As I read the document, I found that I might lean toward various parts of each of the three arguments, but my own experience in schools tells me that none of the three is going to work unless the fundamental problems of the educational institutions themselves are solved.

Again, I feel the need to be bold.... With very few exceptions, the daily school experience of students of color is appalling. Their language, history, communities, values and cultures are most-often ignored and too-often demeaned and ridiculed. And analysis shows that, while it is true that indicators of failure (dropout rates, achievement scores etc.) are linked to income, they are also linked to race -- i.e. even *within* income levels. a significant gap exists based on race and ethnicity.

It is true, of course, that building community supports (healthy families, living wages, decent housing, etc.) -- whether through market mechanisms, choice or enrichment -- would make a significant difference in the future of these students. But until the school experience itself is changed, students of color will fail.

* framework set?

~~Study circles~~

Study circles allow people to start where they are - foundation
How can people get involved? Where can they contribute?

Questions → to lead people; make a bridge between
personal experience & larger picture.

+ how things have changed since their parents were their age?

+ how affect me towards how affect everyone

Last session:

What can people do - people coming from different perspectives.
Define areas where ~~more~~ more work needs to be done.

Where^{is} the community? Where ~~are~~ can we go?

Help citizens figure

- we need to enlarge the pool of people who are
willing to take on these issues themselves.

"laundry list" of projects

- as individuals
- as neighborhoods / small groups
- as organizations

Within the 20+ pages of the discussion guide, I find a brief two-sentence nod toward this issue. But it deserves a full exposition -- an understanding and presentation of the wealth of study and writing that is as fundamental to understanding education and desegregation as is housing, busing and job development.

I would urge clarity around two particular issues -- black people as one segment of local communities of color and the distinction between desegregation and integration.

Much of the document talks about communities of color writ large, i.e. African American, American Indian Southeast Asian and Hispanic/Latino. But in other places, it mentions only blacks (e.g. page 5) as if all of this is really a black/white issue. Since Minnesota's current and proposed desegregation rules have profound implications for *all* students of color (not just black), any diminishment of the importance for some (as in "blacks and *other minorities*") is, understandably resented. Also, by the way, notice the use of "black hole" on page 9 -- an undesirable reference to "black" as being useless, wasteful, hopeless etc.

Also, the report reflects some uncertainty about the relationship/differences between *desegregation* and *integration*. A clarity of definition and intent would be helpful.

Finally, I apologize for the boldness and starkness of saying all this in writing.

I feel a great danger in putting all of this in writing. The *content* is the same as I would contribute to a discussion, but the *context* is very different and more-than-a-bit uncomfortable for me. To try to bring that context to my writing would require *much* more time than I have, and the potential for being misunderstood by trying to say too much too quickly is huge.

As I said before, I don't in any way mean to be disrespectful in what I've written here. I only ask that you consider it and draw from it what makes sense. Maybe dialogue will be possible in the future.

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MEMORANDUM

To: Dick Little
Christy Greenwalt
From: Jim Hilbert
Date: 2/26/97
RE: Discussion Guide

You've obviously put a lot of hard work into this project which I appreciate. I think you have done a fairly thorough job of spelling out different approaches to these issues. I offer the following comments as possible considerations for edits. I will break down most of my comments by page.

P1: The very beginning ought to include a discussion on segregation., the fact that poverty is different for people of color than it is for whites, and the information that is cited later in the piece on inequities (jobs, income, etc.). I would suggest spelling out the entire problem at the start. This would naturally include an explanation of how segregated our community is, the reality that most people of color in poverty tend to be concentrated whereas whites in poverty tend to be dispersed, and factoids about income gaps, poverty rates, etc. which appear later in the guide. I would also make a case that housing and education are linked, and that is why we are discussing these two phenomena in particular and in conjunction.

P2: There are a whole host of disparities by race when it comes to education that should be included such as suspension rates, drop-out rates, etc. Also, segregation at some of the cities' schools is in the high nineties. Many Mpls schools were in violation of the 15% rule before they received their waiver from the State Board of Education. With respect to the "Mandate" section, I would definitively broaden our value of education to include issues of democracy and well-educated citizens (more than job stuff). I would also mention that in Minnesota, education is a fundamental right.

P4: I think the real issue for this "choice" shouldn't be couched in separate but equal language, but in terms of something like is it possible for communities of color to get resources and maintain solidarity? The issue is really that overused phrase why do black kids have to sit next to white kids to get an education? Integration, under this choice, is based on complete acceptance of the premise that in order to have a functional education or living situation, blacks must move into a white neighborhood or send their children to a white school. This

reinforces the racist presumption (among blacks and whites) the idea that white is automatically superior and black is by definition inferior. In this choice, integration strengthens the white racial hierarchy. Also, you many have already, but I would check that quote with Sharon in the second to last paragraph.

P5: First paragraph: I think it is a stretch to claim that desegregation in education has been "largely ineffective." Also (lower in the page), although intuitively appealing, there is no demonstrated evidence that proximity to schools influences parental involvement.

P7: Explain intersection of race and poverty. This gets back to the issue of how poverty is different for people of color and whites. Also, I would consider moving the importance of the city to the suburbs to the beginning. And I would move the stats on p7 and p8 to the beginning as well.

P9: The discussion of why jobs leave the urban core is almost too purified. The reality is that these job sites leave with white flight to accommodate white fears of the inner city typically. They also don't locate in the inner city because there are so many brownfields which cost money to clean. Further, taxes and other fees are higher in the city because the city is desperate to raise money. It is essentially suffering from municipal overburden from all the attendant effects of segregation and the concentration of poverty. I would also change "expensive" in your first bullet point to "inefficient."

P11: I would frame this issue with a more moderate tone and less critically. You might consider putting your market mechanism section first. As it stands, you are beginning this option with a critique of the liberal prescription. Why not begin with social problems are better answered through the speedier and more creative and flexible work of capitalism than they ever will be through bureaucratic government?

P16: I would add two more bullets -- Most people on welfare are there only for the short term; and welfare did show successes with its highest priority, the elderly.

P17: Small point -- David Rusk was here last spring, too, at an Institute conference. Also, I would not mention Thomas and Powell as exceptions to the program; they were large benefactors of affirmative action, which arguably remains a major tenet to mobility strategies.

P18: This speaks to a larger issue throughout the piece, but in the first full paragraph, there is much better information that is more positive than the Minneapolis Public Schools cite. James Rosenthal's important research on Gatreux comes to mind.

General tidbits: I would caution again about apparent bias toward mobility. Even the title to the section is in larger print and is the only section that opens with a quote. I hate to keep harping on this point, but it goes to the issue of legitimacy. The other major issue is the citing. For instance, in choice #2, your opening cite is Charles Murray is brings with him a lot of political baggage. You might also want to include something by more respected conservatives like Christopher Jencks, Paul Peterson, and David Armour. If there is time, I would add some more cites. If you need some suggestions, let me know. Also, it might be useful to add a disclaimer that setting up three specific "choices" may create false dichotomies, but it serves a useful purpose for beginning the discussion.

One last tiny thing -- David instead of Dean Rusk

JEREMY IGGORS'
COMMENTS

FAX COVER SHEET

Tuesday, February 04, 1997 11:16:11 AM

To: Dick Little
At: EHEP
Fax #: 871-8984

From:
Fax: 2 pages and a cover page.

Dear Dick and Kristy,

Here are my comments on the discussion guide:

The first thing that you need is a clear statement of the problem to be solved. It sounds like that may be part of what Darcy is going to write, but it should be right up front, at the start of the discussion guide. Maybe the statement of the problem could be something like:

"What can we do to overcome the increasing racial and economic polarization of our community?"

But if that is the problem you are trying to address, then the diagnoses will have to be substantially rewritten, since they address a different question.

I hate to sound like a broken record, but I don't think you are going to get a very good - or even honest - representation of the conservative point of view without talking to some of those guys, and when the time comes for the study circles to meet, I don't think very many of them are going to show up. If you really believe in dialogue, it has to start with the framing of the discussion.

I don't want to reconstruct the conservative points of view on these issues, and it would be a mistake to use the following as a replacement for actually talking to somebody like Mitch Perlstein, but they might make some of the following arguments:

* They might say that: Liberal welfare policies are responsible for much of the polarization. (Supposedly, years ago, Mpls. and St. Paul city officials fought to keep most of the Section 8 federal funds in their cities rather than sharing it with the suburbs.)

 * They might say that: Stratification isn't bad, as long as there is mobility. And there is more mobility than liberals or progressives admit.

* They might say that: Insulating people against risk isn't the issue; it's programs that encourage dependency and/or irresponsible behavior.

 * They might say that: we need to identify, articulate and reward certain values, and make moral judgments about people who fail to conform to them.

 * They might say that: government regulations get in the way of small-scale entrepreneurship, and that we can reduce inequality if government gets out of the way - i.e. reduces regulatory barriers.

 * They might talk about social engineering as an infringement on

personal choice.

I created a discussion guide a couple of years ago that discussed some of these issues. If I can still find a copy, I will fax it to you from the office today.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Iggers

| | CHOICE #1 | CHOICE #2 | CHOICE #3 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | ENRICHMENT: HELPING BUILD COMMUNITIES | PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: A RETURN TO TRADITIONAL VALUES | MOBILITY: CREATING CHOICES |
| What's the diagnosis? * | <p>*Poverty is the result of an unequal distribution of resources. There is a spatial mismatch between jobs and workers, and jobs do not pay livable wages or provide adequate benefits. Educational opportunities differ for wealthy children and poor children. Neighborhoods are decaying because individuals do not have enough resources to contribute to their upkeep.</p> | <p>* Poverty is the result of a breakdown of traditional values. Beneficent welfare programs insulate people against risks essential to capitalism and promote dependency.</p> | <p>*Poverty isn't the problem as much as the concentration of poverty. When poverty is concentrated, it perpetuates a myriad of other social problems--disinvestment in neighborhoods and tax-base erosion, poor schools, crime, and racial tensions. <i>what are the barriers - social, cultural, economic that produce a concentration of pov.?</i></p> |
| What should be done? | <p>*Train and improve the skills of residents of low-income neighborhoods in the region's core in order to create a work force whose skills match the requirements of new jobs.</p> <p>*Stimulate job growth in the central cities and in areas where there is a mismatch of jobs to the workforce.</p> <p>*Promote maintenance and rehabilitation of older housing to preserve vital healthy neighborhoods, but remove and replace dilapidated housing with other uses in order to start breaking up concentrations of low-income housing.</p> <p>*Use money previously earmarked for busing to enrich neighborhood schools.</p> <p>*Increase transportation services so individuals who live in the city can reach jobs in the suburbs.</p> | <p>* The government should stay out of the business of charity. We need to revitalize mediating structures such as neighborhoods, churches, and voluntary associations.</p> <p>*The government needs to alter patterns of reward to favor work over leisure and investment over consumption.</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> | <p>*Create a regional housing policy so that local governments cannot act like monopolists.</p> <p>*Expand housing choices in the developing suburbs to provide life-cycle housing in a range of types and prices. The majority of new jobs have been created in the suburbs, and without adequate transportation in the Twin Cities area, people need to live near to where they work.</p> <p>*The government needs to expand voucher programs as well as loan programs to enhance the buying power of low-income households.</p> <p>*Combat discrimination in lending and realty markets.</p> <p>*Provide incentives to developers, owners, and landlords to offer additional Section 8 housing.</p> <p>*Scatter low-income housing throughout communities to avoid creating new pockets of poverty in the suburbs.</p> <p>*Provide community outreach projects such as block parties, community education, and mentoring programs to integrate new residents and make them feel a part of the community.</p> <p>*Provide home improvement training programs and incentives for new residents to maintain their property</p> <p>*Expand busing and open enrollment opportunities (such as reimbursement for transportation costs) for inner-city students.</p> |

* diagnosis - The association between poverty and race is very revealing. it suggests that a simple economic analysis is not adequate. Also, if we focus only on economic challenges, we miss the point of the role of racism - as a systemic institutionalized reality. The unequal distribution of resources does not, in itself, explain the disproportionate

rate of poverty in communities of color. Diagnosis might, also, focus on the barriers which maintain concentrations of poverty and reinforce the association between race & poverty.

CHOICE #1

CHOICE #2

CHOICE #3

Why this course of action?

mpmckra@ne.uswest.net

*We need to create a stable core; this will help stabilize the entire region.

* If the region cooperates to improve schools, create jobs, and revitalize neighborhoods in the central cities, people will become more self-sufficient in the long run.

* *Revitalization needs to emphasize making home-ownership more accessible as a key tactic of stabilization and accumulation of wealth (a la Sam Myers)*

* Everyone else has had to work hard to "make it" in today's world; many families live paycheck to paycheck and it is unfair for the govt. to subsidize certain individuals with taxpayers' money.

* Social programs erode a work ethic and self-sufficiency by supporting those who do not work. If we cut or eliminated such programs all together, it would leave the working-aged person with no recourse whatsoever except for the job market.

* Public sector social welfare programs divert income that could be otherwise be invested in capital formation. Channeling funds away from consumption and towards investment will foster economic growth and benefit everyone in the long run.

*The opportunity to live in integrated, middle-class neighborhoods appears to boost employment among adults and school performance among children.

*While moving is not an instant cure to poverty, living in safe neighborhoods and being closer to jobs and good schools is an important step in breaking the cycle of poverty.

*Breaking up concentrations of poverty in the central cities may benefit the neighborhoods, schools, and people left behind if the communities are more socially and economically balanced as a result.

*It is not just low-income residents who need more affordable housing. Alternatives are needed by the elderly, young people such as students, or people going through life changes, such as women who become single moms after a divorce.

The value of diversity (in neighborhoods) is a bit different than integration — economic, ethnic, racial, etc.

What do critics say?

racist use of language!

*Pumping money into the central cities is not the answer. When poverty is concentrated, using money to tackle the problem is simply throwing in down a black hole. For example, Minneapolis schools already spend more money per student than any other school in the region, and their test scores are the lowest.

*In order to create more regional stability, our communities need to be more economically and racially diverse. We need to integrate.

*People need to have more choices about where they live. Since a majority of the new jobs are in the suburbs, there needs to be more low-income housing in the suburbs. People shouldn't have to "reverse-commute."

*Society has created barriers for people. No matter how "responsible" people act, it won't change the fact that discrimination is an obstacle for people of color, nor will it change the fact that many jobs do not pay livable wages nor provide health care or day-care.

*The poor will always be with us as they are the inevitable result of capitalism. In some instances the poor act as cheap labor, in others, as a reserve labor pool. The chief function of social programs is to regulate labor. When mass unemployment lead to outbreaks of turmoil, relief programs are initiated or expanded to absorb/control the turmoil and restore order. As turmoil subsides or as labor is needed, the relief programs contract, expelling those who are needed back into the labor market. Responsibility has nothing to do with it.

*It is better to help people where they are than disperse poverty into other communities.

*An influx of low-income families could lead to increased crime.

* People tend to self-segregate. Low-income families and people of color may just create new concentrations of poverty in the suburbs.

*Low-income housing projects and low-income home-owners who do not maintain their property could lead to lower property values in the community.

*It is inappropriate for the government to interfere in an issue that should be worked out through natural market forces.

*Public transportation in suburbs does not provide 24-hour, 7-day a week service. It is not geared toward low-income families.

* "Transplanted" low-income families may not share the same values as existing residents and thus may not fit it and feel alienated.

Introduction

Make reference to the two major law suits that have been filed in the recent years that are "forcing" or "framing this issue"

1. The Legal Aid Society/NAACP "Holman vs. Cisneros" suit (re= concentration of low income hung + segregation of minorities)
IMPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING
2. The "NAACP vs. State Board of Education, et. al." suit (re= the inherently inferior education available/provided in Mpls/Coon City public schools caused by de facto segregation patterns, etc.)
IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS + BUSING

Choices:

"Return" to ~~Traditional~~ / Market Place
Value?

The Invisible Hand?

Expanding Choices also has to do w/ eliminating, addressing or reducing (discriminatory) barriers. Perhaps these are two similar but slightly different choices (one is an "affirmative" action, the other is a legal remedy). It also has to do with ~~expanding~~ building people's capacity to exercise the choices once available. Perhaps this is also a different "choice" to look at, not sure.

TYPES OF CHANGES

- Allocation of Resources (#)
- application of / implementation of Programs / Existing or New
- Enforcement of Laws + Regulations
- creation of new laws + regulations
- Shifting of authority or power from one level of jurisdiction to another
- Education / social + personal action / behavior / public attitudes + action
- Keep brainstorming on this -
- Public Interest / Intervention in Market Place
- Collective or Individual actions

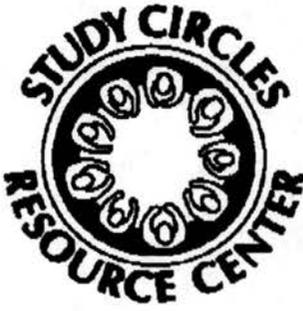
HOUSING

- INVESTMENT EMPH. ON CORE HSNG. CONTROLS ON NEW FRINGE HSNG.
- MOBILITY / VOUCHERS?
- AFFIRMATIVE ACTION / FAIR HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION
- INCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOODS / COMMUNITIES
MIXED USE, MIXED INCOME DEVELOPMENT
- JOBS + ECONOMIC DEV. STRATEGIES
- TRANSIT INVESTMENT

SCHOOLS

- ETHNIC-CENTRIC ENRICHMT. SCHOOLS / ALTERNATIVE
- MOBILITY / VOUCHERS?
- AREA-WIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT / COMPACT
- BUSING / BUT WITH BETTER USING PUBLIC TRANSIT (w/ VOUCHERS)
- MAGNET SCHOOLS
- REALLOCATION OF \$CHOOL \$ TO CORE / EXPAND FISCAL DISPARITIES LAW CONCEPT.

Need to make point that "desegregation" = does not mean ≠ "integration." It means giving real choices to everyone / ~~to~~ larger part of the community rather than to fewer and fewer people (white, upper middle class privilege). It also means creating a ~~mobility~~ "mobility" route for people to improve their own lives and "work" their way into a better economic status / condition. The choice one may exercise is to live in an ethnically cohesive community - that's OK if there is real choice.



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2/4

For the attention of:

Dick Little

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From:

Matt Leighninger

Number of pages (including this page):

3

Comments:

Memorandum

DATE: February 3, 1997

TO: Community Circle Collaborative
Discussion Guide Review Committee

FROM: Matt Leighninger, Program Director, SCRC

RE: January 24 draft

I think the framework for the guide is much better than the December draft.

You asked three questions in your memo:

1. *How can the "diagnosis" be fleshed out so as to focus more on economic and racial segregation?* I don't think there should be a diagnosis for each choice. The participants will be coming up with their own diagnoses in the session(s) before they get to these choices. I think it is important for the sessions to follow a logical sequence, such as: 1) How does the issue affect us? 2) What are the causes of the problem? 3) What should be done? 4) What should we do here. Your diagnosis should go in the introduction (what you are calling the second section). The text on segregation found throughout the December draft is much broader than these poverty diagnoses; it just needs to be boiled down into 1-2 concise pages.
2. *Can we re-word the choices?* I think you're right that the choices aren't answering the question you're trying to get at. If your question is "What should we do to provide equality of opportunity?" then your choices might be:
 - a) **We should help communities build from within.** Every neighborhood and community - no matter what its current condition - can rebuild and revitalize. Sometimes outside resources are helpful in this process, but the assets the community already possesses are the ones which need to be recognized and developed. With a little help, communities can create their own opportunities.
 - b) **All communities in the region should share burdens and opportunities.** Even if it is split up politically, the metropolitan area is a single economic body. Suburbs and urban areas should pool resources and create better transportation networks so that housing and job opportunities are distributed evenly. We need to start working together to provide equal opportunities for everyone in the region.
 - c) **We should let people make their own choices.** Government welfare and housing policies make our problems worse: they remove incentives for poor people to better themselves. Similarly, the education system rewards mediocrity by not allowing parents complete freedom in choosing schools. If we don't discourage them, people will create their own opportunities.

Mobility

- d) **We need to confront racism.** The effects of racism in hiring practices, access to credit, school tracking, and "white flight" are the greatest unexamined cause of inequality. If we are to ensure equality of opportunity, we have to tackle this problem head-on.

Most of the items you have in the What should be done? section of the grid would fit under one of these choices.

3. *How and when can we include more information about schools?* If you follow the choice framework above, it should be much easier to incorporate schools. You've got plenty of information on schools in the December draft to use.

If you were to embrace equality of opportunity as the bedrock assumption of the guide as a whole, you might not have to put in an imprimatur about your perspective in the first section. I realize that, as a term, equality of opportunity has been used to mask other arguments, but as a concept it is something almost everyone can buy into.