SURVIVAL OF AN AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN COMMUNITY: UP THE AVENUE, REVISITED

By

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To son Alexander

and

Parents Allan and Felicia

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ABSTRACT

This is a sociohistorical project that uses the case study of an African Nova Scotian community to explore the concept of community from two perspectives. Firstly, the project relies on a 'traditional' conception of community as developed by Ferdinand Tönnies in his 1887 book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. Secondly, the project explores a 'new' definition of community, supported by theorists such as Wellman and Leighton (1979) and their network analysis, Granovetter's (1973) argument for the importance of weak ties, and Clark's (1973) argument for the degree of solidarity and significance as fundamental components of community. These new models argue for the continuing importance of community, even for dispersed groups.

This case study is developed using in-depth interviews, and a semi-structured questionnaire, complemented by archival and government documents. As well, a collaborative approach is used in which the research participants figure prominently, and their voices are heard extensively throughout the text.

The findings strongly support Tönnies' traditional conception of community that is based on kin, religion, territoriality, and ethnicity. As well, the new definition of community finds secondary support in an elaboration of networks and connections due to weak ties. However, the findings strongly support Clark's (1973) analysis based on the degree of solidarity and significance as the major factors in the continuing salience of community. Relevance of the project and importance for future research are discussed.

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There were many individuals who supported me throughout my research. Heartfelt thanks is extended not only to those identified below, but also to the many people who encouraged me as I worked through the challenges of developing and implementing an independent research project. This basically includes a thank you to all faculty and graduate students in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology.

This project is about the current and past residents of The Avenue. I appreciate the extent to which these individuals took an active interest in my research and opened their homes and their memories to me. I trust this project is an accurate portrayal of them and The Avenue. As well, special thanks is extended to those who participated in the project but who were not from The Avenue. You provided information that allowed me to present a more balanced study.

Donald Clairmont was always available and very skilled at helping me stay focused. Lindsay DuBois encouraged me to reach for clarity and simplicity in the text. I thank Peter Clark for his availability and flexibility on such short notice. Donna Edwards and Mary Morash-Watts were patient with my constant questions and requests, and always there when I needed them. I thank Jennifer Jarman for her perceptiveness. Janet Brown was available in the wee hours of the morning for discussion and support, and helped me maintain my sanity during the 'down' times when juggling

single parenthood, research, and part-time work seemed overwhelming.

While many people had input into this project, I take full responsibility for any errors or omissions. In addition, all opinions and conclusions are those of the writer.

INTRODUCTION

Debates about the loss of community have been central to sociological thought since Tönnies' 1887 book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. The idea that modern, industrialized society cannot sustain deep, interpersonal relationships has resulted in a proliferation of research to either support or oppose this premise.

The concept of community is explored in this sociohistorical case study of a community located in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.[1] This study focuses on the identity of a group of African Nova Scotians[2] in the twentieth century, and how this group defines itself historically and contemporarily. This community has gone from a geographically bounded group to a dispersed, aspatial group. This transition allows for an analysis of how community is defined from the two perspectives by the past residents.

My goal is to reconstruct this community and have the participants address the salience of community from their own personal experiences and perspectives. The major themes in this case study address how participants define community, how they define what makes community salient, how they identify themselves within the group, and how they identify the group to the wider society.

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[1] Dartmouth was incorporated as a town in 1873, and as a city in 1961.

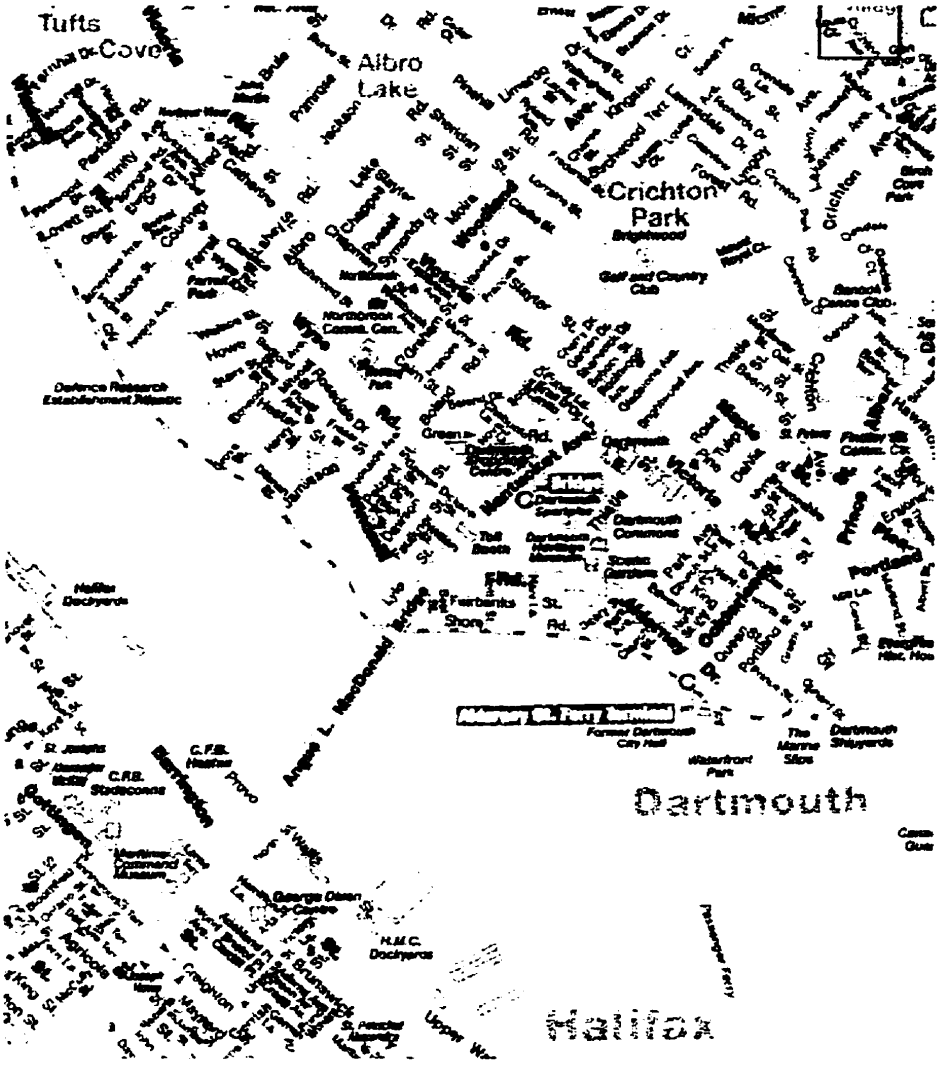
[2] Black is most often used in speech and African Nova Scotian is most often used in academic and other formal writing. Both terms are used interchangeably throughout this text. In addition, terms such as Coloured or Negro, when used by the participants, are included in the text.

This case study uses in-depth interviews and semi-structured questionnaires, complemented by archival and government records such as school registers, land registry records and town annual reports. Using these methodologies and the concept of community as an analytic tool (Gusfield 1975) facilitates this collaborative exploration of the concept of community. In addition, this approach allows for the research participants' voices to be heard extensively throughout the text.

DEFINITION: The Avenue

I am the fourth-generation African Nova Scotian in my family to have lived in the community which is the focus of this case study. The community was located at the top of Crichton Avenue in Dartmouth. Figure 1 is a partial map of Dartmouth which shows the location of Crichton Avenue in relation to downtown Dartmouth and the surrounding area.

Figure 1.



The part of Crichton Avenue above Lyngby Avenue on the map is the area where the Black settlement started (see box highlighting upper right corner of figure). Crichton Avenue winds its way north/south from the downtown area, along the western shore of Sullivan's Pond and Lake Banook. Crichton

Avenue has been a major roadway in Dartmouth for over 100 years and intersects Ochterloney Street in the downtown area, about one kilometre from Halifax Harbour. The Avenue portion of Crichton Avenue extended across the circumferential highway to The Extension, where the Black community ended.

Crichton Avenue Extension was expropriated in the late 1960s because of the expansion of the circumferential highway. Therefore, The Extension portion of Crichton Avenue does not appear on the map in Figure 1, but the sketch in Appendix Seven gives a very general idea of this whole area. The circumferential highway (not shown on the sketch) runs east/west less than one-half kilometre north of the last Lucas house on Crichton Avenue. The Extension was the continuation of Crichton Avenue just north of the highway.

The few references to this Black community in the literature refer to the area as "Colored Meeting Road" until the Legislature passed a bill in 1892 to name the roadway Crichton Avenue. Street signs bearing the name Crichton Avenue were erected in 1894 (Martin, 1957). However, the Black settlement at the top of Crichton Avenue was never officially named.

Although the Black settlement did not have a formal name, my experience has been that people always talked about going up The Avenue to spend time and socialize. The Avenue

is a familiar referent for this community. The phrase evokes powerful imagery for individuals who are familiar with the life and times of the people from this area. I have, therefore, arbitrarily named the area The Avenue.

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My initial question is: Do residents of The Avenue define their situation as a community (Deseran 1978, cited in Perry 1986)? As a starting point the focus is to have the participants reconstruct The Avenue, and the three research questions that derive from this construction are as follows:

1. How do individuals construct and conceptualize the area in which they live? What are the elements of community that have salience for the people from The Avenue?

2. Is a community necessarily lost if the majority of previous residents have dispersed nationally so that they no longer have frequent face-to-face contact within a geographically bounded area?

3. Is the community lost, or has the community merely lost its fixity and moved from structure to process (Gusfield, 1975) based on the uniqueness of strong group identity? Does the community still exist in a liberated form (Wellman and Leighton, 1979) with relationships mediated by weak ties (Granovetter, 1973), technology, and contingent interpersonal

relations? Is the community liberated and how does this translate to identity issues for the individuals within the dispersed group?

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY - AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

It is widely accepted in the sociological literature that Ferdinand Tönnies is the founder of the theory of community (Gusfield 1975; Clark 1973; Chekki 1996; Hay & Basran 1992; Beiner 1995; Bell & Newby 1978; Pearson 1995). Tönnies developed his theory of community in his 1887 book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, which roughly translates to *Community and Society*. Briefly, Tönnies (1965:42-8)[3] defines the Gemeinschaft as solidary relations and the stability of social life. These two components of the Gemeinschaft constitute the "natural will", which is bounded by strong and enduring links to the land. Tönnies develops the concept of the Gesellschaft as the polar opposite of the Gemeinschaft. The Gesellschaft is defined as large scale, impersonal and contractual ties which constitute the "rational will".

The alleged loss of community was central to Tönnies' work, as well as to much of the sociological writing on

[3] A useful review of Tönnies theory of community can be found in Gusfield, Joseph R. *Community: A Critical Response* (p 4-11). The above analysis is drawn from both texts.

community during industrialization and the modern era. For example, near the end of the nineteenth century (1893), Emile Durkheim expressed concern with the loss of community in his writings. Durkheim wrote about the consensual nature of "mechanical solidarity" and the interdependence of "organic solidarity". Early in the twentieth century (1909), Charles Horton Cooley adapted the Gemeinshaft and Gesellschaft dichotomy to his characterization of urban society as "impersonal secondary relationships" in contrast to the "primary" relationships found in villages and the family. The 1920s saw the introduction of urban sociology which was founded by Robert Park of the Chicago School. Park saw the movement along the continuum from community to society as an inevitable consequence due to the accelerated pace of urbanization (Bender, 1978). Park and his colleague Burgess conducted a number of community studies on the ethnic communities in and around Chicago (Suttles 1972). The community studies were premised on the dichotomous nature of community and society developed by Tönnies, which related well with the then-current melting pot theories.

According to Park and Burgess, the ethnic community was a waystation for new immigrants who needed emotional support from their groups. But these ethnic communities were perceived as transitory enclaves that would disappear as the immigrants assimilated into the wider society (Steinberg

1981). However, it was anticipated that racialized groups such as Blacks, who were at the extremes of disadvantage, would be excluded from progression through the assimilation process (Steinberg 1981).

Community then, was considered to have more salience for Blacks over the long term than for other groups, because the members of other groups were more easily assimilable into the mainstream society. The supposed permanent inferior status accorded to Blacks forced them inward for social and economic support (Omi & Winant 1986). This forced isolation and exclusion from the wider society provided the impetus for the development of strong and enduring ties in the formation and perpetuation of group and individual identity. These urban studies conducted by Park and Burgess, and others from the Chicago School, were followed in the 1930s, by studies conducted by Robert Redfield, who defined the poles of the community-society continuum as "folk" and "urban" cultures (Bender, 1978).

Most community studies start from the premise of the community as geographic location where people have kinship or other emotional ties and have frequent face-to-face contact. The interactions within the geographic area are the focus of study as opposed to the experience of community (Bender, 1978) in how the group is perceived in relation to the wider society. However, technology and geographic

mobility complicate this traditional notion of community. Modernization has given us technology that facilitates interaction between individuals who are widely dispersed. Motor vehicles, airplanes, computers, facsimile machines, and telephones all help sustain close relationships between people who cannot maintain face-to-face contact because of geographic location. Studies using a network analytic methodology (Wellman & Leighton 1979) also focus on social interactions, but network analysis can incorporate aspatiality as an acceptable element of community.

In addition, Granovetter (1973) shows how interpersonal ties can work to maintain communication between people who are geographically dispersed. He also shows how these ties can be mobilized in times of need or for "social, economic and historic continuity" (Gusfield 1975:47). From this perspective, the ties that bind people together, especially people who have been socially and culturally isolated like African Nova Scotians, should have continued salience in modern society even when individuals in the dispersed group do not have regular, daily interaction. The strength of the ties is not diminished by the contingent nature of the interactions.

The fundamental nature of community in sociological thought is evident in the ongoing debates which pit communitarianism and libertarianism against each other. On

the one hand, Etzioni (1995) argues in support of communitarianism from a vantage point that sees individuals becoming more alienated and unreasoning relative to the weakening of community ties. On the other hand, the libertarians challenge the definition of community put forward by social scientists like Etzioni. Libertarians critique what they perceive as the inherent negative aspects of community such as oppression and inequality, which libertarians accuse communitarians of ignoring. For the libertarians, community is nothing more than social contracts developed by individual choice.

In a critique of Etzioni's 1993 book *The Spirit of Community*, Pearson (1995) questions the usefulness of individual choice with reference to community by asking how cohesive and useful communities are where individuals can opt-out at will. As Pearson argues, if "we are obliged to subject ...[a community's values] to a continual process of moral evaluation", how is this possible if there is the possibility of constant movement into and out of the group (1995:46)?

These and similar debates have been on-going since the 1980s, and it is conceivable that the debates will continue into the twenty-first century. By focusing on a dispersed group that formed a cohesive bounded community, I hope to add to these debates by focusing on the salience of

community from the experiences and perspectives of the research participants.

DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

A major difficulty in defining community is that definitions are very often subjectively infused with elements of what the social scientist thinks community should be (Bell & Newby 1978; Effrat 1973). It is therefore no wonder that of 94 different definitions of community that Hillery studied in 1955, the only commonality he found was that the definitions all included people. A follow-up study of 60 definitions of community since 1950 by Willis (1977) did not find any major change in social scientists' conception of community. Following are a few definitions of community from the literature that highlight the diversity of elements incorporated in the concept. These definitions also point out the difficulty of finding a 'best-fit' interpretation of the concept to work with:

- Community as a group of people interacting socially and living in a specific geographic area (Hillery 1955:111).
- What is defined as the community may vary between individuals and for the same individual in different settings and at different times (Hunter 1974:179).
- Social interaction, shared values, and a sense of identity as a group is essential. Territory is not essential to our concept of community. Central to

> our interpretation of community is the feeling of the participants that they belong to a group. There must be some minimal social interaction to provide the link which binds people together as a community (Westhues & Sinclair 1974:12).

- Community is the perception among an aggregate of people that they constitute a community. This consciousness of kind is not an automatic product of an abstract homogeneity (Gusfield 1975:32).

- Membership in the same ...ethnic groups that often cut across local boundaries seems to have influence in creating a sense of community among individuals today than simply neighborhood or residential propinquity (Alan Wolfe 1969, cited in Caoili 1976:16).

- A community is to [sic] a group of people who share affective bonds and a culture. It is defined by two characteristics: Communities require a web of affect-laden relations among a group of individuals. And being a community entails having a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings (Etzioni 1995:14).

- A community is a particularly constituted set of social relationships [usually] based ...on a common sense of identity. Frequently used to denote a wide-ranging relationship of solidarity over a rather undefined area of life and interests (Marshall 1996:72).

Rather than working with any one specific definition of community, I am using the concept of community as an "analytic ...term" (Gusfield 1975:11) for this research project. Community in this context is not the "setting of the study ...rather ...the subject of the study" (Knop 1976:103). Instead of studying an existing community that is or was officially recognized and identified by territoriality and name, my focus is on a dispersed group

who lived in a specific geographic area. My interest is in how individuals from this dispersed group define where, and with whom, they lived, and the significance that group identity has for these individuals in the Gesellschaft. However, to provide a framework within which this project is centred, I am using the following operational definitions of community, which can be considered working definitions:

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION NUMBER ONE

Within the wider Black community of Dartmouth, The Avenue was considered a Black community. Therefore, the operational definition which frames the reconstruction of the community in all three phases of the project will be traditional. My approach is to have the participants describe The Avenue by using themes dealing with marginalization, racism, social isolation and group identity. Community then, is considered a group of people having strong kinship or social ties, having daily face-to-face contact, in a geographically bounded area.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION NUMBER TWO.

For the dispersed group, the focus is on how they experience the ongoing importance of community. My approach

in this phase of the project relies on Wellman and Leighton's (1979) categorization of communities, Granovetter's (1973) analysis of the ties that bind people together, Etzioni's (1995) argument in support of communitarianism, plus Clark's (1973) analysis on the degree of solidarity and the sense of significance of the group. The operational definition that frames this part of the project is new. Community is defined as aspatial due to out-migration of individuals from a geographically-bounded area. Individuals can have infrequent social contacts, many of which are mediated by technology. However, it is the strength of the interpersonal ties, based on past history and social cohesiveness, that underpins these often contingent relationships.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In-depth interviews and a semi-structured questionnaire, complemented by archival and government records, such as school registers, land registry records and town annual reports, are the methodologies used in this project. Montell (1970) was used as a guide for structuring the presentation of text in this project. Usually, when direct quotes are used, the names of the participants are

not cited in the text. However, in this, as in the Montell text, the names of the participants are used continually throughout, except where anonymity is provided for sensitive information.

This project relies heavily on a bottom-up approach, from both a sociological and an historical perspective. General themes, as outlined below, were used to guide the participants. The following is an explanation of how the methodologies are used in this project.

Research Project Phase One

The Avenue as a Black community is gone geographically. There are only a few long-term Black residents left in The Avenue, and one Black family that relocated to The Avenue, into the family homestead, in the past few years. Otherwise, developers bought the land and converted what was recognized as a Black community into an area that blends into the wider landscape of the White, middle-class neighbourhood that surrounded the Black community. Therefore, it was necessary as a starting point to develop a retrospective of the group of Blacks who were settled in the area, and those African Nova Scotians who later migrated to the area. This phase of the research relies primarily on in-depth interviews as the methodology to recreate the historical component.

One elder from The Avenue was interviewed three times because of his knowledge of the settlement. Two interviews lasted for one and one half hours each. The final interview lasted for one hour. Appendix One includes the interview guides that were used in the semi-structured interview process with this participant. The broad themes centred on initial settlement, and the salience of community with respect to marginalization, racism, social isolation, and identity.

Each interview developed around a specific theme. The first interview focused on early settlement and what the participant knew of how the area was settled, the number of people in the area and their educational and occupational backgrounds. In addition, some questions were directed at the quality of the social interactions within the group, and between the group and the wider society.

The second interview focused on the geography of the area and the social interactions during the participant's youth. What was this participant's experience growing up in The Avenue? What were the educational and occupational backgrounds of the group members? What was the quality of the social interactions within the group and between the group and the wider society?

The third interview focused on the geography of the area and the social interactions during the participant's

adulthood, when this participant was raising his own family in the area. How many people lived in the area and what were the educational and occupational backgrounds of the adults and the children? What kinds of social interactions existed within the group and between the group and the wider society?

Research Project Phase Two

In this phase of the research process, elders and others who have knowledge of the area were interviewed. The participants were either still living in the area, or people who had social interactions with the people in the area. There were ten in-depth interviews, one involving a couple. The interview participants, with two exceptions, were born between 1918 and 1926. One participant was born mid-1930s and the other early 1950s. Six families from The Avenue are represented by the interview participants whose families lived in The Avenue.

All interviews, with one exception, lasted from one to one and one-half hours. One interview, with a participant from outside The Avenue, was deliberately short because there were only a few questions I required input on from this participant. This interview lasted just under one-half hour. Participants were all individuals the researcher knows

personally and who expressed an interest in involvement in the research project.

Appendix Two includes the interview guide which was used in this semi-structured interview process. The broad themes centred on the salience of community with respect to marginalization, racism, social isolation, and identity. The focus was on the participants' knowledge of the area geographically and socially, and any specific themes that the participants and researcher considered important to the project.

In both Phase One and Phase Two, a completed Informed Consent form was obtained from all participants. All but one of the interviews were conducted in the participants' homes. The one exception took place in the researcher's home. All but one of the interviews were taped, and all tapes were transcribed verbatim by the researcher as soon after the interviews as possible. One of the interviews was not taped due to technical difficulties with the tape recorder. I followed the same format (interview guide) for collecting information in this interview, and took notes of important points throughout the interview. All participants received a form on which to include information for their personal profile. This information is included in Appendix Three.

Research Project Phase Three

In this phase of the research project, my focus was to gather information from the last generation to grow up in The Avenue. The method used for this phase was a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix Five) with broad questions developed around the basic themes as detailed in Phases One and Two. In addition, there were questions dealing with the social networks that respondents maintain with individuals in and from The Avenue, and the impact membership in this group has on respondents' identities. All questionnaires included a page on which the respondents could voluntarily include a personal profile to form part of the write-up. These personal profiles are found in Appendix Four.

I intended to conduct a pilot study of the questionnaire prior to mail-out. However, the individual I wanted to involve in this task was unavailable, and I was at a stage where it was difficult timewise to find and engage another individual in a pilot study. So, in lieu of a pilot study, I spent a productive afternoon reviewing the questionnaire with an individual not otherwise involved in the project.

I originally selected seventeen respondents to complete the questionnaire. Selection was partially convenience and partially snow-ball. The respondents are all individuals the

researcher knows personally. An introductory phone call preceded the questionnaire to introduce the project and formally solicit participation. All but four of the questionnaires were returned within one month after mail-out or delivery of the questionnaire package. Two of the questionnaires were delayed because the participants felt the need to schedule a day or two to complete the questionnaire in as much detail as they thought necessary. The other two were not returned at the time of writing, although both individuals expressed interest in participating. It appears that these two individuals had difficulty scheduling the completion of the questionnaire into their schedules, especially during the busy summer season. This is unfortunate because these individuals represent two families from The Avenue.

Interestingly, after the questionnaires had been distributed, I received phone calls from two individuals who were interested in participating in the project. As well, a follow-up phone call to one of the original participants indicated that the questionnaire was passed along to another person interested in participating. Another questionnaire was delivered to the original participant, but it was not completed due to personal circumstances. As well, I was unable to follow-up with the individual to whom the questionnaire had been passed. Thus, my original sample of

seventeen, and the changes indicated above, resulted in sixteen returned, completed questionnaires. The respondents include nine males and seven females between the ages of 40 and 61, representing seven families from The Avenue.

A follow-up was done with most participants at least once during this phase. The majority of follow-ups occurred after all questionnaires were returned to thank the participants for their involvement in the project, and to review questions where the participants' responses needed clarification or elaboration.

The primary methodology employed in this project is qualitative. As well, this is partially an historical account of a community. These two factors raise a number of ethical issues which, together with issues involved with my positionality within the community and to the participants, are discussed below.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I am a member of this community. My Father, Mother, Uncle, Aunt, siblings, cousins and friends all contributed information to this project. Therefore, from a social science perspective, I guess you could call me an "insider" (Narayan, 1993). There are pros and cons regarding positionality and subjectivity that I considered at great

length before I decided to do this project, during the whole planning process, and during the write-up.

I am in regular contact with a number of the participants in this study. Therefore, I have been meticulously careful with information during the planning and data collection phases. As I mentioned earlier, once I decided to do this project, I immediately stopped using the word community as a referent. I took to calling the area The Avenue and, since this was a familiar name to the participants and myself, it was relatively easy to mask this slight, but necessary, deception.

Another concern was the quality of information that participants, especially the elders, felt comfortable in divulging to someone with whom they lived and, for some, with whom they still have regular face-to-face or electronically-mediated contact. In part, this concern was addressed by the design of the project and the research instruments.

Because the project is exploratory, the questions tended to be broad so that participants were not second-guessing the kind of information I was looking for, but were motivated to provide information that they thought was useful. For the most part, the questions were designed to focus participants on group interactions and relationships.

Even with these kinds of precautions, I was impressed by the richness, and oftentimes sensitivity, of the information that participants freely provided. I think the participants felt a level of security and rapport with me, as an insider, that could not have developed easily with a researcher coming from outside the community. For example, the interviews provided an opportunity for the elders to talk candidly about the challenges they and the settlers faced when raising their families.

Tape recording the interviews was a definite asset. I did not have to worry that we were using up precious interview time focusing on a topic that was not covered in my research. I found that giving the participants the freedom to address their various issues contributed to a more relaxed atmosphere. I had a genuine interest in hearing what the participants had to say. And I found that the participants would weave their story so that they pulled themselves back to the content of the interview. As well, many of the participants volunteered that they were pleased it was me, someone from the community, who was doing this study. Invariably, these individuals commented that only someone coming from the community could truly understand how the people lived and, therefore, could develop an accurate, portrayal of the community. These comments were made by both interview and questionnaire participants.

The ethical issues that surface in this project deal with participant involvement in face-to-face interviews and in completing questionnaires. In addition, the historical nature of this project also involves ethical issues. As mentioned above, the participants are all individuals with whom the researcher has a personal relationship. I initially approached individuals tentatively to determine the level of interest for participating in a project such as this. Most of the individuals were enthusiastically supportive, and expressed an interest in participating.

This project was presented to potential participants as a study of group social interactions. On that basis, all participants agreed to using their names in the research write-up, although one interview participant requested that direct quotes not be used. However, all participants were offered confidentiality, so that participants are not identified for any sensitive information that would cause the individuals, or other members of the community distress. During the interviews, participants would usually make asides regarding information sensitive to them. If this information is used in the text, the participant is not identified. In addition, some quotes are modified to provide anonymity.

This project explores the concept of community and because the word community is used in the title, the title

of the project was modified on any material that the participants had access to. My goal was to have the participants describe The Avenue as a community, so that the participants could address the salience of community from their own personal experiences and perspectives. Because the word community is part of the title of the project, the title was modified to "Up The Avenue, Revisited", for all material that participants had access to.

However, other than the omission of the word community from my conversation and my written material for the participants, the research project was explained to all participants so that they had a clear understanding of the goals of the study. All participants were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and that if they choose to become involved in the project, they could withdraw at any time, for any reason. No remuneration was offered to the participants.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY OF AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIA SETTLEMENTS/COMMUNITIES

Introduction

This study focuses on the identity of a group of African Nova Scotians in the twentieth century, and how this group defines itself historically and contemporarily. However, in order to understand how this group locates itself within the wider society, the historical settlement in Nova Scotia of people of African descent provides the foundation from which this study develops. Therefore, what follows is a brief history of the settlement of Blacks in Nova Scotia, focusing on the three largest migrations of Black Loyalists and Maroons in the late eighteenth century, and Black Refugees in the early nineteenth century.

The Black Loyalists

The history of the settlement of Nova Scotia shows that Black people, both free and slaves, were in the province as early as 1750, the year after the founding of Halifax (Grant, 1980; Pachai, 1990) However, it was not until 1782-1784 after the American Revolution, that Black Loyalists were encouraged to migrate to Nova Scotia in large numbers. The Black Loyalist migration coincided with the immigration to Nova Scotia of a large number of White Loyalists who, in

turn, brought approximately 1200 slaves, plus a smaller number of black servants, with them (Tulloch, 1976; Pachai, 1993, Grant, 1980; Henry, 1973; Pachai, 1990; Martin, 1957; Atkins, 1973; Clairmont and Magill, 1987).[4] By 1784 approximately 3000 Black Loyalists were settled in Nova Scotia, primarily in Shelburne but also in other Black settlements across the province such as Preston, Annapolis Royal and Digby.

Land grants and a three-year provision of rations were promised to all immigrants. However, what little land the vast majority of Black Loyalists were allotted was not only infertile, but was not granted free and clear, as it was with the White Loyalists. The settlements were often in isolated areas allowing for minimal social intercourse with the dominant society. The promised rations were nonexistent.

The inhumane treatment of these first Black settlers resulted in protracted discussions between the settlers and the government, culminating in the departure of 1,196 of the Black Loyalists for Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1792. This mass exodus of Black Loyalists included all the preachers, teachers, and others not bound by indebtedness. This departure was a major blow to the Blacks remaining in Nova Scotia who, with the loss of the more politically involved members of their communities, faced severe setbacks in their

[4] The large influx of slave blacks brought into Nova Scotia by the White Loyalists is discussed by John Grant, 1980, p9; Frances Henry, pix-x Intro; and Bridglal Pachai, 1990, p13-14.

fight for education and human rights (Grant, 1980; Henry, 1973; Pachai, 1990; Martin, 1957; Atkins, 1973; Tulloch, 1975). The poor treatment of the Black Loyalists by the Nova Scotia government set the stage for the treatment of future migrations of Blacks such as the Maroons and the Black Refugees.

The Jamaican Maroons

The Jamaican Maroons were a group of ex-slaves living in the interior of Jamaica and who instigated frequent uprisings against the British. The Jamaican Government determined to disband the Maroons. As a first step, the 550-600 Maroons were sent to Nova Scotia in 1796 to await a final destination. While in Nova Scotia, most of the Jamaican Maroons were settled in Preston on the lands abandoned by the Black Loyalists and subsequently purchased by the Jamaican Government. Additional land was purchased for this purpose on the Windsor Road near Sackville. The Maroons were put to work repairing parts of the fortress on Citadel Hill.

The Jamaican Maroons, like the Black Loyalists before them, suffered extremes of social, political and economic isolation carried out by the Nova Scotia Government and society at large. In keeping with their politically-active

past, the Maroons did not hesitate to express displeasure with their treatment. Finally, in 1800 the Nova Scotia government shipped almost the entire population of Jamaican Maroons to Sierra Leone (Martin, 1957; Atkins, 1973; Grant, 1980; Henry, 1973; Pachai, 1990; Raddall, 1965; Piers, 1947; Clairmont and Magill, 1987).

It would be thirteen years before another large group of Blacks entered the province. However, as outlined below, treatment of this new group, the Black Refugees, remained consistent with the prior treatment of Blacks in Nova Scotia since the 1780s.

The Black Refugees

The last, large migration of Blacks to Nova Scotia occurred between 1812 and 1815, during and after the American War of 1812. Approximately 1200 Blacks, escaping the slave South in the United States, made their way to Nova Scotia by way of British naval ships docked at Chesapeake Bay. An additional 1500 - 2000 ex-slaves, displaced from Bermuda where free Blacks were denied legal settlement, were sent on to Halifax for permanent relocation in 1815.

While some of the Black Refugees were sent on to New Brunswick, most were settled within the province of Nova Scotia. Many of the Black Refugees were permitted to remain

in Halifax and Dartmouth. Large numbers of the Black Refugees were settled in Preston, following in the footsteps of the Black Loyalists and the Jamaican Maroons (Martin, 1957; Atkins, 1973; Grant, 1990; Pachai, 1993; Grant, 1980; Henry, 1973; Pachai, 1990; Raddall, 1965; Clairmont and Magill, 1987). Although 95 of the Black Refugees departed for Trinidad in 1821, the remainder settled and put down roots in Nova Scotia (Pachai, 1990).

All of the historical accounts used for the above overview of the settlement of Blacks in Nova Scotia point out that in most cases, Black people were segregated into isolated communities, were settled on infertile land, did not receive land grants comparable to those of other settlers during the same periods, had to fight for clear title to the land, were denied access to education and employment, and the list goes on. In short, systemic and societal racism prevented the Black settlers from taking their place in the mainstream. As a result, African Nova Scotians were economically, socially and politically deprived. The Black settlers who remained in Nova Scotia quickly became dependent on the government for subsistence. Institutional and societal racism forced the African Nova Scotians inward, to "cling to their own communities" (Sarap 1996:175). Community, therefore, has had special

significance for African Nova Scotians since first settlement. Within these communities, there developed a high degree of intimacy, privacy and the exclusivity of living together (Tönnies, 1965:33) in isolation that has had an enduring impact on the lives of both Black and White Nova Scotians.

This study attempts to explore the "historical circumstances" of life in The Avenue, and the "Gemeinschaft ...[as a form] of human interaction" (Bender, 1978:32,33), as the fundamental components of this marginalized, bounded community. I carry the analysis forward to the present where the group from The Avenue is dispersed. My goal is to provide an understanding of the salience of community as defined by the experiences and perspectives of people from the margins.

CHAPTER THREE

EARLY SETTLEMENT

Introduction

Blacks were settled in The Avenue at least as far back as the 1880s. While one or more of the families considered in this study may have been related to the original Black settlers, the other men and women migrated to The Avenue either from downtown Dartmouth or from Black settlements in Cherry Brook, Preston, and Lucasville. At least one resident originally came from as far away as the Caribbean.

This section deals with the group of Blacks who migrated to The Avenue between the 1890s and the 1920s. I call this group the settlers, but the term is not to be confused with the group of Black people who originally settled in The Avenue. Rather, it is used to differentiate between the two groups of elders included in this study. Thus, the term elders applies to the parents of the last generation raised in The Avenue.

The Settlers

> Well, the only thing ...I've ever heard, ...was that the Smiths owned the property up here. All this property, the property that everybody up here lived on.[5] And they cut it up into blocks and they sold it as building lots.

[5] This comment does not refer to the land in The Extension.

> I think they were slaves. The slaves who fought in the ...[U.S.] army was supposed to be granted land. So I think this was the only way because it was a grant from the Queen.[6] The City of Dartmouth didn't own any property up here at all. They took it in later years. But they originally didn't have any claim up here because it was Crown Land and the Crown gave it to who they wanted to (Allan Lucas, May 5).

Other elders mentioned the Smiths as owning the land on which most, if not all, of the Black families settled.[7] I was able to trace this ownership back to 1918, when Mrs. Smith, widow of Charles Smith, sold land to one of the settlers[8]. As well, an entry at Land Registry shows the transfer of property from Smith to another settler in 1925[9].

Unfortunately, limitations of time and resources restricted my ability to spend the time required to continue searching the Land Registry records prior to 1918. In addition, a search of land grant records at Crown Land Grants was unproductive in substantiating the claim that the

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[6] Clairmont and Magill (1987:39-41) talk about the "myths of settlement" that Africvillians had of settlement by land grant in Africville. This is also a possibility worth exploring with regard to the settlement of The Avenue, but is beyond the scope of this project.

[7] This part of the analysis does not include the African Nova Scotians who settled in The Extension, as settlement in The Extension did not occur until the 1950s.

[8] Gordon Lucas provided a copy of the deed showing this land transfer.

[9] Searching these deeds at Land Registry is an arduous task. Land Registry did not exist until the 1870s at which time, and for many years after, deeds could be registered on a voluntary basis. Many deeds did not get registered until years later as it cost money to register them. People who had put all their savings into buying a piece of property did not necessarily have the extra cash required to register the deed. In addition, during that earlier time, people treated their deeds as they did their property and many were reluctant to part with a deed for the time it took to have it registered with the government. In the case of the early Black settlers, where they received such poor treatment at the hands of the government, it is understandable that they would not trust the government with such an important document. For example, the deed for the sale of property by Mrs. Smith to Benjamin Lucas is dated 1918. However, this deed was not registered with Land Registry until 1947. Therefore, it is a matter of considerable effort to find the record of an old deed such as this if the date of registration is unknown. You literally have to search the records year by year until you find the corresponding entry.

property was granted to the Smith's by the Crown[10]. However, that Black people were originally settled in The Avenue by the Crown is a possibility supported by information provided by the elders who participated in this project, as well as by maps, such as that in Figure 2.

[10]Again, a major difficulty in searching these records stems from the often racist handling of the relocation of the Black settlers by the Nova Scotia government. As had happened with many of the Black Loyalist and most of the Maroons, the government was interested in relocating the Black settlers out of Nova Scotia. However, this option was rejected by the Blacks in Preston who had settled and put down roots. Instead, they were interested in relocation within the province. The government was petitioned and in 1839 agreed to resettle those Blacks in Preston who were interested, on Crown Lands in other parts of the province. However, the government withheld title deeds to ensure that the Black people actually settled on the land. (Pachai, 1990). Therefore, it would have been years later that those people who took up permanent settlement were actually given title to the land.

In answer to my numerous questions about the recording of these grants to the Black settlers, I was told by employees at Land Registry and Crown Land Grants that those acting on behalf of the government in completing and recording these early transactions were often careless in the processing when it came to the Black settlers. Therefore, it is a difficult and time-consuming process to try to find this information, and then to piece the fragments together.

Figure 2.
Map Showing Black Settlement in The Avenue

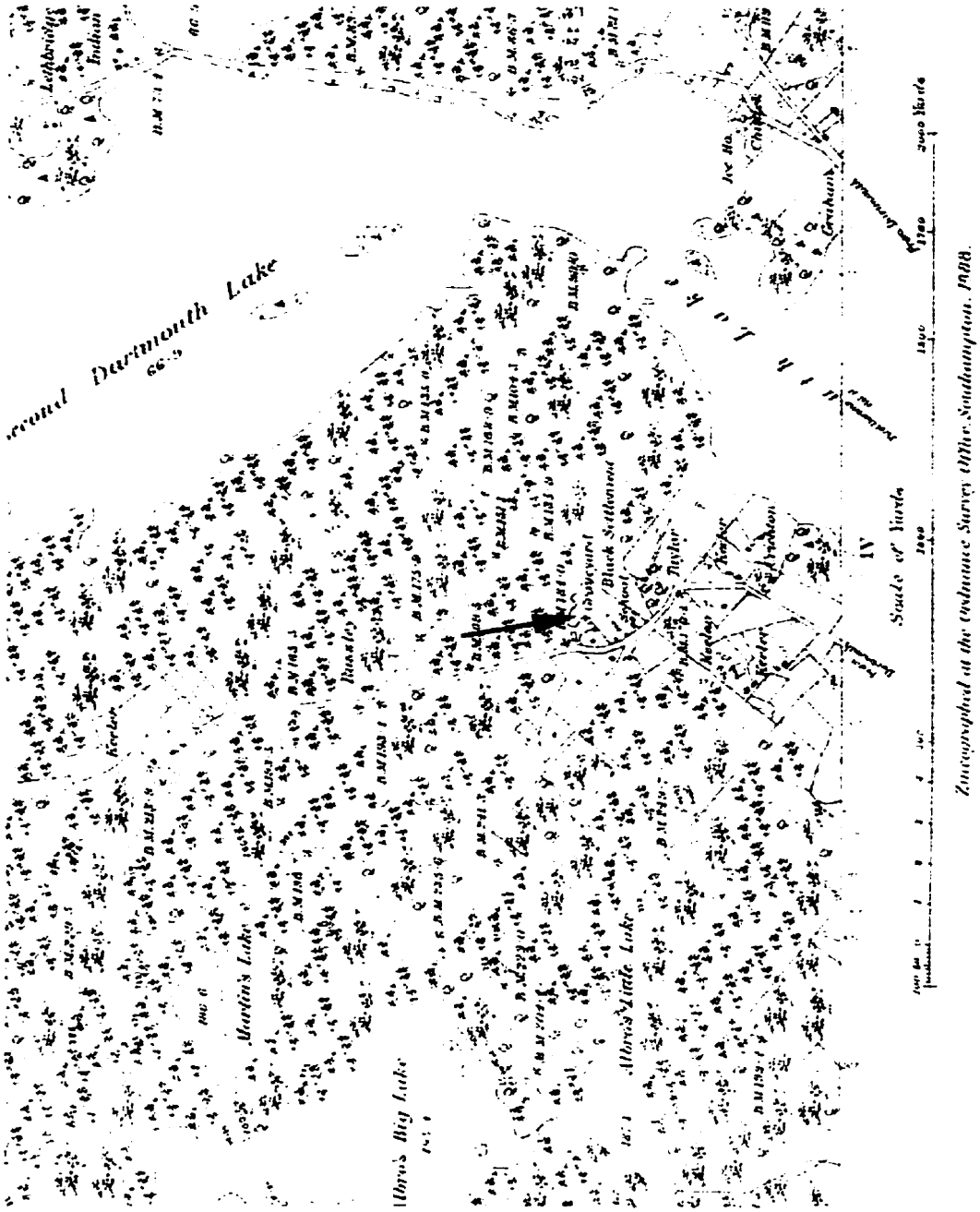

Figure 2 is a copy of a map dated 1888[11]. This map clearly shows that a Black settlement existed in Crichton Avenue. Unfortunately, for purposes of this study, we can only guess at when this Black settlement was started.[12]

Some of the settlers were originally from the downtown core of Dartmouth. Others possibly migrated from the more distant Black settlements in search of work. By 1892 these settlers started relocating to The Avenue. Even in these early years, the Blacks who lived in The Avenue did not experience the isolation that Blacks living in other Black communities such as Africville, Cherry Brook and North and East Preston experienced. Because they were only about two kilometres from the downtown, the residents in The Avenue always had relatively easy access to work and shopping.

By 1926, as indicated in Table 1, there were approximately twelve Black families, totaling about 82 people, living at the top of Crichton Avenue. This number, of course is not static. There was movement in and out of the settlement as children grew up and some of them moved on. As well, relatives from the more distant Black communities would board with kin in The Avenue to be nearer

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[11]I am grateful to Charles Lloyd and Paul Zinck, of the Halifax Regional Municipality, for providing me with this and other maps of The Avenue. Paul also used their computerized system to verify that the location of the Black Settlement on this map is Crichton Avenue.

[12]Town of Dartmouth Directories, which date back to 1862, list a small number of Blacks living on the Lake Road (which later became Crichton Avenue) in 1869/70. The Smiths first appear as homeowners in The Avenue in the 1891 directory, and The Avenue is referred to as Tynesville in the 1897/98 directory.

the job market. The population of 82 is therefore an approximation only.

Table 1.
Black Families Located in The Avenue by 1926.

Family Name	Number of Children*
Mary Jane Smith (widow Charles)	1
Fred & Mary Jane Bauld	4
Johnny & Clara (Lee) Tynes	1
Arthur & Mary (Turner) Tynes	16
Henry & Ruth (Tynes) Bundy	5
Abraham & Mabel (Wyse) Brown	1
Wilfred & Edie (Bauld) Samuels	7
David & Orrie Wyse	6
George & Gwen (Bauld) James Sr.	1
Tommy & Louise Tynes	3
Henry Tynes	2
Benjamin & Agnes (Wyse) Lucas	13
Total Adults and Children	82

*Note: Children could be biological and/or extended family

The Characteristics of the Black Settlement

All of the elders who participated in this study and who were born in The Avenue, were born between 1921 and 1926. They remember the characteristics of The Avenue in those early years, and the settlers, for their dedication to each other, their dedication to the work ethic, and their dedication to the Church.

The sketch of The Avenue in Appendix Seven is useful here as a guide, and to reinforce the comments made by the elders. The sketch shows the area of interest during the

1920s which includes Keeler's Farms and the first White family north of the farm, and continues north to include the last Lucas family. So, we can say that the Black settlement was bounded by one White homestead and then a farm, going south along Crichton Avenue towards the town, and woods in all other directions. One participant remembers the surroundings as

> all woods. We were surrounded by ...woods, all the way around us. This whole avenue was just like an avenue. There was trees on both sides. And right across from here it was ...nothing but forest. And that's where we got our supply of wood, from just across the street there (Vivian Fowler, May 25).

The few other homes on Crichton Avenue were further down towards town, south of the farm. With the exception of a few summer homes down through the woods towards Birch Cove and out The Extension towards Second and Third Lakes, this was a relatively isolated part of town. The natural forest setting and the closeness of the people prompted one participant to recall that, "it was beautiful up there. It was quiet. Everyone was friendly. You could visit anybody, ...and always be made welcome. It was a beautiful, beautiful place" (Mary Wilson, May 13).

There was a small, private pathway that Keeler had built, possibly with the help of the Black settlers, that went through the Black settlement and out to Keeler's Farm in The Extension. The City did nothing to that part of the

road that ran through the Black settlement until 1947, at which time the road was widened.[13]

The Settlers Earn a Living

The men held a variety of jobs, most unskilled. One individual had a horse and wagon and operated his own home and business cleaning service. The other men variously drove coal teams, did gardening and yard and basement clean-ups, worked at the Rolling Mill, the Sugar Refinery and Starr Manufacturing and other factories. Some of the men worked as servants for well-to-do White families. Two of the men worked as porters. One of the men tended the graveyard.[14]

Some of the women who worked outside the home did day's work[15] for White families. Two of the women were caterers, one was a midwife and in later years worked at the Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children.

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[13] Conversation with Charles Lloyd, Design Engineer, Design Services Section, HRM, June 8, 1998. Charles referred to City Plan No. 46.

[14] The first Black Baptist Church in Dartmouth was founded by Richard Preston in 1844 and located in The Avenue. This graveyard was part of this institution. During development efforts to erect a townhouse complex in 1976, bones from this graveyard were uncovered. In 1977, the remains of the bodies that had not been destroyed by the bulldozers and that could still be located were removed to the cemetery across from the Victoria Road United Baptist Church in downtown Dartmouth. See Appendix Eight for a Memorial recognizing this historic graveyard. The Victoria Road Church replaced the 'Colored Meeting House', as the Church in The Avenue was called, after the Meeting House was lost to fire in 1896. This graveyard was actually an historic site that few in The Avenue knew anything about. One resident in The Avenue tried for years to have the graveyard removed. Consequently, there was no discussion between City officials and the Black community to maintain this graveyard as an historic site.

[15] This would be domestic work. All of the participants called it day's work.

With the exception of the individual who owned a horse and wagon, the only way these people had of getting back and forth to work was to walk.

> They walked. They walked no matter where it was, they walked. Dad (Benjamin Lucas) used to walk to the sugar refinery from here everyday, down Woodside, just down past the Nova Scotia Hospital. Well, he used to walk that every day. He'd walk down and walk back. Mostly everybody if they went to work they walked to work (Allan Lucas May 5).

These settlers walked back and forth to work every day, summer and winter, good weather and bad weather. They expected to pay their own way in life and it appears they did not mind working long, hard hours, both in the home and on the job, to be self-sufficient and to raise their families. One participant recalls that

> Nobody ...had any amount of money but it seems like what money they had they knew how to use. They never ever had to ask anybody for anything, and they always had money to do what they wanted to do. Like, they didn't have no cars. In those days there was no refrigerators. No one had a furnace in their homes or anything like that, so living was fairly cheap. They grew their own vegetables, they picked blueberries and stuff and women put down preserves, so living was actually ...very cheap because you didn't have the things that you have today to spend your money on. A radio was the only thing they had. Nobody had electric lights. Everybody was burning lamps when I first remember (Allan Lucas, May 5).

What little time they had to themselves was spent with their families and in the Church.

Religious and Social Life of the Settlers

Most of the settlers in The Avenue were involved in the Church.

> The men took more interest in the Church. The men never missed Church. I think it was mostly because they carried on the Church. We didn't have a steady minister for so long, I think maybe that's it (Vivian Fowler, May 25).

> The older folk were very involved ...in the Church, always. And I guess when you look at it, it stems almost from slavery, that the only thing that kept those people going was their faith in God. And when they would get together and sing their spirituals, it kept them going. Well, it was much like that. There was a strong belief in the Lord, and they knew that whatever they had or whatever they were or ever hoped to be would be blessings from the Lord. They were always involved in the Church. It was part of their life, because they didn't have a great social life. So the Church was where they gathered for their social things (Phyllis Lucas, May 27).

A number of the men were Deacons in the Church. Appendix Six is a photograph of a commemorative plaque that lists the Deacons who were involved with the Victoria Road United Baptist Church. Another individual, who held a Deaconship with the Church in the community from which he migrated, sang in the choir, along with another resident from The Avenue. Only two of the men in The Avenue were not considered to be churchgoers. Most of the women were members

of the Ladies Auxiliary. The rest of the community attended church regularly.

Church attendance and participation in Church activities filled not only the religious needs of the community, but the social needs as well, because

> that's the only thing they had at one time. The Church was the focal point of ...[their] social life. The people went to Church and they had different organizations and ...they met at people's homes. When one of these organizations, like the Finance Committee, was going to meet at someone's house, it was a great big thing. They would have a ...big banquet and all the girls would help to serve and the people would come from down Dartmouth and everywhere ...and they would have a wonderful time for that evening. And these were really big things in those days. And when they went to Church on Sunday and they came home, they would gather at somebody's house and sing hymns and play the piano. Most everybody had pianos or had some kind of instrument. Even the children would join in. And that's the way they spent their time (Allan Lucas, May 5).

The Settlers Raise Their Children

The children of the settlers are the elders who participated in this research project. The participants remember the settlers as God-fearing, hard working and self-sufficient. The needs of families requiring periodic assistance were met by the other families in The Avenue so that a demand for government assistance did not develop amongst the settlers.[16]

[16] This independence was interrupted for a time during the Depression, as it was for many others.

The elders remember in their early years the beauty, freedom, and security of growing up in The Avenue.

> I would describe Crichton Avenue ...like all one family. Everybody loving, everybody got along well together. I just loved it. We were one big happy family. I think when the parents get along so well together, so the children just follow in their footsteps (Vivian Fowler, May 25).

> I was born in Crichton Avenue. It was a very close knitted community. Everyone was always there for you. I never knew my grandparents but we adopted a grandmother, Grandma Bauld and Grandpa Bauld. Everyone was our parents growing up because we had to have respect for everybody. We could never [call] anyone by their first name. And if someone asked us to go on an errand, we couldn't refuse. We had to go. And ...if we talked back to our neighbours ...they were allowed to give us a slap. The elder's word come first. I'm not saying that we were angels, but we had to have respect for our elders. As I always say we were very poor, ...but there was so much love.

> To tell you the truth, when I think back on my childhood, I wouldn't change it for the life I got today. It was so much closeness and loving. I remember Grandma Bauld, she used to always make brown bread. And she always give us a piece of bread and she put the butter on it then she put the sugar on it and a little bit of water or tea to keep the sugar from blowing away. And I remember going to your Grandmother Lucas' house on Sunday nights. Now if it was nice, (never went in the wintertime), we had to stay outside and play and older people would have their tea. And if we went in the house, you sat down in the corner while they told all those ghost stories and scared you to death, but you must not interfere with the conversation. We had a beautiful childhood (Doris Fenty, May 15,).

> [The settlers] were very close. Like, when children was out playing there was always somebody watching them. If you went up the street there would be somebody sitting on a verandah and any one of them people had control of other people's children, to stop them from doing what they shouldn't be doing. And they were very, very close. In the daytime they would come from their houses and visit. People would hang clothes out on the line and they would come down and talk. But they were very,

> very close. Oh, it was just like one family. And all the children played [together]. Once in a while you'd have a problem but not very much. But they were very, very close knit people and they got along very well together. And if someone was sick the other women would do whatever they had to do to help the other person out. They were very concerned about each other. And they were all members of the Church and they all went to Church every Sunday.[17] They were a nice bunch of people (Allan Lucas, May 5,11).
>
> The only disagreements they ever had was over children fighting. They never had no disagreements ...with each other over different things. [But] there was a couple of families up here that had some pretty rough children. So they would go and confront the mother or the father, and get it straightened out. [The settlers] would lay the law down and that was that (Allan Lucas, May 5,11).

Common themes developed in the interviews, and these themes are easily identified from the examples included above. The elders who were raised in The Avenue and most of those who had social relationships with the people in The Avenue, continually stressed in the interviews the close-knit, family dynamic that defined the way of life for the people in The Avenue. This reinforces Robert Nisbet's point that "historically and symbolically" in a "genuine community" the term family is used (cited in Bender, 1978:9).

The interviewees acknowledged that this was a poor Black community, based on White, middle-class standards of material affluence. The participants talked about the hardships the settlers in The Avenue endured to survive.

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[17] With the exception of the two non-churchgoers as mentioned previously.

There was material poverty, yes, but because most families had their own gardens, there was always plenty to eat. And there was an abundance of emotional support and guidance from their parents. From the perspectives of the interviewees, the lack of material wealth was secondary to the sense of security and caring that characterized daily interactions.

The children fought amongst themselves at times, which is typical childhood behaviour that "happens in almost all group life", but this was secondary to the unusually high level of "concord" and "understanding" (Tönnies, 1965:44,48) that existed amongst the settlers. Tönnies explains this uniformity of "sentiment" as

> based upon intimate knowledge of each other in so far as this is conditioned and advanced by direct interest of one being in the life of another, and readiness to take part in his [sic] joy and sorrow (1965:47).

For the elders, this concord of life derives from the morals and values fundamental to their religious beliefs, which is also an important aspect of the Gemeinschaft (Tönnies, 1965:45). Some of these themes are developed further as the elders take us through some of the defining features of The Avenue.

Growing up in The Avenue

Defining features of The Avenue for these elders were the woods, Birch Cove Lake, watchful eyes and helping hands, the dirt road, well water and outhouses. As children, the woods and the lake were wonderfully attractive features of living in The Avenue. This was a self-contained, secure environment for the children, and it was not until they ventured off to school that the differences between how and where the Black people lived and how and where the White people lived started to have an impact on these elders.

> It was nice. People was ...you know how old I wished I was now? Twelve. I'd love to be twelve years old. You see with your eyes when you're younger that sometimes you pass right by it when you get older. You know right where Phyllis [Lucas] lives? I spent [many] Saturday afternoons in there picking pansies and blue violets. Oh I thought life was so beautiful (Mary Wilson, May 13)!

> Oh, it was beautiful! You could go and play in these great big fields. We used to go back to Keeler's farm out ...[The Extension]. We used to pick dandelions and ...there was all kinds of wild apple trees everywhere. And you could go out the road out here and you could play ball and then there was strawberries and [you could] gather apples. And then you'd go down the Cove (Birch Cove). We always had access to the Cove. That was just like our private little place. So we could go down there anytime. Cause we was the only ones that did, mostly. We could go down there anytime we wanted.

> We used to have a great time. In the winter time the lake (Birch Cove) used to freeze over, and we ...used to spend most of our time on the lake. We used to go down there and build fires and skate down there until 11:00 o'clock at night. It was fantastic! You could walk up the street and just jump over the rock wall (Keeler's Farms) and you could get a few tomatoes and turnips you know, just to eat on your way home.

> My overall impression is that it was a wonderful experience, really. We didn't have all that much money so to grow up in a place like this where you could do as you like, play where you wanted to play and have the love of all these people around you was quite a rewarding experience. And you could go in any house, ...and be welcome. You could go in any yard and play, it was wonderful. Everybody knew everybody and everybody got along pretty well with everybody else, and everybody looked out for each other. So it was a nice place. I wouldn't a wanted to grow up in any other place really (Allan Lucas, May 6,11).

> The Avenue was really a special place for the Black families that lived there. It really was because there was so much outreach. Everyone was ready to ...lend a helping hand when we were young (Doris Fenty, May 15).

Well Water

As far as the amenities went, the elders remember The Avenue as being distinctive for lack of indoor plumbing. Water was drawn from wells, summer and winter. Some of the families had their own wells, and there were a number of wells used in common by various families. Using these wells in the wintertime was particularly challenging, because the water would be frozen. People would have to break the ice with long poles before they were able to draw water. Of course, the lack of indoor plumbing also meant that the people had to make do with outhouses.

The Dirt Road

The dirt road was most often mentioned as a defining characteristic of The Avenue. As I mentioned earlier, this part of Crichton Avenue originally started as a narrow pathway, possibly dug out by the people in The Avenue, that allowed Keeler access to his farm across the highway in The Extension. Because this was a private pathway, there was no city maintenance. The people who lived in The Avenue were required to keep the way clear so that they could get in and out. This meant, in the wintertime, that the men would have to shovel their way out so that they could get to work. And in the summertime, the residents had the constant problem of dust and dirt in the dry weather, and a muddy, barely passable pathway at times in the wet weather.

It was against this backdrop of separation and exclusion that the elders ventured off to school.

Education

> As far as I'm concerned, the only place that existed was Crichton Avenue, because I didn't know anything about any other part of Dartmouth. Only Crichton Avenue. Until I went to school this was my whole world. I played here and I done everything right here and as far as beyond this, I didn't know anything (Allan Lucas, May 6).

For these children, it was their first introduction to their 'difference'. And for some, it caused serious problems. Some of the settlers were unable to read or write, but "you weren't amazed at it in those days because you knew there were some people ...that either didn't have an opportunity ...or they had to go out to work". However, it appears that most of the settlers were educated to the extent that most of them could read and write.

> Most of them had schooling. Mrs. Bundy, she was a very intelligent person. And she was the first one, ...had an idea that her children should go to university. Where Dad and Mom was educated I don't know. Dad must have went to school out in Lucasville. They must have had Black schools out there. And Mom went to school but where I don't know. And Uncle Dave was educated. He could read, write and do everything. And he was a very intelligent man to talk to. They kept abreast of the news and stuff, and they could talk about mostly anything (Allan Lucas, May 5).

Unfortunately, with one exception, education was not stressed as a way out of poverty and into the mainstream. While most of the children started school at around age seven, most left school at grade seven or eight. At the tender age of fifteen, most of these elders were working and helping to support their families. "When you got a certain age, you had to go out and work and help. Where there were so many children, you had to go and work" (Doris Fenty, May 15,). The primary expectation for these children was that they work hard and

> contribute and help. It seemed like, ...when the families were all large, ...you needed things. So you just stopped school and your parents didn't seem to say 'well no, you're not going to stop'. They'd just say, 'if you want to help out, OK' (Vivian Fowler, May 25).

Even though some of the children enjoyed the school environment, they still accepted the societal and familial limitations and expectations.

> Oh, when I went off to school it was a big experience. I never experienced anything like it before in my life. Sitting in a class with people that I didn't know and never seen before in my life. This was a whole new thing! But I seemed to fit in with them. I had no problem there, but it was just a big experience (Allan Lucas, May 6).

> But like I say, you had no money when I was going to school. And another thing that made me tired of school, [was] when I finally looked at myself. When I finally was old enough to assess myself you know and look at me, here I am going to school with these people and they're all dressed up and ...[riding] bicycles and they got all their equipment, books and pencils and pens. And I didn't even have a piece of paper to write on.[18]

> The people in The Avenue struggled. They, for the most part, were good, good parents. One thing about the children. Maybe they didn't have everything they wanted but they had love. And ...that overcomes everything. And it wasn't easy. the men didn't have the best jobs because [they] ...could not stay in school to be educated. They had to get out in order to help out with the home. When they reached fifteen, sixteen years old, they had to go to work to bring a few cents home to help out. And this is exactly what they did. The children, then they were children [the elders], they didn't ask 'why we have to do this'. They just did it. It was the thing to do.

> I saw so much potential here but it couldn't be developed because of the economic structure. And

[18] It should be remembered that this was during the depression and, although it may not have seemed so to the Black children, many in the White community were also suffering through this phenomenon.

> ...they couldn't get the better jobs because they didn't have the education. Here again, society has a way of keeping certain groups of people under their thumb so that you are subservient all your life. And I think that this ...has a lot to do with it. Although I don't think they met with great difficulty at school. [I've heard] various stories, and the children were the meanest ones. But as far as the teachers were concerned, you would meet up with some [bad ones], as you do in life today. But for the most part I think they didn't have a half-bad life in school. And some of them were very apt. You know, they could have gone on to greater things but you couldn't do it at that time.

For some of the children, the educational system was a foreign, scary and disturbing experience from the very beginning. As articulated so well above, some of the teachers and some of the White students were particularly mean and racist. One of the elders remembers being forced to recite stories such as Little Black Sambo while the White children in the class laughed. For another elder, school was a bad experience from day one.[19]

> I was really scared of people. And I think it was mostly because I had a teacher [who] ...was right nasty. [Another child from The Avenue] and I was in the same grade and she always picked us out and made an [example] of us in the classroom. Cause we was the two little black [children]... in that ...[class]. And I remember one time ...[the other child's dad shaved her hair off]. And she didn't want to take her hat off and [the teacher made her]. I remember [the teacher] standing her up in the middle of the class and making her take her hat off and her head was bald and how the children laughed.

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[19] A review of the school registers for Hawthorne School in Dartmouth from 1925 to 1936 at Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS) was informative. The most surprising finding was the number of children in the grade one class over the years. One year had a high of over 90 children in the class, with most of the other years averaging between 50 and 60 pupils. It is little wonder that both Black and White children needing more individual attention easily slipped through the cracks and ended up leaving school without the all-important rudimentary skills.

Whether or not the children attributed their marginalization within the school system to racism, classism, or their personal inadequacies, the school experience served as reinforcement for many of these children in identifying their difference from the wider society. This forced them to become more dependent on each other within The Avenue for validation of their self-worth and their identity. This point is reinforced by Gusfield who suggests that

> conflict with others and the resulting cooperation and common struggle often provide the experiences from which an aggregate of people develop a sense of themselves as possessed of a common fate and belonging to a common group (1975:36).

Conclusion

The interview participants were in accord in how they define The Avenue and their elders. In the early 1900s, there was a geographic distance between the first Black home in The Avenue and the last White house of the surrounding neighbourhood.[20] Because of their location at the top of Crichton Avenue, these Black families suffered very little interference in their way of life by the wider society. The community was tucked away from the mainstream; the people

[20] Some participants considered this first White family as living in the Black community, because they were deprived of Town services as were the Black people. Although, when the pavement was brought further up Crichton Avenue, this White family benefited from that. I don't think, though, that the people in the Black community considered themselves as social equals to this White family, so class and race still maintained an invisible dividing line.

were self-sufficient, and the elders cared for their properties and their homes. This was a law-abiding and respectful group of people who accepted the status quo. As a result, there was a minimum of meddling by Town officials, politicians and the wider society in general.

The geographic barriers pale, though, in comparison to the social barriers that separated the Blacks from the Whites in Crichton Avenue and the wider society. The following story very bluntly puts the pervasiveness of the social barriers in perspective:

> [One of the settlers] said this day, this summer day she was sitting on her verandah, ...and you couldn't see [her]. So she said she heard these two White women ...talking. [The first woman] said, "isn't this a beautiful area". The other woman said, "it would be so nice to live up here". [The first woman] said "well, its too many Black people up here". No, too many "n-----s"[21] up here. She said "you could never live up here amongst them". Yeah, isn't that something!

The settlers living in The Avenue were so involved in the day-to-day pressures of survival that the little time they had for relaxation was spent with each other and especially with involvement in the Church. Spirituality and organized religion appear to have provided most of the settlers with the morals and values that they used to guide their behaviours and interactions with others.

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[21] I do not use racial slurs to denigrate any people, including my own, but I am sure the reader can easily fill in the blanks to complete this derogatory label.

The conflict that there was in this small community was minimal. The children, of course, would have altercations amongst themselves. Within the adults, there was one case of spousal abuse and I surmise there would have been instances of corporal punishment meted out to keep some children in line. Other than that, the participants, both from The Avenue and outside, were in agreement that this was a peaceful community with a high level of concord amongst a small group of unassuming, hardworking people.

Most of these settlers were dedicated to their religion, their religious morals and values, and social relationships with each other. The various families within The Avenue and their extended families in other Black communities, provided all the social and emotional support these settlers required. The settlers did not pine for inclusion in the wider society; they accepted their place on the margins and did not protest the racist treatment meted out to them. They knew they had no recourse.

Most of these settlers came from the segregated Black communities and were the products of the segregated school system. Despite the intentional limitations of the educational system, most of these settlers were educated to the point that they could read and write. As well, because many of the settlers had leadership positions in the Church,

they also developed skills that empowered them beyond what was the accepted norm for poor Blacks during this time.

Most of the settlers relied on their religion, their education, and their hard work, to raise their children. However, we start to see the changing nature of community with these children, especially because of their exposure to integrated schooling at a time when most of the Blacks in Nova Scotia were still caught in the trap of the segregated school system. Chapter Four looks at the underpinnings of the changing nature of community.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Elders Raise Their Families in The Avenue[22]

Introduction

The offspring of the small group of settlers in The Avenue matured during the hardships of The Great Depression, and reached adulthood during the Second World War. Many of the men participated in the war effort, in the Canadian Army and Merchant Marines. One became the first Black fighter pilot.

Some of the settlers were kin, but the close relationships amongst the settlers gave the whole group a family-like status. Therefore, the elders who settled in The Avenue in adulthood, with a couple exceptions, went outside The Avenue to the other local, Black communities to find marriage partners.

By the 1950s the population in The Avenue had reached its maximum of approximately 23 families totaling 134 people. Of the totals, one family was the last of the settlers, and 13 families totaling 81 individuals were descendants of the settlers. In addition, Black and White families had settled out The Extension. The people in The Avenue, although predominantly Black, were a more heterogeneous group than lived there during the settlers'

[22] Participants who contributed to this section are: Phyllis Lucas, Allan Lucas, Earl Bundy, Vivian Fowler, Barbara James, Donald Fairfax, Felicia Lucas, Janet Randall, Fred Wilson Sr., Doris Fenty.

time. The Avenue, though, was still considered by people living inside and outside as a Black area, and not a desirable place for middle-class Whites. What follows is a look at the social and economic challenges the elders faced as they raised their families in The Avenue during the 1950s and 1960s.

Raising Families

> We didn't have a whole lot to give our children ...but they had our support and they had our love. And we would sacrifice for our children. You know, we would do without in order to give to our children. We were very proud that our children were going to school. And when they reached junior high and high school, we didn't want them to look different because that would be a contributing factor for them opting out. So we did the best we could do for our children. And tried to bring them up with respect for their elders and manners. When you look back at it we ...weren't perfect by no means. But I think there's a lot of our children who are making their mark in life (Phyllis Lucas, May 27).

By 1939 and the outbreak of World War II, many of the elders in The Avenue were coming of age and moving into early adulthood. Many of the men participated in the War effort, and, consequently, were exposed extensively not only to life outside The Avenue, but life in other countries.

After the War, the elders were caught up in the daily struggles of survival and raising families. Many of the returning White veterans received a housing allowance which

is how the subdivisions of Crichton Park and Woodlawn[23], and the lower part of Crichton Avenue were developed. However, this housing subsidy seems to have bypassed the Black veterans that I spoke with, both within and outside The Avenue.

The late 1940s was also a time when The Avenue was growing. Some of the elders who had married and relocated to downtown Dartmouth or Halifax returned to take up permanent residence in The Avenue. The Avenue was possibly the only area within the Town of Dartmouth where Black people could own a nice piece of property. And, since the area had been settled by Blacks since the 1800s, it was probably an area in which Blacks felt comfortable. One participant recalls that "when I got out of the army my Mother gave me this piece of property. So, the next year ...I started building a house up here. That was in 1947". New homes were erected and young families settled in. And some families settled into their old homesteads. Table 2 lists the families living in The Avenue by the 1950s.

[23]Woodlawn is located in East Dartmouth, approximately four kilometres from downtown Dartmouth.

Table 2.
Families and Number of Children Living in The Avenue by the 1950s.

Names of Family Heads	# of Children*
Dan and Beatrice Bauld	0
Boutilier*^	5
Eddie and Olive Bowes*	6
Clarence and Mildred Brown	0
Marshall and Catherine Claiborne*	3
Hupert and Ruth Drummond	3
Wilfred and Marjorie Drummond	1
Lyle and Violet Eisan*^	0
Frank and Vivian Fowler	2
Alexander and Pansy Gordon	9
Dollard and Norma James	1
Allan and Felicia Lucas	8
Catherine Lucas	8
Clarence and Myrtle Lucas	13
Gordon and Phyllis Lucas	3
Jack and Helen Lucas	4
Albert and Frances Mills	1
Clarence and Marjorie Shepherd*	3
James and Martha Styche*^	3
Wilfred and Audrey Tynes	3
Fred and Mary Wilson	4
David and Orrie Wyse	0
Reginald and Katherine Wyse	7
Total Adults and Children	134

Note: Children could be biological and/or extended family
*Living in The Extension
^White families

By the 1950s, Black families had settled out The Extension and there were approximately 134 people living in The Avenue, mostly Black.[24] A notable exception was the poor White family that had no place to stay, and that the Town

[24] This number fluctuated depending on whether the participants included the White families in The Extension as part of the community. Interestingly, the one White family right in the midst of the settlement was always included. As well, as the children grew up and moved on, the numbers fluctuated.

relocated to The Avenue, after having relocated a stone crusher there in 1931[25] and the town incinerator in the 1940s.[26] One participant recalls how the Town introduced the relocation of the dump to The Avenue:

> There was woods. They [the Town] had the stone crusher there and ...they started cutting down and getting ready for something, which we didn't know what it was going to be. And then they notified us ...they were going to put the dump. You know what we all thought. They put it up here because we were Black. That's the first thing we think about, but I don't know if that was the cause. Perhaps they had no place else to put it, I don't know.

As well, there were about three poor White families living out The Extension. The Avenue as a recognizable, predominantly Black community, was complete. Some of the then new residents and visitors give their impressions of coming to The Avenue.

> 1948: The first time I came up The Avenue, my first impression was that it was a lot of trees and bushes. The road was unpaved and there weren't that many houses. My impression was [that] they [the Black people] owned their own homes which was great. It was great knowing that ...all these people had their own homes.

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[25] Mention of the town crusher first appears in the 1931 Annual Report of the Town of Dartmouth. The 1932 Report includes the following comment about the relocation of the crusher: "The crusher was moved from the Walker Property on Prince Albert Road, owned by the Town, where it had been for many years, to the Town property on Crichton Avenue, where a new building had been erected for it. T

[26] The following comment is included in a footnote in an unpublished MA Thesis: "Dartmouth did at one time have a small concentration of Blacks near the city dump". To know anything of the history of this Black settlement, of which this researcher was obviously unaware, is to know that the Black settlement was not near the city dump, the city incinerator/dump was near the Black settlement. From this perspective, the statement takes on a whole new meaning. As well, within members of the Black community in Dartmouth, this settlement was recognized as a fairly large Black community in comparison to other Black communities in the province.

I walked The Avenue. When we'd get off the ferry (from Halifax) ...we'd walk from there up. So, when you hit the last White house there was ...an obvious distance. I just got the impression that people up here liked it that way. They never talked about it but they seemed to like it that way (Barbara James, May 22).

1948: The homes in Crichton Avenue ...that belonged to the Black folk were nice homes in comparison with some other ...Black communities I visited. It was very country. I had been born in the city and lived in the city for quite a while, so I found it very much country, although it was still within the city bounds of Dartmouth. But I found it very much like the country because there were ...wells and there wasn't any indoor plumbing. I had never had to deal with this in my life before.

It was a country area on the outskirts of town, with the normal type of country homes, well kept. It was very different, heavily wooded. One of the landmarks approaching the Black settlement was Keeler's Farm, one of the last White families. Also, Taylor's lived in the Coloured settlement (Donald Fairfax, May 25)

1948: Well, it looked like a settlement cause the Coloured people were congregated in one area. You were in the country but yet you were in the city. But it was hard in the wintertime because I wasn't used to all the snow piling up so much. Sometimes we had difficulty in getting downtown (Felicia Lucas, May 13).

The Avenue was very close knit, ...very clannish. What you did to one you did to all. But at the same time, if you needed one, everybody would come to your rescue. It was like a big family. We would borrow from one another and nobody ever said anything about it. But if I had it they had it or if they had it I had it and that's the way we lived.

It was like a family affair. And if you were hurting I would hurt. And that's the way we lived our daily lives up here. There was a very strong bond among all of us. And even when people weren't related, we still had a feeling for everybody in The Avenue. And I think, because we were very aware of one another, we didn't live separate lives. We lived together in a community under a bond. I think this is what it was all about (Phyllis Lucas, May 27).

> They didn't have anything to compare because all their friends were doing the same thing. Which led to happiness because everybody was like on par, nobody was above anybody else (Phyllis Lucas, May 27).

The lessons learned from the settlers served these elders well. They worked hard to raise and provide for their families. One of the new residents recalls that, when she moved to The Avenue in 1948, "there weren't any men sitting around home. And of course the women went to work to help to maintain the family".

Many of the men, like the settlers, were unskilled labourers and worked for the Town. A few of the men were porters. A couple of the men worked on the ships. One of the men "drove the large equipment on construction work, which was "never heard of years ago". Another was the first Black drycleaner in Nova Scotia. Still another got a job "with benefits" with the airlines. Although we start to see some job mobility with the elders, they are still limited by low education levels. We also start to see the elders becoming more socially active in protesting against their mistreatment by Town officials. In their own quiet way,these elders fought to get the services long denied them, even though they paid their taxes. Services readily available to the surrounding area and the rest of the Town, such as water, sewerage, road maintenance, and paving, were long denied to this part of town.

> Where the Black people lived it was considered separate because we ...always had to pay taxes but we certainly didn't get the same benefits that the White folk got, probably just a few steps beyond us. It was like that.
>
> There was pavement as far as where the White folk lived. Over the hill there that they used to call Taylor's hill, that was where the dirt roads began and there was nothing in The Avenue. It was just a dirt road.
>
> When my husband bought the house we were getting so much dust that that's why he put [the] front on. We used to sit out on the verandah but when cars went by, the cars could go right through and they'd just kick up a whole lot of dust and stones. We had windows broken, and that's when he closed that in.
>
> The dust from [the road]. Yes, if it didn't rain for a period of time to keep the dust down you got all of that too. It was very difficult to keep your windows clean and your house looking half-ways decent because it was always full of dust and dirt. And then the stench from the dump, if the wind was blowing. You couldn't put your windows up.

And even with petitions and many visits to City Hall, some of these services did not make it up through The Avenue until the mid-1980s, when most of the Black residents were gone and more White residents were moving into the area.

> [We were] always [told] that we were too low to get sewerage. Too low. Like, we're down and the sewage can't run up hill. I mean, we knew that. But it's so, so strange when the people of the other race moved in they were able to put sewage in. So the convenient things that were had for the White folk, we never had the privilege of having.
>
> For all the many other things that we had to contend with, we kept a pretty good attitude, I think. We didn't become a hateful people and we didn't let the things that we didn't get that we should have had, we didn't let it eat away at us and change our dispositions and become ugly and nasty about it.

> There were so many things we were denied as a people and it's not a very nice thing to say but everything pointed to because we were Black. You know, you didn't need those things. So it was very sad. And it kind of leaves a bitter taste in your mouth. [Then you have] people such as these people (the Whites), which are middle-class people (who moved into The Avenue). I don't know what it is but they seem to get what they want.

Schooling

Education and schooling are taken up again from the perspective of the last generation when we analyze the questionnaire data. However, the elders provide their perspectives on issues they considered important when sending their children to school. We will see that the elders were motivated by the unpleasant memories of their school days. Because of this, the elders placed more emphasis on outward appearances and material possessions than on the quality of the education their children received. For the elders, if their children could dress as the White children, and have the proper school supplies, their children would have the same opportunities.

> [The children] attended the same schools as ...the White children. Looking just as good as any child that went to school! I wouldn't have my children going down that road unless they could dress properly. And they had to be dressed like the other children. They had their books and they didn't have to run scrounge paper and pencils. They looked as good as anybody and they had the same things to work with as anybody else. So I expected them to have the same education as the White people. And they did.

When we compare these comments to the actual experience of the last generation, presented in Chapter Six, we see the powerlessness of the elders in their ability to deal with the sometimes subtle, sometimes blatant, racism and classism that impacted the children and denied them full participation in the educational process. For the elders, appearances and possessions were important, so that the children could fit in better and not have to "go through what [they] went through". The following comments put the elders' thinking into perspective:

> I remember the teachers would say how well they were kept when they were going to school, so many of them. You got along good in school. You did very well. Well, the boys wasn't too much for school, but my girls were interested in their lessons. But we never were involved like we should be.

The children went to the same schools that their parents had attended, but had considerably more interaction with their White peers.

> Our children ...went to ...White schools, and they didn't seem to have any trouble. And [the children] also had ...their White friends. They socialized a lot [with their White friends]. We never had any problems that way, with mingling. What was, it was very subtle. But the kids seemed to get along OK.

The children experienced less spatial and material separation from their White peers and, consequently, some of

the children from The Avenue socialized frequently with their White friends, both inside and outside The Avenue.

> Being Black didn't mean a thing. They had no trouble. They could go in White people's houses. They [had] White children here all the time. But they got along with the White children and they mingled with them and they had no problem that I know of. And it was because of their appearance and the way they went to school. They didn't bother nobody. And they went to school just the same as the other children.
>
> For the most part, you weren't made to feel that you were different. Most of our children went to school in a very respectable manner. And what I mean ...is that ...most times they were dressed well, they were clean, their hair was combed and they had done their homework. Because we were parents that believe ...that, if our child showed potential, we didn't ask that child to go beyond that. But we expected that child to use their God-given talents and abilities. And that's all we wanted. We wanted something for our children that we were unable to experience. And I think it's rubbed off and I think it's a good thing. But our children, at the same time, because their minds weren't poisoned, can deal with people of other races. They know it's there [racism] but they don't let it dominate their lives. And so they're able to mix in and to live with people of other races. They don't believe that they should segregate themselves. They're as good as anybody else.[27]

The Black children did not have to rely solely on 'their own kind' any more for social activities. As residential development moved closer and closer to The Avenue, the sense of geographic isolation gradually diminished. However, the barriers of a dirt road and no indoor plumbing served to underscore the idea that the

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[27] This comment should not be taken to mean that self-segregation is necessarily a bad thing. It more underscores the unique position of the Black people in The Avenue relative to other Black communities and their interactions with Whites.

people in The Avenue lived differently and consequently, were somehow different from the wider society. There was reluctance on the part of some children, and some adults, to welcome the White friends into their homes out of embarrassment that the 'critical' eyes of these White children would target and ridicule the perceived inadequate environment that was no fault of the people living in The Avenue. At this point, it is the Black people who attempt to devise barriers to maintain their self respect and dignity and protect their children from the negativity of the unfair treatment the elders experienced at the hands of Town officials.

Social Life in The Avenue

Many of the men, and some of the women in The Avenue enjoyed an active social life with each other and Blacks in other local communities. The primary social activity for many of the adults was to gather in someone's home for drinks, cards and partying. These activities were limited to the week-ends and occurred with regularity. Oftentimes, people would come from other Black communities to join in the socializing, and they were always made welcome in The Avenue. One participant remembers that "we had company from Chicago and the guy said 'you got any [place] to go [to

party]?' And we walked all the way to Crichton Avenue". Another recalls that "there were all kinds of parties. We used to go from house to house to party".

For others, especially the young mothers, family responsibilities limited their social activities to mostly spending time with the other young mothers in The Avenue.

> Everyone was so engrossed with their families. I mean, this was a very young area when I came here, people were just having their children. And [most times] ...they spent in their homes caring for their children.

> The women were too involved in their [families]. Just to exist was their main project in life. And so, we would get in groups and sit and chat, that kind of thing. They didn't have a whole lot of time. The men used to gather a lot, like week-ends.

Conclusion

When we look at the how the elders describe where and how they lived, we come back to some of the same basic themes that had salience for the earlier settlers. The strong sense of family which encompassed kin and non-kin, was still very important. The commitment to hard work and responsibility for family were still important characteristics defining how the elders maintained the values instilled in them by the settlers. There were changes too, though. Religion was not the focal point of a larger proportion of elders than settlers, although it continued to play a significant role for many of the families. Many of

the children had much more social interaction with their White school friends, so that the children were starting to move beyond the bounds of their community to develop social relationships outside the small, close circle of those with whom they lived.

Geographically, the physical distance separating the White neighbourhoods from the Black community was lessening as Whites continued to settle the surrounding area. For the elders, though, the social distance was still great. This was due largely to the inadequate living conditions forced upon the people in The Avenue. The message that came across to the people in The Avenue, who were continually denied access to the services taken for granted in the surrounding neighbourhoods, was that they did not need the services, they could do without. These elders, though, recognized the Town's racist policy and they became socially active to force the Town to recognize their rights as long-standing contributing members of society.

I think a statement used earlier in the text bears repeating here. Despite the changes and perhaps because of the continuing marginalization that people in The Avenue experienced, community as a geographically bounded area in which people have regular face-to-face contact continued to have salience for the people living in The Avenue. The

importance of community is summed up nicely in the following comment:

> I think, because we were very aware of one another, we didn't live separate lives. We lived together in a community under a bond. I think this is what it was all about (Phyllis Lucas, May 27).

This sense of togetherness is carried forward as some of the last generation to live in The Avenue give their perspectives on the importance of community in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LAST GENERATION

Introduction

Chapter Four gave us a glimpse of a community in transition. Many of the traditional characteristics of the Gemeinschaft still existed during the period the elders were raising their families. The Avenue was still geographically separated from the wider society and still lacked the services available to residents in other parts of Dartmouth. The sentiment that the Black people living in The Avenue were all like a family still existed.

In addition to these traditional features of community, we can also see a gradual shift away from the isolation and marginalization that so characterized this community since at least the late 1880s. The mobility provided by car ownership allowed the elders to go further afield both for work and socializing. The strict religious upbringing that the elders lived through manifested itself in how the elders raised their children. Even though there was an erosion of the religious values amongst many of the elders, this did not stop most of them from setting high moral standards for their children.

We now move on to the last generation that was raised in The Avenue. This part of the text deals with community both as bounded and dispersed. This section starts with an

overview of the participants, followed by an explanation of the methodology used, and then the analysis of the questionnaire data.

The Respondents

Sixteen respondents, representing seven families from The Avenue, completed questionnaires for this part of the project. Most of these respondents left The Avenue by the age of eighteen, either because of family relocations or when they finished their schooling. The respondents live in Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia, Hamilton, Ottawa and Wolfe Island, Ontario, LaSalle, Quebec, and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. All but one of the respondents has attended universities, technical colleges or trade schools, although none directly from high school. The respondents have worked in a variety of fields as indicated below.

Three of the respondents are retired military personnel. One, retired after twenty-five years with the military, has been a self-employed chimney sweep for the past eighteen years. This respondent was inducted into the Military Sports Hall of Fame in 1997. Another became a commissioned officer in 1967 and is now retired from the position of Lieutenant Colonel with the Department of

National Defense. The third retired after over tweny years with the military.

Four of the respondents are in business. One has been in banking for eighteen years, in various management and non-management positions. One is a medical secretary presently working as an administrative assistant. Another is a professional MC and owner of a video production company. The fourth is a retired marketing executive and systems analyst now working as a sales representative.

One respondent, trained as a heavy equipment operator, is presently employed as a labourer and is a member of the Nova Scotia Labourers' Union. Another is a light mechanic service technician employed locally.

Three of the respondents are social workers. One, who also holds an education degree, is an educator in an inner-city school. Another works with troubled youth in the Halifax Regional Municipality school system and is a part-time educator at the university level. The third is a self-employed social worker in a large metropolitan centre.

Methodology

The research instrument in this phase of the project was an in-depth, semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix

Five). The data comes from sixteen completed questionnaires. The demographic breakdown is nine males and seven females, all between the ages of forty and sixty-one, and representing seven families from The Avenue.[28]

One completed questionnaire was supplemented by a telephone interview at the request of the respondent. Four respondents were asked to complete a long form of the questionnaire. the four individuals were selected based on the depth of information they shared about The Avenue during my initial contacts soliciting volunteers for participation in the research project. These four questionnaires included one additional section in which the respondents were asked to draw a picture of The Avenue at a time period of their choice. Three of the four respondents completed this question.

One of the sketches is specific to the participant's home and its immediate surroundings; one of the drawings shows great detail and is approximately one and one half metres long. The third sketch is included as Appendix Seven. The sketch gives a sense of the area in which the Black people lived and can be referred to, where appropriate, as we move through analysis of the data. The remaining questions in all questionnaires ranged from the very broad,

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[28] One respondent self-identifies as Métis, the other fifteen as Black. During the 1950s and 1960s when these individuals were raised in The Avenue, all of the people of colour were considered as Black by the wider society.

asking for a description of where the respondents grew up, to the very specific, asking if there was and continues to be any connection amongst the people who lived in The Avenue.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to have respondents conceptualize where they were raised and to describe and define any long-term impact growing up in The Avenue had for them. Do the respondents define where they were raised as a community? If so, what are the features and characteristics that give salience to this area, and what makes The Avenue different from other areas in close proximity? How connected did the respondents feel to the group within The Avenue, and to society generally outside the area? Was this connectedness based on race, class, or a combination of the two? The questions, for the most part, were aimed at focusing the respondents on group behaviour and dynamics.

Defining Community

> Where the pavement ends, follow the dirt road until you come to a settlement. That's The Avenue - at the distant end of Crichton Avenue (Terri Gray).

I did a manual count of the words the respondents used to describe the group of people who lived in The Avenue

during the time they were growing up. Table 3 shows the number of times key words were used by the respondents when referring to The Avenue of their youth.

Table 3.
Descriptors of The Avenue by Count

Descriptor	Count
Community	46
Family	26
Black Community	11
Close-Knit	5

Note: No. respondents 16

Table 3 clearly shows that these sixteen respondents use the word community when defining The Avenue. One respondent provides a definition of community in relation to The Avenue as "meaning that all of the lives of the people were intertwined and often the daily events of someone in the [community] were felt by more than that particular family" (Doug Lucas). From another perspective, The Avenue "was a close-knit community, a community that gave me a sense of security and trust where a child could feel safe" (Rochelle Mainville). Still another respondent describes The Avenue as "a place of contrasts that made it a throwback ...from another era: outhouses, wells and dirt roads; many nice homes nestled within a natural forest setting (Susan Lucas).

We will look at the location of The Avenue within the wider society, the racial diversity within The Avenue, how the respondents describe boundaries, both social and geographic, and the physical condition of the homes and road in The Avenue, as the primary defining features of The Avenue. A look at these features will help clarify why the respondents perceive The Avenue as a community, and the importance of The Avenue as a community for the people who lived there.

Location of The Avenue Within the Wider Society

We can say that The Avenue is located geographically at the top of Crichton Avenue, north of downtown Dartmouth, and that Crichton Avenue runs off Ochterloney Street along the western shore of Sullivan's Pond, which is near the downtown core. We can say that The Avenue is less than two kilometres from this intersection and that to find The Avenue of these participants' youth, you could

> drive up Crichton Avenue until you come to a dirt road, actually where the pavement ends - that is the start of The Avenue. You would notice small, colourful houses and the city dump's stacks giving off incineration (Fred Wilson).

The Avenue

> was situated on the border of a White community but in many ways, exist[ed] outside of [the White community's] way of life. The contrast is the difference between two

> different worlds -- one with all the advantages of White privilege and [the other] with all of the hardships attached to difference (Blackness) (Susan Lucas).

It does not take long, when talking to the last generation who lived in The Avenue, before they mention how separate this community was from the wider society. And as you talk further, you come to understand that this distance is not so much geographic as it is social. The Avenue ran into the White, middle-class neighbourhood of Crichton Park, and there were no physical barriers separating The Avenue from the Whites who lived in close proximity to the first Black homes located in The Avenue. But the social barriers were recognizable and significant to these respondents, residents of The Avenue.

Social Boundaries

As we saw in Chapter Two, most Blacks in Nova Scotia were settled in isolated areas, away from much of White society. Although it is not clear how African Nova Scotians were first settled in The Avenue, it is clear that this settlement was on the outskirts of, but always a part of, the Town of Dartmouth and that the Blacks who lived in The Avenue were somewhat isolated. This point was raised by respondents who recall that

> as in most cities and towns in Canada during the 30s-50s, it was beneficial to have Negroes in small pockets and, wherever possible, separate from the rest of the community (White), and The Avenue was no exception (Mike Lucas).

> There was little communication with "outsiders". I grew up having no friends other than family living on The Avenue (Celina Grant).

After World War II, in the late 1940s and early 1950s when White families started to settle in Crichton Park and further down Crichton Avenue, the geographic isolation diminished. However, the African Nova Scotians in The Avenue were still a group of poor Blacks in the midst of what was quickly becoming a White, middle-class area. And, as one respondent recalls, it was the way we were forced to live that made us conscious of our social distance from the wider society:

> we were forced to be separate. There was this invisible boundary. Nobody ever really said anything to you, you just knew that you had your place. Those people had running water and sewerage, ...that sort of thing. And ...believe it or not, I did recognize those things and they made a big difference to me. Especially when you see them in somebody else's house and you see how easy it was for them. I think [these amenities] were kept from [the people in The Avenue]. I remember when I was very small, Dad and a few of the other people from The Avenue going down to ...town hall and fighting for those things. And it was a long time but they never gave up. They did this not on one occasion but a few occasions and they kept trying to press their case. I can remember that, and the fact that our road wasn't paved. And, ...if we had snow removal and that sort of thing, it was always after the fact (Alana Plaku).

Another respondent recalls that the long walk to the downtown schools

> was tiring enough, but having to walk through the deep snow was unfair. I remember wondering why our road could not be plowed when they cleaned the road in the White section (Susan Lucas).

One respondent suggested that perhaps these services were not available in The Avenue because of the distance. However, in the wintertime the snow plow would plow all the way up Crichton Avenue, stop at the dirt road, and then plow the adjacent road that went up to the incinerator. When you think about it, distance was not a factor. As well, during the early 1950s, when the new developments of Crichton Park, Woodlawn, and other areas of Dartmouth were taking form, all of these services and amenities were available to people moving into these areas. Crichton Park is in the same general area as The Avenue, approximately two kilometres from the downtown. But what's more interesting, when you talk about distance, is that Woodlawn is approximately four kilometres away from the downtown core. When you look at it from this perspective, it is difficult to say that the services were not available in The Avenue because of distance.

Seven of the respondents mention the lack of services and amenities as major contributing factors to creating a social distance between the African Nova Scotians in The

Avenue and the surrounding White society. Doug Lucas recalls that

> as a child I always felt that the area in which I was raised was one that was socially excluded from the wider society. As I grew older, I understood that this was implied by the enforcement of our physical conditions (Doug Lucas).

Two respondents point out that "most of the adult Blacks confined their interactions with Whites to work, and accessing certain services (doctor visits, work, shopping, paying bills, etc) in downtown Dartmouth". And, due to historic racism that prevented Blacks from attending the White churches[29], the African Nova Scotians in The Avenue attended a Black church which had its historic beginnings in The Avenue.[30] Two respondents say that attendance at separate churches was a contributing factor to maintaining social distance.[31]

Geographic Boundaries

> The Avenue had the barrens[32] to the north, the stone crusher and town dump to the west, Lake Banook and Lake MicMac East, and Taylor Farms south (Mike Lucas).

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[29] Pachai, Bridglal. *Beneath The Clouds of The Promised Land: The Survival of Nova Scotia's Blacks, Volume II: 1800-1989.* p52-3, 57, 62-3.

[30] Richard Preston, who helped found the African United Baptist Association (AUBA), was instrumental in setting up the first Black Baptist church in Dartmouth. This first church was known as Coloured Meeting House, and was started in 1844 in The Avenue (Pachai, p60)

[31] Contributed by Robert Maxwell and Terri Gray.

[32] The Barrens was a heavily wooded area in Crichton Avenue Extension. Residents of The Avenue spent much time there in the summer picking blueberries and playing.

The cognitive maps that some of the respondents describe clearly delineate The Avenue as geographically separate from the wider society. Suttles (1972:22) defines cognitive maps as the images individuals have of the area in which they live. Suttles suggests that individuals can use actual physical characteristics within a defined area to draw up their cognitive maps. He further suggests that cognitive maps serve as part of the "social control apparatus" that are important in "regulating spatial movement to avoid conflict between ...groups". Mike's description of his cognitive map above shows that The Avenue had natural and manmade boundaries. Some of the boundaries provided great enjoyment and beauty (The barrens, the Lakes), while others were an embarrassment and environmentally hazardous (the crusher, the dump). Another respondent describes her cognitive map as one which is defined by an actual physical distance so that she "felt no connection to the surrounding society, neither emotionally nor physically". For this respondent, the end of the pavement and the beginning of the dirt road signified the great distance separating the Black community from the White community. Other respondents also mentioned the dirt road

and heavily wooded areas as significant geographic boundaries.[33]

Physical Conditions in The Avenue

> I always felt that they (the Black people) tried to show the White people that they were capable of maintaining and keeping up this front. But it wasn't ...a front - those people really were that way. They were good people and they wanted to show that they could do just as well as anybody else given whatever conveniences and privileges that other people had. But they did it without those things (Alana Plaku).

Many of the respondents remember the houses as small for the number of people. Fifteen of the sixteen respondents recall that most of the houses and properties were well maintained. Most of the elders took great pride in their home and property ownership. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the mostly well-kept properties were remarked on by the elders from The Avenue and other parts of Dartmouth. The participant from Crichton Park recalls that

> the homes [in The Avenue] were very similar to our homes. They all had homes the same as my home so I ...thought ...that this was [their] neighbourhood. I never realized until much later on in life that it was ...considered ...a segregated area because Blacks lived at the end of Crichton Avenue and we didn't. And at that time there was no other Blacks living in the other part of Crichton Park. I thought that was just where they chose to build their homes. I never associated with the fact that they lived there and that might have

[33] Participants who made similar comments: Terri Gray, George Edmonds, Fred Wilson, Doug Lucas, John Lucas.

> been different. And I don't even know if it was necessarily (Janet Randall).

A major drawback, though, was the lack of city services to The Avenue. A water main was not laid in The Avenue until 1963. Up to that time the residents continued to draw water from the wells for all their needs - cooking, bathing, washing clothes. A pumping station and forced main for sewerage were not installed until 1986. Many families had septic tanks installed to allow for indoor plumbing. The elders then had to deal with the challenges of having the tanks emptied regularly and the mess and stench of leaky tanks. Some families continued to use outhouses. And this small stretch of road was not paved until 1988, well after the last of the last generation had left The Avenue.[34]

The respondents in this study remember the dirt road or, as one respondent exclaims "What road! There was a dirt track that flooded in spring and only got plowed [in the winter] if you called and complained" (John Lucas). Many respondents remember the road as "very bumpy, with lots of potholes", that was repaired and covered with tar in the warm weather to control for dust.[35] The absence of a paved road was also remembered by the participant from Crichton Park who recalled that

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[34] The information regarding the installation of these services was provided by Rob MacKenzie, Halifax Regional Municipality.

[35] The participants who made similar comments about the road: Craig Lucas, Doug Lucas, Terri Gray, Sheila Lucas, George Edmonds, Rochelle Mainville.

> you didn't have a paved street. The pavement stopped [just below the first Black home]. The section that the Blacks lived in was not paved. It was always the dirt road (Janet Randall).

Conclusion

The respondents described The Avenue as an area physically distinct from the wider society. The respondents recognized both social and geographic boundaries setting The Avenue apart from the wider society. A lack of services meant that living conditions were challenging for the men, women, and children who had to draw well water, empty 'slop buckets' into the outhouses, and clear the road to make it accessible in the winter. These were harsh, exceptional conditions for an area within the boundaries of the City of Dartmouth, conditions which tended to isolate and marginalize the people living in The Avenue. And finally, the respondents describe the people in The Avenue as a close-knit group, many of whom were related and others who were absorbed into the overarching familial tendencies of the longer-term residents. We will next look at the cohesiveness of the people in The Avenue as a continuation of the exploration of how these respondents perceive the people from The Avenue as a group.

CHAPTER SIX

COHESIVENESS OF THE AVENUE

Social Life

> We always used to get together ourselves, all the kids. And then, maybe a Friday or Saturday night, all the adults, they'd sort of let their hair down. People would come visiting. People would break out in song and laughter and maybe they had a few drinks. It was a great time. It was a good feeling. That was the release that these people had from a week of grueling work. And church of course. That was a social event really. It was more structured than [some of the other Black churches], but it was really a social gathering (Alana Plaku).

The respondents recall that the social life for people from The Avenue revolved overwhelmingly around family and church, with a limited involvement in outside sports events and community groups. Fourteen of the sixteen respondents stated that most social events revolved around the extended family, either the children playing with their cousins, or the adults socializing in their limited spare time with each other through house parties.

The church was next in importance as a source of social activities for the last generation. Ten of the sixteen participants include the church as a place to meet and be with their peers from The Avenue and other parts of Dartmouth. Within this group of sixteen respondents, At least fourteen, possibly all sixteen, attended Sunday School, church, and other functions held in the church

geared to youth, on a regular basis. Sunday School and church attendance were mandatory for most children, although as we got older attending the different youth programs was optional.

Outside activities contributed least to the social life of the last generation in The Avenue. Only four of the sixteen respondents, all male, mention activities outside the Black community as part of their social sphere as children. Three of the four respondents were involved in sports. Two of the four respondents mentioned day camps which they disliked either because there was too much structure and poor quality food, or because he "did not feel welcome because ...[he] was from the Black community". And one of the four mentioned community groups such as cubs, and sea cadets. This is not to say that more children from The Avenue did not participate in sporting or community activities outside The Avenue. What is included here is what had salience for these sixteen participants in their youth, exclusive of school activities. I might mention that I also went outside the Black community for involvement in sports to become the first Black champion gymnast in the Maritimes.

The elders stayed more to themselves than did their children. As the opening quote shows, the elders worked hard and played hard, and for the most part, the play did not interfere with the work or move outside The Avenue or other

Black communities. There were often boisterous house parties with loud music and card games on a Friday or Saturday night which the children enjoyed spying on. Some of the respondents remember these get-togethers as exciting, fun times, while one other respondent recalls the sometimes more aggressive nature of the partying, especially when heavy drinking was involved. The point here is that the elders' behaviour and interactions changed substantially from that of the settlers. As detailed in Chapter Three, the settlers were more involved in the church, both spiritually and socially. As well, the settlers were much more isolated from the White society due to the classist and racist ideology prevailing during theirs, and their forebears', lives. The elders, on the other hand, were a part of a changing society. Many of these male elders had participated in the war effort and were exposed to different groups of people and for some, different countries. Automation allowed these elders a degree of mobility that was unheard of in previous generations. As well, better access to education and employment was gradually drawing these elders out of the poverty that so characterized the lot of African Nova Scotians.

In addition, many of the children felt comfortable bringing their White school peers into The Avenue and thus diminishing the long-term isolation from White society that

the adults and children described repeatedly. And finally, these elders continually challenged a political system that denied them services that were available to the rest of Dartmouth. We can see, in the economic and social transitions occurring, both inside and outside The Avenue, during the elders' adulthood, that these changes would also impact the group dynamics of the African Nova Scotians living in The Avenue.

The Shaping of Identity

> I feel very fortunate that during my youth I didn't have to look beyond the people I loved to find the qualities that I find necessary to "live with oneself". In my parents I saw commitment, love, strength and dedication. In my sisters and brother I saw individualism, cohesion and determination. In the community I saw concern, understanding and support (Doug Lucas).

Table 4 shows a breakdown of the most important morals and values that were instilled in the respondents in their youth, and that form the basis of their identities. The respondents provided the categories.

Table 4.
Importance of Morals and Values by Number of Respondents.

Morals and Values	Number of Respondents
Respect for Self and Others	12
Moral Values Based on Religious Beliefs	7
Importance of Family	6
Protestant Work Ethic	5
Responsibility for Others	3
Honesty	4
Total Responses	37

Note: No. of Respondents = 13
All responses by each respondent are recorded.

Religion and the Protestant Work Ethic played a big part in shaping the identities of these respondents. Many of the respondents see the religious teachings of their youth as fundamental to their identity. This may seem contrary to the comment made in the previous section where some of the respondents said that the social, not the religious, aspects of church attendance were more important to them during their youth. What we are talking about in this section goes beyond the confines of organized, orchestrated religion to the core of how people shape and live their daily lives. However, some of the respondents point out that there was more than a thread of hypocrisy in how some of the elders lived and how some of them raised their children. For example, two of the respondents point out that for some of the elders in The Avenue, the old motto of "don't do as I

do, do as I say" was, at times, relevant. Through it all, though, the Protestant Work Ethic kept most of the elders focused on providing for their families.

Education

> Education was of a high standard but the youth of The Avenue were not encouraged by the teachers to excel (Dwight Lucas).

Access to education is an area that generates substantial change in the expectations of the elders for their children, and the aspirations of the youth in The Avenue. Dartmouth had the Stairs Street School, a segregated school for Black children, from 1879 to 1915 when it was integrated, and finally closed in 1916. Many of the White parents in the downtown core were disappointed with this school's closing and signed petitions to protest the closure of this segregated school.[36] From 1916 onward, Black children in the Town of Dartmouth attended the common schools based on location instead of race. The educational process for the last generation will be explored by looking at the location and accessibility of the schools, and the quality of the education.

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[36] Evans, Doris and Tynes, Gertrude. *Telling the Truth. Reflections: Segregated Schools in Nova Scotia.* Stairs Street was the previous name of Park Avenue, in downtown Dartmouth. The Stairs Street School was known as the Colored School until the name was formally changed to Stairs Street School by the School Board in 1889. p28-30.

Fifteen of the respondents agree that all public schools in Dartmouth were open to the children from The Avenue. One respondent was unclear on this question because she left The Avenue at age thirteen. In 1961 Crichton Park School opened to service the growing number of children in the Crichton Avenue, Crichton Park areas. Prior to 1961 most of the children walked the approximately two kilometres to the downtown schools, as did most of the other children from the general vicinity. The children living in The Extension walked approximately the same distance to a school in the North End of Dartmouth. The children in The Extension had to travel part way through woods, and this was worrisome to the children, especially during hunting season. Five of the respondents mentioned that the schools were far for the younger children, and three of the respondents felt that the schools were all within walking distance. The other respondents did not specify whether or not they thought the schools were difficult to get to.

The respondents overwhelmingly state that the quality of education in the Dartmouth Schools they attended was good. Fourteen of the respondents answered to that effect. During the 1950s and 1960s Dartmouth was considered to have one of the best educational systems in the Province, and this distinction is reinforced by these respondents. One respondent recalls that the teachers "showed a very keen

interest in getting us educated" (Alana Plaku). Another participant recalls that she "was not treated, or at least ...[she] did not feel that ...[she] was treated - any differently from the White kids". This respondent remembers that she "had one teacher who ...[she] felt may not have appreciated ...[her] being in the class, ...[as she was] more or less ignored". But "generally ...[her] teachers encouraged [her] and gave [her] due recognition for good grades" (Terri Gray). One respondent, however, said that the quality of the education was not good because "the curriculum was racist, sexist and classist" (Sheila Lucas).

The more interesting information that this question generated was that seven of the respondents answered that although they thought the quality of the education was good, they were not treated as equals to or by the White children in the system.

> The "system" to me was just that, a system. You entered in to become just like everyone else and you come out knowing how to read, write and do arithmetic, and leave with no sense of self-identity. My memory of school is that I entered public school at age six having a wonderful impression of my identity. That was taken from me, eroded over time, as it was through school I discovered I was different, a misfit that did not fit into the rest of society. I felt "poor" for the first time. We did not come from fancy houses with indoor plumbing. None of the White children would play with me. I was called n----- and got into many fights as I was quite a tomboy. I hated school. It robbed me of my dignity, sense of self-worth, and eroded my sense of having a place in the world. I learned to mis-trust Whites, and hate who I was. It was harsh and the racism directed at me was not hidden.

Some of the respondents recall references to 'Bunga' and 'Simba'[37] and how they were made to feel different and inferior and isolated from the social activities of their White peers. Another recalls that "the teachers didn't care if you learned just as long as you were there" (Gary Lucas).

For many of the children, "education was not stressed at home". The older ones still felt the pressures of the past to go to work as soon as possible, to begin "contributing financially to the household". Finishing high school was not really stressed. Most of the younger children from the last generation felt the pressure to get out on their own and support themselves. Although there were many children who had the proven scholastic ability to continue on to higher education, neither the teachers nor most of the parents encouraged or worked through this option with the children.[38] One respondent recalls that "the children of The

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[37] We learned about 'Bunga' and 'Simba' in grade 6 geography. We learned that they were characteristic of Africans and Blacks in general in that they had thick lips and wooly hair. I recall these references vividly because it was this story about my African heritage, which prompted my class to turn to me, the only Black in the class, and laugh. This was my first introduction to racism and it started opening my eyes to some of the harsher elements of being Black in a White society.

[38] I recall an incident that happened to me while I was in grade 8. The principal approached me in the hallway one day with a cheque in a sealed envelope and words of congratulations. Apparently I was being recognized by some organization for academic achievement because I was Black. At the time, my only interest was that someone was giving me money, apparently for nothing. However, I have been puzzled over these many years about this incident. Looking back, I think it would have been an opportune time for the principal to open the discussion about the possibility of higher education to me. It is certainly not something that I have ever dwelt on, but writing about this incident makes me wonder about missed opportunities. You see, I too had internalized the norm that a university education was for White, middle-class children. Although I have done a considerable amount of studying in my adulthood, it took me until 1990 to shake free of this antiquated mindset and enter a university classroom.

Avenue were often told that they were fortunate to have gone this far in school [junior and senior high school] by the teachers" (Dwight Lucas). Another respondent recalls that

> there was a tendency to encourage Blacks to go into a program that would suit them for trade jobs as opposed to encouraging them to enter university. Many Black students missed out because of this recommendation (it was a general class as opposed to an academic class) (Terri Gray).

Conclusion

From the parents' perspective, their financial status did not allow for the luxury of higher education for their children. The parents "were [more] intent on survival and teaching [the children] to be survivors". From the children's perspective, they were simply conforming to societal norms. and expectations. University was for the White, middle-class children, not for the poor, Black ones.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION

Social and Geographic Changes

> During the 70s when I lived away, many left the community or sold out one by one to developers. The Avenue used to be so beautiful with the trees, peace and quiet. The eighties saw surveyors, community meetings (I knew nothing about), development, new homes, growing [White] families with young children and an open parenting style whereby boundaries appear non-existent and the children roam where they please. It's very difficult to become accustomed to so little respect and the violation of the old community (Sheila Lucas).

The last generation matured, and left The Avenue in pursuit of work, marriage, or adventure. Many of this generation followed the better job markets and resettled in other parts of Canada. One respondent was relocated in another province at a young age. By 1976, all of the last generation had left The Avenue, leaving a small number of elders behind in the community.

Crichton Park School was built in 1961. The stone crusher was removed by 1964. The incinerator/dump was removed by 1970 following aggressive complaints about unsanitary conditions and pollution by the Crichton Park residents. The MicMac Mall shopping complex, including a city block of apartment townhouses bordering the eastern section of The Avenue, was built in the 1970s. The City of Dartmouth expropriated The Extension lands in the late

1960s, to develop a highway system partially through that vacated property. The Extension residents resettled in other parts of Dartmouth and Nova Scotia.

There had been continual development in Crichton Park, since the 1950s so that this neighbourhood had reached the limits of development and was as close to extending into The Avenue on the east as could happen without the two communities overlapping. The City of Dartmouth expropriated the lands in the rest of The Avenue in 1985, supposedly for street purposes as stated on the expropriation document.[39] Although there were some land disputes and a lot of anxiety on the part of the elders, they were all left with clear title to their lands. For many years the elders have contended that the City of Dartmouth had no claims to any of the land in The Avenue, and that developers only owned what had been sold to them, mostly after the deaths of long-term residents. However, the property that was not claimed by the elders ended up either in the hands of developers or the City.

In either case, builders were soon busy creating an upscale development with many large homes squeezed onto tiny lots, while destroying the "physical beauty, [The Avenue's] natural forest areas" (Susan Lucas). As a result of the

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[39] The expropriation document #2787, is dated 1985 and recorded at Land Registry, Book 9036 at pages 792-795. Apparently, the explanation of expropriation for street purposes gives the City the right to claim lands that leaves the residents no recourse.

development, there was an influx of Whites into The Avenue, an area that White, middle-class families would not have dreamt of settling in when there was a larger number of Blacks. One respondent recalls that up to 1965, when his family relocated out of The Avenue, the area was primarily inhabited by African Nova Scotians. And now in the 1990s, developers have created an area of "prime real estate for Whites" (Fred Wilson), so that it is now "fashionable to live up The Avenue" (Mike Lucas). Now, there are only a few Black families left in The Avenue, and it appears that outside interests are biding their time, waiting for these people to give up their land and move on. One participant sums it up nicely as follows:

> A lot of people moved away and some people died. And coming back, it wasn't the same. It was not just socially different, it was geographically different too. You know, I see people living right up in back of our house where there were never any houses before. It was sort of depressing. And I don't know why, it's very strange. Now it became very small. It was like the walls closing in on you. [And I remember] as a child we were an entity unto ourselves. We didn't depend on the people who lived at the foot of Crichton Avenue. And now it's like, a huge portion [of our history] has been erased (Alana Plaku).

Dispersal and Social Relationships

> I feel a bond with the people of The Avenue, although many have dispersed to other cities/countries. This bond is important to me because no matter where we live, our shared experiences remain, positive and negative. This

> bond also gives me a sense of belongingness and a connection with others that has formed/shaped my ...identity (Susan Lucas).

None of the sixteen respondents lives in The Avenue now. This last generation left, as did others before them, because it was expected. When asked if they had any social contact with people from The Avenue, all respondents said yes. Of the sixteen respondents, ten maintain contact with various members of their extended family only, while six maintain contact with extended family and friends from The Avenue. All sixteen respondents said they feel a general closeness to the people from The Avenue.

> I feel we lived somewhat in a cocoon apart from the rest of the world. And only we knew we were there and what the specialness of the place was. Everyone else saw it as the location of the city dump or the small stretch of road leading to the highway. I remember all the people of The Avenue being gentle, humble, and respectful of each other. In the end, it didn't matter what others thought. Most were happy having "a piece of our own" it seemed (Celina Grant).

Table 5 shows the descriptors the respondents used most often when explaining the bond they feel to people from The Avenue.

Table 5.
Descriptors of Sense of Community by Count

Descriptor	# Responses
Identity	8
Belongingness	8
Shared Experiences Pos/Neg	6
Family	5
Roots	4
Stay in Touch	1
Total Responses	32

Note: No. Respondents = 13
All responses by each respondent are recorded.

The opening quote includes the three most often expressed sentiments and sums up the continuing salience of community expressed by the respondents in this research project. Another respondent explains the bond in relation to how he thinks people in other communities feel about those they grew up with in this way:

> Other than the natural bond that everyone feels to the people of their youth, I feel that the people of The Avenue have a special bond because of the ...obstacles [we overcame]. This is important to me because it has helped me to cope with hardships and disappointments in my adult life (Doug Lucas).

A third participant expressed the bond as a tie to roots and how all of the people within the community were instrumental in our upbringing. It was not only the good times, but the hardships, that shaped people's identities and left such an enduring impression on people's psyches. And when asked if

people from other communities share these same types of sentiments, this respondent's reply was

> I don't think so. And the reason that I say that is because we had to depend on each other so much because if some people didn't have something, somebody else was more than willing to give. And they did. They really did. And I think that you really feel that now. You feel this sense of community, camaraderie, or whatever you want to call it. Or cohesiveness (Alana Taylor).

Dispersal and Salience of Community

> People from The Avenue will always have a special bond because of the closeness fostered and the special conditions we all grew up with (Mike Lucas).

Fourteen of the sixteen respondents said they still consider the people who lived in The Avenue as a group, although they are mostly dispersed now. Table 6 shows the descriptors the respondents used most often when explaining the enduring salience of community.

Table 6.
Descriptors of Salience of Community by Count.

Descriptor	Count
Sense of Family	6
Special Conditions	6
Interaction During Formative Years	4
Importance of Roots	4

Note: No. respondents = 14
All responses by each respondent are recorded.

The two major reasons for these respondents experiencing an ongoing sense of community are the feeling that we are all family, and the conditions that we endured in the Avenue, both of which sentiments are expressed in the opening quote. Another respondent explains why, when the former residents of The Avenue are dispersed and not necessarily in regular contact with each other, why the bond of community is so strong and enduring. From this respondent's perspective

> Everyone knew each other. There were shared experiences during the formative years. Many people were related, which made the bond stronger. People laughed together, cried together, shared meals, borrowed from each other when necessary, supported each other emotionally, socialized, [and] understood experiences of racism, although they were seldom talked about (Sheila Lucas).

Still another respondent expresses the enduring nature of the community from The Avenue in relation to the wider society as follows: "I think that life outside of The Avenue was different enough to create an inseparable bond between generations of people born there pre-1975" (Doug Lucas). The simplest explanation, though, is that "once from The Avenue, always from The Avenue. We were all like one large family" (Robert Maxwell).

A final question, in attempting to define the salience of community, dealt with the racialized difference of most of the people in The Avenue from the wider society. In other words, was the fact that most of the residents were Black

the major reason for the feeling of cohesiveness and community expressed so strongly by these respondents. Of the fourteen respondents who answered this question, six said yes, that race was a major factor in their identifying as a group, and eight answered no to this question. Three of those who answered yes explain their responses in this way:

> We were a very distinct community within a community. For better or worse, whenever someone asked you where you lived, all that was required was "Up The Avenue" (Mike Lucas)

> Like any socially outcast [group], it is important for those neglected to bond and form a support system to maintain a sense of importance for themselves and to give strength to the children. I think that the people from The Avenue felt caught in the middle - happy to be out of the country[40], but not quite city (Doug Lucas).

> Partially because of racial/ethnic differences and partially because of a close-knit community with many family connections. I don't believe there were any members of the community who were Black who didn't at some time experience racism. The difference then versus now was that Blacks gave the impression that they were more passive about racial intolerance. There was a mentality that "change was still coming". Even the term "racism" was not used in the 60s, it was prejudice or discrimination. But you didn't hear members of the Black community calling Whites on their racism - such occurrences were rare. The majority of White children were educated formally (school) and informally (at home) to think of themselves as superior and Blacks as inferior. Racism bound ours and other Black communities together - we only had each other (Sheila Lucas).

One respondent who stated that racialized difference was not applicable explains her response in this way:

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[40] Because of the extremes of isolation and marginalization experienced within the more geographically remote Black communities.

> I'm not certain race was the predominant factor. Environment was the main factor. The community was unique because of its location, the family tree history, etc. I do not identify because of race. I identify because of living in an environment somewhat isolated from the rest of society, living close to the Earth and not being socially active elsewhere (Celina Grant).

Conclusion

In this chapter, the respondents talked about the changing nature of community, and how the encroachment of the surrounding society forced many changes in The Avenue. Crichton Park expanded, a school was built, the dump and crusher were removed, large shopping and residential complexes were built. Development changed what was previously considered as a socially undesirable area to live, because of the Black population, into a highly sought after residential area for Whites.

Against this backdrop of affluence, the respondents recall the marginalization they experienced while growing up in The Avenue. The respondents remember that it was the strong family and community bonds that combined to buffer them against the impact of a racist society. And the respondents point to family bonds and enforced hardship as two of the determinants in keeping them connected to each other even though dispersed.

We will now move on to discuss all three phases of the project, to see how the overall findings tie into the theory, as presented in Chapter One.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Two Approaches to the Concept of Community

Introduction

This case study has been an exploration of the concept of community, both from a 'traditional' and from a 'new' perspective. The traditional operational definition relates to all three phases of the project. Here, we consider community as a group of people having strong kinship or social ties and daily face-to-face contact, in a geographically bounded area. The new operational definition relates to the third phase of the project only. Community, relative to the dispersed, last generation, is defined as aspatial due to out-migration of individuals from a geographically-bounded area. Individuals can have infrequent social contacts, many of which are mediated by technology. However, it is the strength of the interpersonal ties, based on past history and social cohesiveness, that underpins these often contingent relationships.

We will consider how the traditional operational definition defines how community was perceived for the participants in all three phases of the project. In addition, we will look at how the new definition relates to the last generation's perceptions in Phase Three.

Community and The Settlers

In Phase One, we looked at how the settlers interacted with each other and the wider society. The settlers were presented as a close-knit group of people who were God-fearing, hard-working, and self-sufficient. Some of the families were blood relatives, but the sense of family transcended the bounds of kin relationships to include all the families living in The Avenue. The people owned their own homes and took pride in maintaining their homes and properties.

Race was a determining factor of why the people lived in The Avenue. The Avenue was considered a Black Settlement. It was therefore a place where upwardly mobile Blacks, looking to buy land, could settle and live amongst their own without being too far removed from employment opportunities.

Tönnies' ideal depiction of the Gemeinschaft relied on a combination of the major components of territory, kinship, ethnicity and religion (Gusfield, 1975). All of these characteristics defined The Avenue and the people living there, although territory in this study is considered from a different perspective than Tönnies intended.

Tönnies' conception of the Gemeinschaft depended on a group of people with essential ties to the land so that working the land was how they subsisted. The land provided the people with food and shelter, and the people did not

have to venture afield to find other means of survival. This was Tönnies' Gemeinschaft of locality, defined by "collective ownership of the land" (1965:43).

In the case of the settlers in this study, they bought and settled on the land not to work it, but to own a piece of real estate that was still within the Town of Dartmouth, and not too far for walking back and forth to work each day. Some of the settlers maintained small gardens, and these were useful in providing much of their fresh produce in the summer, and preserves in winter. The difference for the settlers was that this was not communal land and they were not bound to it. The settlers could sell their properties and move on if they desired. This was not the case in the Gemeinschaft, as the people were bound to the land for life. So, we can say that the settlers had somewhat more flexibility in where to live, but that their reasons for living in The Avenue were based on a closeness to each other, their religion, and their race.

Many of the settlers were either related or knew each other well before locating to The Avenue. They probably chose to live together in The Avenue because they had the same deep religious and family values, and work ethics. There was, therefore, what Gusfield terms a "consciousness of kind" and a "sense of participating in the same history" (1975:35).

Tönnies' depiction of the Gemeinschaft was an ideal-typical portrayal of community. We can see that the settlers and The Avenue, as presented by the participants and detailed above, fall within Tönnies conception of the Gemeinschaft. Tönnies' traditional definition of community is easily adapted to describe how and where the settlers lived.

Community and the Elders

If we carry this discussion forward to the elders, we can start to see the impact of the Great Depression and the Gesellschaft having a greater influence, especially after the Second World War. While the settlers would have been educated in segregated schools housed in the Black communities, all of the elders attended the common schools in Dartmouth. So, the Black children, at an early age, were exposed to White society and middle-class values, and the difference between how and where the Black people lived and how and where the White people lived. The Black children from The Avenue benefited from involvement in the educational system in the common schools, which was markedly different from that provided in the segregated schools in the more isolated Black communities.

Many of the men in The Avenue were a part of the war effort, and were, therefore, exposed to a wide range of

experiences. This increased exposure to a world outside The Avenue, plus the increased mobility with the affordability of cars, gave the residents in The Avenue better access to employment throughout the province. The residents also enjoyed a wider social sphere including many of the other Black communities. However, this increased level of sophistication, mobility and socializing contributed to the erosion of the deep religious values passed on from the settlers. That said, religion still maintained an important place for members of the community, especially in how the children were raised.

In addition, the children were starting to bring their White school friends into The Avenue. The socializing between the Black and White children started to break down some of the long-term social barriers between the Black and White communities.

The elders, though, generally remained isolated socially from the surrounding White society and continued to rely primarily on each other for social and moral support. In addition, the people in The Avenue were more politically involved in attempting to have access to the services available in other parts of Dartmouth, and this political activism also contributed to a sense of solidarity.

So, we begin to see the work of the Gesellschaft in the transition in the social and political interaction with

people from The Avenue and the wider society. However, the people in The Avenue are still bound by a strong sense of family and kinship, territory, race and religion. The Avenue and the people living in The Avenue still constitute a community in the traditional sense, based on Tönnies' definition.

Bounded Community and The Last Generation

The respondents from the last generation were clear in their perception of The Avenue of their youth as a unique community to grow up in, different from most other Black communities in Nova Scotia, although with many of the same physical characteristics. The geographic community for them was defined by social barriers as a result of a lack of City services such as running water and sewerage. Geographically, there was no discernible distance that separated the Black community from the surrounding White community. However, the respondents recalled the dirt road as a signifier of the separation and distance between the two communities. Interestingly, the dirt road, of all the barriers, was the last to go.

A dirt road and lack of city services most often identified the Black communities in Nova Scotia until recently. In fact, this lack of services to Black communities appears surprisingly widespread and uniform. A

case in point is a small, Black community in the city of Glen Allen, in the Mississippi Delta.

This Black community was portrayed in a film entitled *Once Upon a Time ...When We Were Colored*, a 1993 movie narrated by Clifton L. Taulbert, about his life growing up in a segregated Black community known as Colored Town. Taulbert is of the same generation as the respondents in this research project, and he recalls that

> once we crossed the railroad tracks and turned onto the paved surface of [the main road], we had crossed an invisible boundary. For now, we were uptown!

I only happened upon this film recently, after collecting all my data, and I was surprised at the number of similarities in geography and sentiment between Colored Town and The Avenue. The major difference, of course, was that Glen Allen had the Ku Klux Klan and Jim Crow laws to maintain order. The racism aimed at the Black communities in Nova Scotia was not as visible, but just as effective in maintaining the status quo.

The respondents talked extensively about the bond amongst the families in The Avenue, and how the shared experiences, both good and bad, were important in developing strong identities. The respondents recognized the effort the elders put in to provide the necessities of life, and how committed the elders were to their families. There was a sense of belonging and an overriding sense of security and

support from people within The Avenue that more than compensated for the struggle to cope in a racist society. Again, I go back to Clifton Taulbert, a world apart from the last generation, to reinforce the points made by the respondents. You would think that Taulbert came from The Avenue as he states that

> it was a community populated by maids, domestics, field hands, teachers, farmers, and preachers. All Colored. And all set apart by the painful and humiliating barriers of racial segregation. But it was also a place where people nurtured and protected each other, and just enjoyed life together.
>
> All that I am or ever will be stems from growing up among my extended family in a section of Glen Allen know as Colored Town.

The community, as a source of nurturance, support and territoriality was still basic to how the respondents define where and how they lived as youth. The community was considered unique for a variety of reasons. The Avenue was located in a middle-class area, unlike many other Black communities. For instance, North Preston, East Preston and Cherry Brook, as the oldest Black communities in Dartmouth, were located well outside the City limits. The elders in The Avenue were all fortunate in finding work, which enabled them to support their families and maintain their homes and their properties. In fact, many of the male elders in The Avenue developed the skills to move beyond day-labour work, which is how most Black males earned a living. Other Black

communities were marked by extremes of unemployment and dependency.

Probably the one area that contributed most to the uniqueness of the community in The Avenue for the last generation was access to education. As mentioned earlier, the Blacks in The Avenue had access to a high quality of education in the common schools since the closure of the segregated Stairs Street School in 1916. At a time when most Blacks in Nova Scotia were going to segregated schools, the Black children in The Avenue had access to some of the best schooling in the province. The respondents do stress, though, that they were not encouraged to maximize their potential within the educational system even when they exhibited the ability. In fact, many of the children were streamed into more general classes because the teachers had more control than was warranted. However, it is of interest that most of the respondents in this project have gone on to post-secondary education or technical training in their adulthood.

The uniqueness of the educational experience for residents in The Avenue is underscored by the experience of the youth in Inglewood, another Black community located in the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia.[41] The residents of Inglewood were descendants of the Black Loyalists. At its

[41] The story of Inglewood is included as a case study in the BLAC Report on Education; Redressing Inequity - Empowering Black Learners. 1994. p55-74.

peak in the 1950s and 1960s, the community numbered approximately 80 people. The population in The Avenue, at approximately 134 people, was at its peak during this time as well.

The Inglewood children attended a segregated school until integration into the Bridgetown school system in 1943. And it is after integration, during the 1950s and 1960s, that Inglewood is estimated to have had a 95 per cent success rate in the number of children to graduate high school. Many of these young adults attended post-secondary or trade institutions to further their education to become successful in a wide variety of fields. I calculate an over 80 per cent success rate of post-secondary or technical training for the respondents in this study. And, the young adults from Inglewood, like the young adults from The Avenue and other communities across Nova Scotia, followed the job markets to other parts of the province, Canada, and abroad.

Dispersed Community and The Last Generation

As mentioned in the Introduction to this project, most of the previous members of the community have dispersed to other parts of the province, the country, and overseas. So, the question is whether the respondents still consider themselves and their elders as a community. If so, what are

the defining characteristics that inform this sense of community.

My original intent was to incorporate how maintaining networks was the link to keeping a sense of community alive for dispersed individuals. However, the questions dealing with ongoing social relationships and social contacts elicited the obvious responses of ongoing contacts primarily with extended family. And perhaps this should be the focal point of the discussion since social interactions with kin and non-kin were grouped under the category 'family' as one of the fundamental characteristics of The Avenue. Focusing on the networks maintained by this dispersed group takes us back to Wellman and Leighton's (1978) liberated concept of community. The liberated community is possible, Wellman and Leighton argue, because

> a variety of structural and technological developments have liberated communities from the confines of neighborhoods and dispersed network ties from all-embracing solidary communities to more narrowly based ones (377).

Community, from this perspective, "is simply primary relationships; geographic place and local institutions are distractions" (Perry, 1986:265). There is ongoing communication and social contact amongst individuals within this dispersed group. However, it is no surprise to find the contacts are primarily with kin. Because there were large

extended families that made up most of the population in The Avenue, this is to be expected.

Granovetter's (1973) argument for the importance of weak ties that maintain a sense of community amongst a dispersed group supports the Wellman and Leighton (1978) argument for the liberated community. Overall, though, it would appear that these contacts are but a result of some deeper components that drew consensus from the respondents.

The data provided by the respondents, supports Clark's argument for the continuing salience of community. For Clark, the "communal elements" that are fundamental to any "social system" are "a sense of solidarity and a sense of significance" (1973:404). And I think it is these two elements that were stressed most often by the respondents. Clark suggests that if we accept the two fundamental elements, we can look at

> the strength of community within any given group ...[as] determined by the degree to which its members experience both a sense of solidarity and a sense of significance within it (409).

The respondents continue to consider their identities as tied to the group of people from The Avenue. The respondents elaborate on this point by continually going back to the social barriers and how different the area in which they lived was from the wider society. Because of their early exposure to White society, the respondents saw

how much easier life was for people in the White community. The respondents appreciated how hard life was for people in The Avenue, and recognized the significance of the extended family in equipping them with a strong sense of self that informs their daily lives.

All of the above factors created a deep sense of solidarity amongst the people in The Avenue. There was always acceptance and inclusion in The Avenue in comparison to the non-acceptance and exclusion from the wider society. The bonds then, based on solidarity seem strong and enduring, as reported by the respondents.

The same holds true for the sense of significance. The respondents talk about the morals and values and the strong identities that were forged in The Avenue. These factors were not just family-based, but extended to most of the families in The Avenue. Marginalization from the wider society created a strong sense of solidarity amongst the people in The Avenue. Acceptance and nurturance from their own community created a strong sense of significance that developed strong individual and group identities.

Community then, for these respondents, persists because of their collective, historic past. Most of the people from The Avenue dispersed by their late teens. They have lived in many large cities across the country and, like most everyone else, must face the stress of the impersonality and fast

pace of modern life. Perhaps the extraordinary challenges and hardships this group endured together in The Avenue provides a grounding for how they live their lives and a base from which they get the strength and sense of connection in a highly impersonal world.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusion

This project was an exploration of the concept of community from a 'traditional' and a 'new' perspective. The project relied on information provided by participants, dealing with their perceptions of what constitutes community, and the factors that contribute to cohesiveness amongst a group of people. The data was analyzed based on themes dealing with how community persists over time, especially when territoriality ceases to have importance in bounding a group. The project centred on the experience of community as provided by information from interview participants and questionnaire respondents.

The findings in all three phases of the project support the traditional definition of the Gemeinschaft, or community, as detailed by Tönnies. Tönnies considered territory, kin, ethnicity and religion as fundamental components of the Gemeinschaft, and it was a fairly straightforward process to tie these factors to the experience of community as provided by the participants and respondents.

The new definition supports the argument for the persistence of community in the Gesellschaft, especially the analysis put forward by Clark (1973). There are at times unique circumstances through which people survive that

create strong and lasting bonds. On the surface and on an individual basis, we can say that a person is paying lip-service to a concept that they perhaps do not fully understand. However, when a number of individuals repeat the same points over and over again, based on their experiences, we need to take stock of the experiences and look at them in light of the existing theories.

This was a non-institutionally complete community. There was a church of longstanding in the early years (from 1844 to 1896), but after this was destroyed by fire, there were no institutions in the community to make this a self-sustained, autonomous system. This was not an isolated community, like many of the other Black communities in Nova Scotia. This community was located in a middle-class area with easy access to employment, shopping and entertainment. Moreover, the community was small in comparison to the wider society, and people moved on to find better opportunities as they reached adulthood. The respondents' views reflected the value of The Avenue in preparing them for the challenges of adulthood in an impersonal modern world. When you look back at the history of Blacks in Nova Scotia, and the history of this community in particular, this is no small achievement.

Relevance of Research and Findings

This project is important from a sociohistorical perspective for a number of reasons. Firstly, the project allowed me to historicize a Black settlement. The few references to this community in the literature are either cursory or biased, and do not touch on the rich history of the African Nova Scotians who have lived in The Avenue since at least the 1880s.

Secondly, as an exploration of the concept of community from the perspective of the participants and respondents, it is their experiences that provided the raw data from which the analysis developed. I did not take the experiences to support my own ideas and arguments. Instead, I took the information provided and developed my arguments from that. So, while my emphasis initially was on social networks and weak ties to support the persistence of community, the data was more supportive of Clark's (1973) argument in support of the degree of solidarity and the degree of significance.

Thirdly, as an insider of this community, I believe I was able to collect a level of detail and background that would not have been available to an outside researcher in such a short period of time. In fact, based on what many of the participants said, I do not think this study would have developed for an outsider. There is a high level of trust and rapport that has developed between myself and many

others from this community. The participants therefore felt secure in the knowledge that I would develop an accurate portrayal of The Avenue, and were open in their disclosures, which resulted in a high quantity and quality of data.

Fourthly, I have an interest in the continuance of this geographic community and the fair and equitable treatment of the remaining residents, especially after so many years of exclusion by City officials. In the process of collecting data for my project, I had occasion to inform a City official of the history of this community. A situation arose in which the official was able to rely on my research to support a resident in the community in a dispute over boundaries and access to city services. This support for the resident was a direct result of my research.

And finally, there was a unique mix of factors such as: lack of city services, social barriers, access to a quality educational system, and location within a middle-class neighbourhood, to name the most important, that made this a unique geographic community, and that informs the sense of community experienced by the dispersed members. The components that characterize this community can now be compared to those of other communities as a means of determining the differences in the experience of community for different groups of people.

This study was limited due to time constraints. The questionnaire was designed to elicit detailed answers and was therefore quite lengthy. This was a consideration in determining how detailed each section could be before the respondents ran out of time and patience in completing such a detailed questionnaire.

For instance, it would have been helpful to develop the questions dealing with networks more fully, to get a better sense of the connectedness amongst this group of individuals. As well, identity issues could have been explored more. How the respondents rated the significance of their identity to The Avenue in comparison to the multiple identities they hold in modern society would have provided a more in-depth understanding of the respondents' sense of community. Identity could also have been explored relative to how the respondents raise their families and how this ties back into how they were raised. All of these issues would have added to the understanding of community from the perspectives of the participants, and would certainly be incorporated in future research of this nature. I initially included sections in the questionnaire relating to identity issues, but had to delete them in consideration of the respondents and the length of the questionnaire.

Another area that limits this research is the minimal comparisons of this community to other local communities,

both Black and White. There are many issues that could have been explored between The Avenue and other communities to better contextualize The Avenue within the wider society. Again, time was a major factor here because I originally intended to do these kinds of comparisons. This is another area that could be developed in future research.

I believe this project adds to the debates and theoretical perspectives on the concept of community and the salience of community in modern society. Especially with the additions noted above, this study can, perhaps, be used as a point of departure for looking at the experience of community for other dispersed groups. It could also be used to draw comparisons between various local communities.

Appendix One

1. Interview Guide - Part I

The purpose of this Interview Guide is to present broad questions as a general guide to the topics that are instrumental for completing this stage of the research project. In Part I, the focus is: to reconstruct memories of how, when and by whom The Avenue was settled; and, to focus on the livelihood and lifestyle of the people in The Avenue. This phase of the interview process will cover the early history up to and including the settlement in The Avenue of your immediate forebears.

These questions will serve as your guide to organize your retrieval of memories and facilitate your presentation of these memories.

Approximate length of interview: one to two hours.

What do you know of how the Black people were originally settled in The Avenue?

- Who they were
- Where they came from
- How they came to be settled in the area

What do you know of how your immediate forebears settled in The Avenue?

- Who they were
- Where they came from
- How they came to settle in the area

What do you know of other families who settled in The Avenue?

- Who they were
- Where they came from
- How they came to settle in the area

What do you know of the economic and financial background of the people who lived in The Avenue?

- Employment
- Industry (i.e. farming, etc.)

What do you know of the social relations of the people in The Avenue?

- Religion
- Personal interactions

2. Interview Guide - Part II

The purpose of this Interview Guide is to present broad questions as a general guide to the topics that are instrumental for completing this stage of the research project. In Part II, the focus is: to reconstruct memories of The Avenue during your youth and adulthood. The focus is on the livelihood and lifestyle of the people in The Avenue during this period. This phase of the interview process will cover from approximately 1930 to 1960.

These questions will serve as your guide to organize your retrieval of memories and facilitate your presentation of these memories.

Approximate length of interview: one to two hours.

How would you describe The Avenue during your youth?

- Was The Avenue a part of the wider community in Dartmouth?

- Were there natural or imagined boundaries separating The Avenue from the wider society?

- Description of The Avenue.

- Sketch of The Avenue.

How many families lived in The Avenue during your youth?

- Names of family heads and number of children raised in the household.

What do you know of the educational attainment of the people in The Avenue?

- Adults

- Youth

What do you know of the economic background of the people who lived in The Avenue?

- Industry (i.e. farming)

What do you know of the financial background of the people who lived in The Avenue?

- Employment

What do you know of the social relations amongst the people in The Avenue?

- Religion

- Personal interactions and relationships

What were the aspects of growing up in The Avenue that were most important in shaping individual identity?

What were the aspects of growing up in The Avenue that were most important in shaping group identity?

What is your overall impression of growing up in The Avenue?

3. Interview Guide - Part III

The purpose of this Interview Guide is to present broad questions as a general guide to the topics that are instrumental for completing this stage of the research project. In Part III, the focus is: to reconstruct memories of The Avenue during your children's youth. The focus is on the livelihood and lifestyle of the people in The Avenue during this period. This phase of the interview process will cover from approximately 1960 to present.

What do you know of the financial background of the people who lived in The Avenue?
- Employment

What do you know of the social relations of the people in The Avenue?

- Religion

- Personal interactions and relationships

How would you describe The Avenue from 1960 onward in relation to how you remember it in your youth?

What were the aspects of growing up in The Avenue that were most important in shaping individual identity?

What were the aspects of growing up in The Avenue that were most important in shaping group identity?

Appendix Two

Interview Guide for In-Depth Interviews

The purpose of this Interview Guide is to present broad questions as a general guide to the topics that are instrumental for completing this stage of the research project. The focus of this interview is to provide you an opportunity to disclose information that you think is relevant to this research project, specific to the group of families that lived up The Avenue.

These questions will serve as your guide to organize your retrieval of memories and facilitate your presentation of these memories.

Approximate length of interview: one hour

How would you describe The Avenue
- 30 years ago
- Today

What do you know of how any of the people settled in The Avenue?

What do you know of the economic and financial background of the people who lived in The Avenue?

What do you know of the social relations of the people in The Avenue?

What do you know of how the women up The Avenue spent their time, both inside and outside the home?

Appendix Three

Personal Profiles - Interview Participants

Bundy, Earl S. I was born in 1918 and have lived in the Black community of Cherry Brook all my life. I am married to Ruby States and we have 9 adult children, 27 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. I fought for the Canadian Army in World War II and drove military vehicles after the war, until my retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces. I am a member of the Cherry Brook United Baptist Church.

Fairfax, Rev. Dr. Donald E.. I was born and raised in Cherry Brook. I am Married to Marjorie Tynes and we have six children. I was pastor of the Victoria Road Baptist Church for 50 years, retiring in December 1997. I have been a social activist in the Black community of Nova Scotia for many years. In 1981 I was awarded the Ronald Stafford Memorial Award by the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers, and in 1990 I was appointed to the Order of Canada.

Doris Fenty (née Tynes). I was born and raised in Crichton Avenue. I left The Avenue at age 23 for Montreal, lived in Montreal for 23 years and returned home in 1970. I maintain ties to The Avenue by keeping part of the family property. I am a member of the Victoria Road Baptist Church.

Vivian M Fowler (née Samuels). Lived in Dartmouth all my life, other than spending two years in Halifax. Living in the Samuels homestead on Crichton Avenue. My husband is deceased. I have two daughters, five grand-children and four great grandchildren.

Barbara H. James. I have lived in Dartmouth nine years. But I and my family have been/are connected with Crichton Avenue at the present address for one hundred years, from great grandfather and great grandmother to father. The names were Brown, Smith and Bauld.

Allan Lucas. Married to Felicia Tynes Lucas. I am the Father of six daughters, one of whom is the author of this project, and two sons. I am grandfather of fifteen and great-grandfather of five. I was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces in World War Two and served in Canada, England and France. I am a member of Victoria Road Baptist Church. I worked as a crane operator in the construction industry, retiring from Standard Paving in 1991. The Lucas family has resided in this community for approximately one hundred years. My wife and I are living in the home we built fifty years ago. The Avenue was an ideal place to raise a family.

Felicia Lucas (née Tynes). Wife to Allan Lucas. I am the Mother of eight children, fifteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. I moved up The Avenue after my marriage in 1948. I was a stay-at-home Mom during my children's early years. I later worked as a domestic and finally as a Personal Care Worker for sixteen years at Northwood Manor. I am a member of Victoria Road Baptist Church.

Gordon Earl Lucas. Husband to Phyllis Lucas. Father of one daughter, Grandfather of four and Great-Grandfather of four. Served in the Merchant Marines from 1944-1949. Worked as a labourer for the Town of Dartmouth. Retired in 1985 from Air Canada after 29 1/2 years. I have lived in Crichton Avenue since birth. I have been a Deacon in the Victoria Road United Baptist Church since 1979.

Phyllis Gertrude Lucas. Wife of Gordon Lucas. Mother of one daughter, Grandmother of four and Great-Grandmother of four. I was born in St. John, New Brunswick and came to Nova Scotia in 1939. I came to reside in Crichton Avenue in 1948 and still reside there. I am very active in Church work and co-ordinated classes for less privileged children for a Dartmouth Head Start Program (Pre-School) out of the Church Hall.

Janet Randall (née Ring). I am a friend and former teammate of the author. I grew up in Crichton Park, part of a family who were very involved in the community and sports. I am married to Peter Randall, also from Dartmouth. We have three children and two grandchildren. I presently work in the Emergency Department of the Dartmouth General Hospital as a Registered Nurse, as I have for the past fourteen years.

Fred Wilson, Sr. I was born in North Preston and moved to The Avenue in 1946, after marriage. I was employed with Cousins Drycleaning for 19 years and worked my way up to become the first Black person in management in the drycleaning business in Nova Scotia. As my wife and I lived in Crichton Avenue for the better part of our married life, I saw many changes take place in such a close-knit community. There was a good family and community spirit. Through your work the past will live on.

Mary Wilson (née Lucas). Wife to Fred. I was a stay-at-home Mom who raised five children. One son is heavily involved in the Church, one daughter manages a retail clothing store in British Columbia, one daughter is a Certified Nursing Assistant in Ontario, and the other children are employed and living in Nova Scotia. I was born and raised in The Avenue, and returned to raise my family when I got married. I have very good memories of my past and it was so good to verbalize this.

Appendix Four

Personal Profiles - Questionnaire Respondents

George (Tim Lucas) Edmonds. Married, three adult children, three grandchildren. Active in community, Church and singing. Member of the Nova Scotia Mass Choir. Active in the East Preston Lion's Club. Employed as a nurse at the Nova Scotia Hospital for many years. Lived for many years in Quebec.

Celina Grant. I self-identify as Métis. I believe that the early years gave me a great opportunity to discover those things that are truly important in life. Much of my experience was very hard. So many have died, such a sense of loss. I've not had children but certainly if I did, they would tire of me speaking of a most magical place. Honouring the Earth Mother, Celina Grant.

Terri Lucas Gray. Wife of George Gray. Mother of three sons and a daughter; grandmother of four. I work as a psychiatric registered nurse at the Nova Scotia Hospital in Dartmouth. I was born and raised in 'The Avenue' and still reside in Dartmouth.

Craig Vincent Lucas. Son of the late Catherine Lucas (Watson). I am a divorced father of four and a grandfather of one. I enjoy the outdoor life and I am an avid sportsman who enjoys fishing, hunting, etc. I am a member of the Nova Scotia Labourers' Union. Quote: "Personally, I am proud of who I am and where I lived during my youth years 1955-1969".

Dawn Lucas. Youngest child of Allan and Felicia Lucas. I am 40 years old with 2 children. I have lived in British Columbia for 17 years. I work in a credit union. My children participate in a variety of activities such as: baseball, soccer, baby-sitting course, piano, karate. I was born and raised in The Avenue, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and visit as often as I can.

Douglas (Doug) Lucas. Although I have worked in many different occupations, I have never been far from the entertainment industry. In over 28 years in the business I have won awards for "best vocalist" in three different cities. In the past seven years I have won nine awards for excellence in video production and I have hosted programs both locally and nationally. As a professional MC, I have hosted a number of charitable events in Ontario and British Columbia, including being the spokesperson for UNICEF B.C. I am the owner of a corporate video production company.

Gary B. Lucas. Age 59. I am married to Susan and we have two children, Robie and Laura. I am employed with Farmer's Dairy. Susan and I presently reside in Cole Harbour and have a cottage in Parrsboro.

John A. Lucas. Moved to British Columbia in 1978. Living in North Vancouver with wife Gillian, daughter Jessica, dog Cosmo and cat Mittens.

Mike Lucas. Married to Willena Y (Borden). Joined the Canadian Navy at age 17 and served 5 years. Joined the Canadian Airforce at age 22 and served 20 years. Retired from the military after 25 years and settled in Victoria, B.C., where I run a chimney sweep service since 1980. In October 1997 the Military inducted me into their Military Sports Hall of Fame.

Sheila Lucas. I am a single mother of a teenage daughter, Chondra. I am a Social Worker interested in single parent issues, "at risk" youth and cross-cultural education for social work students. Recently completed sessional teaching at The Maritime School of Social Work in the BSW Program. I believe that more resources need to be redirected into strengthening historically oppressed communities. Racism flourishes due to ignorance, a lack of understanding, education, fear and informal and formal teachings of hatred.

Susan Lucas. Reflecting back on my youth, through these questions, I realize that in many ways The Avenue has motivated me to reach my goals. Suffering through an education system that highlighted my supposed intellectual inferiority, I am grateful that my desire to learn superseded these negative experiences. As well, the notion instilled in me by my parents that 'you can achieve anything with hard work' has helped me to persevere and succeed.

Rochelle Mainville (née Claybourne). Daughter of Marshall and Catherine. Sister to Thane and Blair Claybourne, and mother of Leah and Jon Mainville. Mother's maiden name Bernard. Grandmother to Landon Mainville Lamey.

Robert E. Maxwell, L.Col. (Ret'd) DND. Age 60. Joined military in 1956. Commissioned officer in 1967 from rank of Corporal. Retired from forces as Fire Marshall for the Canadian Forces. Living in Ottawa with wife Yvette (nee Lawrence), retired school teacher.

Alana Taylor-Plaku (née Lucas). Third eldest child of Allan and Felicia Lucas. Mother to John (Tiger) and Grandmother to Andrew and Matthew. Resided in Mississauga, Ontario for 25 years and for the past 2 years living on Wolfe Island, Ontario. Presently employed at Kingston General Hospital, Kingston, Ontario.

Fred Lucas-Wilson. Age 42 years. Middle of five children of Fred and Mary (Lucas) Wilson. I have completed three years of study at St. Mary's University. I have worked at various jobs, such as: salesclerk, and waiter. I am involved in the Metro Non-Profit Housing Association, and I am very active in community Church.

Appendix Five

Questionnaire

Part One.

1. Draw a sketch of The Avenue, including the Extension, using a time period of your choice. Your sketch can start at any point along The Avenue. Accuracy is the important consideration for your sketch, not artistic ability. You can use the space below or the blank sheets at the back of the questionnaire.

Your drawing should include the following detail, as much as possible:

- natural and manmade boundaries (i.e., forestry, industry, etc.)
- location of homes
- names of families
- number of people (adults and children) living in the home
- the time period on your drawing.

Part Two.

The purpose of the following section is to develop a verbal sketch of The Avenue of your youth. Blank pages are included at the back of the questionnaire. If you prefer to use the blank pages, please number your answers to make sure that you include answers to all questions.

2a. If you were describing The Avenue of your youth to a complete stranger, how would you describe it? Please include time period.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2b. If you were describing the location of The Avenue of your youth to a complete stranger, how would you describe it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2c. How would you describe the racial/ethnic diversity of The Avenue of your youth?

_____

_____

_____

2d. **Social boundaries:**

Was The Avenue considered an integral part of the surrounding society?

Yes _____ (if yes, go to 2e)
No _____ (if no, complete 2d1)

2d1. If no, how do you think The Avenue was socially separate from the wider society?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2e. **Geographic boundaries:**

Was The Avenue separated from the surrounding society?
Yes _____ (if yes, go to 2e1)
No _____ (if no, go to 2f)

2e1. If yes, describe as many boundaries as apply:

_____

_____

_____

_____

2f. Describe in detail the physical condition of The Avenue of your youth, including your understanding of why things were that way. Please include time period.

2f1. Condition of housing:

_____

_____

_____

_____

2f2. Availability of indoor plumbing:

_____

_____

_____

_____

2f3. Condition of road:

_____

_____

_____

_____

2f4. Any other information about the physical conditions not included above:

_____

_____

_____

Part Three

This section focuses on the social and moral life in The Avenue during your youth. If you need more space, blank pages are included at the back of the questionnaire.

3a. How would you describe the social life in The Avenue during your youth?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3b. Describe in detail the kinds of morals/values the elders in The Avenue instilled in you during your youth.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part Four

This section focuses on the kind of education available to people living in The Avenue during your youth. If you need more space, blank pages are included at the back of the questionnaire.

Describe access to the educational system by answering the following questions. Please provide time periods where possible.

4a. Location of schools

4b. Quality of education in schools

4c. Were all public schools in the area open to the children from The Avenue?

4d. Any additional information on the educational system and the educational process that applies to people from The Avenue.

Part Five:

The following section focuses on social and geographic changes that have occurred in The Avenue over the years. If you need more space, blank pages are included at the back of the questionnaire.

How has The Avenue changed over the years? Please include time frames.

5a. Socially.

_____

_____

_____

_____

5b. Geographically.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part Six:

The following section focuses on your on-going social relationships with the group of people who lived up The Avenue.

6a. Do you live up The Avenue now?

Yes ____

No ____

6b. Do you have social contact with people from The Avenue?

Yes ____ (go to 6c)

No ____ (go to 7)

6c. If yes to 6b, fill-in the following information for up to the ten most frequent contacts. The scale below can be used to complete your responses:

Scale:
Frequently = Daily
Often = Once a week or more than once a week
Sometimes = Once a month or more than once a month
Infrequently = Less than once a month
Seldom = Once a year or less than once a year

Name	Relationship	Frequency of Contact

Part Seven

The following section focuses on group solidarity and identity. If you need more space, blank pages are included at the back of the questionnaire.

7a. Do you feel a general closeness to people from The Avenue, whether or not you maintain regular contact?

Yes ____ (go to 7b.)
No ____ (go to question 7c)

7b. If yes to 7a, describe the special bond you feel to the group of people from The Avenue. Also, please explain why this is important to you.

_____

_____

_____

_____

7c. The people from The Avenue once lived in the same geographical location as a group. Now that the people from The Avenue are located nationally and even internationally, do you still consider them as a group?

Yes ____ (go to 7d.)

No ____ (go to Part Eight)

7d. If yes to 7c, please explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

7e. If yes to 7c, do you identify with people from The Avenue because of racialized difference from the wider society?

Yes _____ (go to 7f)

No _____ (go to Part Eight)

7f. If yes to 7e, explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part Eight

The following information will be used to group information from all participants.

8a. Date of Birth:
Year _____ Month _____

Highest level of education completed:

8b. Elementary School _____

8c. Junior High School _____

8d. High School _____

8e. University _____

Please Specify _____

_____

8f. Trade School _____

Please Specify _____

_____

8g. Other _____

Please Specify _____

_____

8h. Type of work/Occupation

_____

_____

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to acknowledge your contribution to the completion of this research project, would you please include below a brief personal profile. The profile can include information such as name, age, family status, educational attainment, occupational, and associational involvement, or any other relevant information you would like included in your personal profile, that you can squeeze into a 4-sentence paragraph.

Profiles of all participants will be included in an appendix at the back of the text, in recognition of this collaborative effort and your contribution.

PERSONAL PROFILE:

NAME:_____

_____

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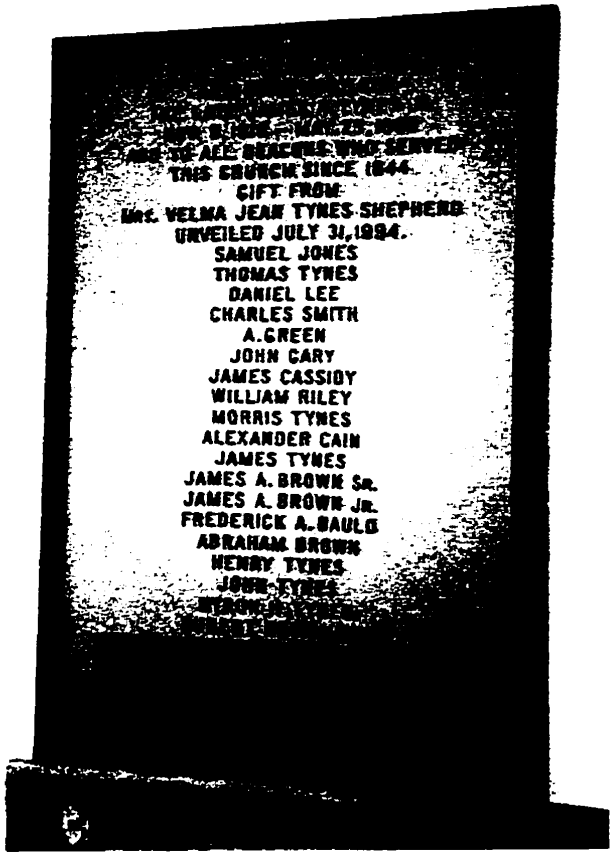
Appendix Six.

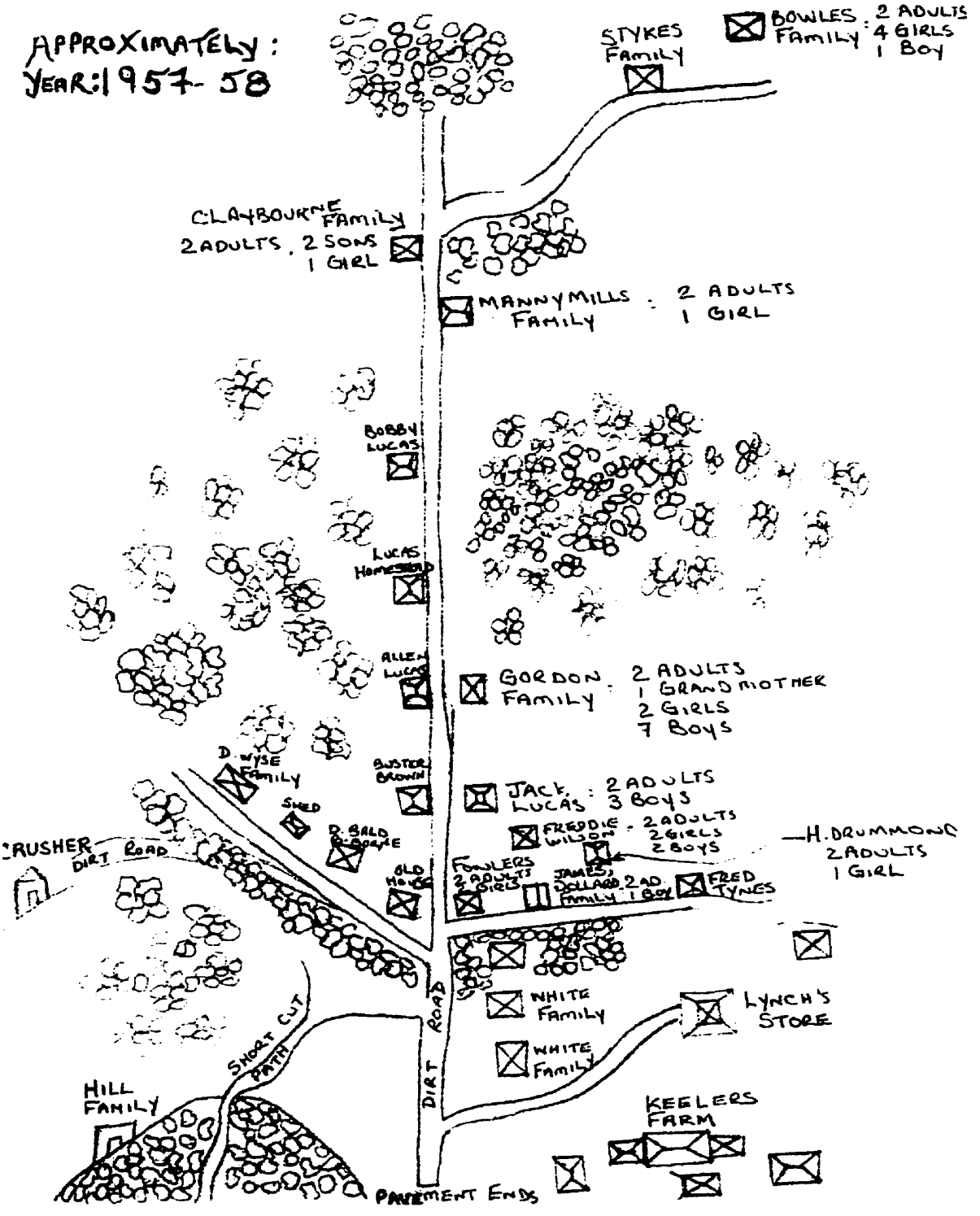
Commemorative Plaque of Deacons Dedicated to Service at Victoria Road United Baptist Church



Courtesy of Victoria Road United Baptist Church.

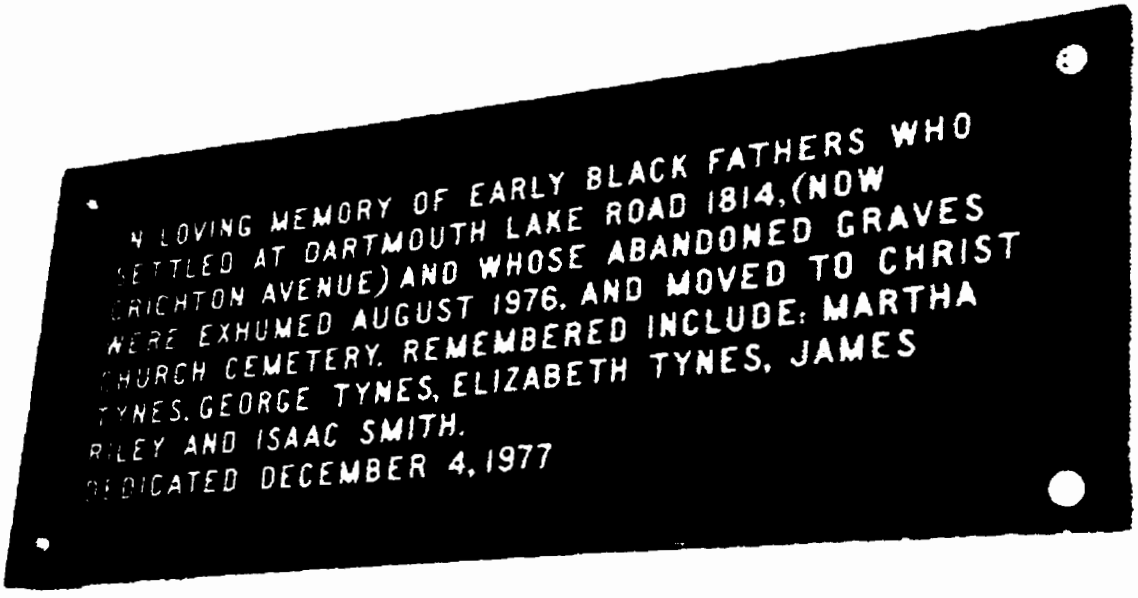
Note: Deacons known to have lived in The Avenue are Thomas Tynes, Charles Smith, Frederick A. Bauld, Abraham Brown, Henry Tynes, John Tynes.

Appendix Seven.



The Avenue. Sketch by Susan Lucas and Michael Hewitt, 1998.

Appendix Eight



Courtesy Victoria Road United Baptist Church

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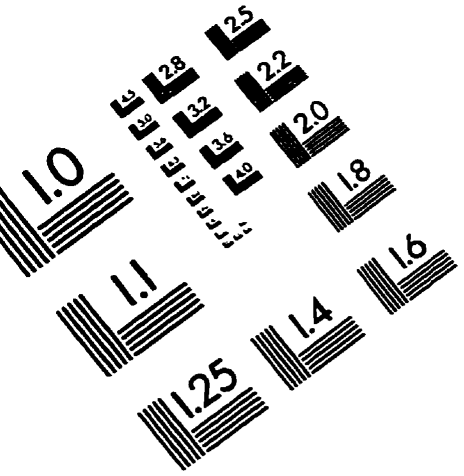

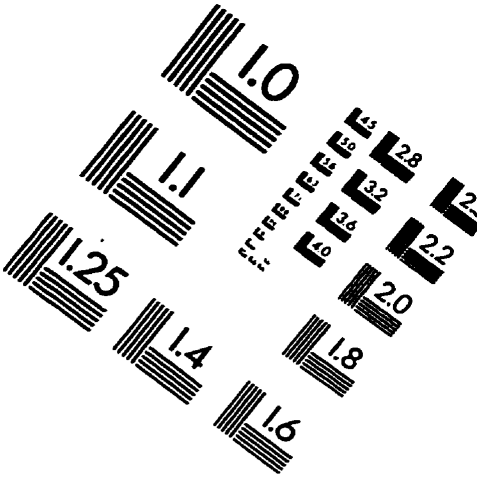

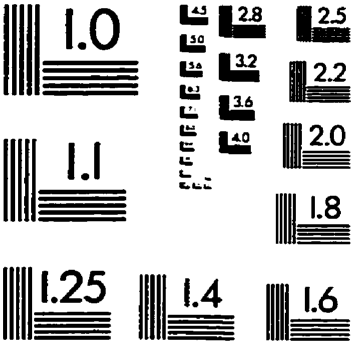

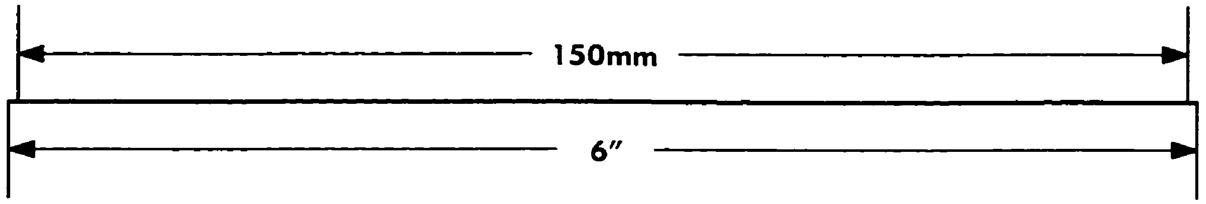

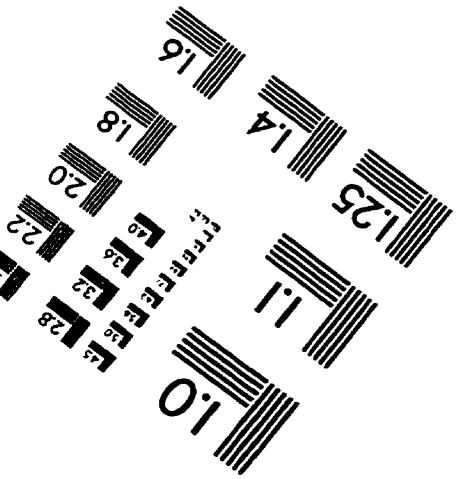

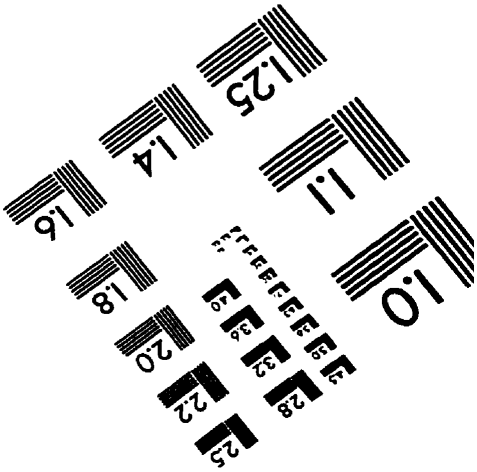

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