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Neighborhood Social Interaction in Public Housing Relocation

Christopher W. Pell

Georgia State University

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NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION IN PUBLIC HOUSING RELOCATION

by

CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM PELL

Under the Direction of Lesley Reid

ABSTRACT

Nationwide, housing authorities demolish public housing communities and relocate the existing residents in an attempt to create more favorable neighborhood environments and to promote safer and more efficacious social interactions for public housing residents. Yet, studies of public housing relocation do not find strong evidence of beneficial social interaction occurring between relocated residents and new neighbors. Despite increased safety and relative increase in neighborhood economic standing, studies find relocated residents socialize outside of their new neighborhoods or else limit existing neighborhood interactions as compared to living in public housing communities. This raises the question of why relocated residents either do or do not choose to interact with their new neighbors within their new residential settings. In an effort to answer this question, I have conducted a study focused on neighborhood social interactions using public housing residents relocated from six of Atlanta, Georgia’s public housing communities.
As a backdrop to the study, I present relevant literature concerning both the study of neighborhoods and the study of prior relocation endeavors. I argue that neighborhoods do provide important social landscapes for attempting to benefit public housing residents, though more research and a different framework of analysis are needed in order to manifest theorized outcomes of relocation for all residents involved. I then employ the use of both quantitative survey data from 248 relocated residents and qualitative in-depth interview data from 40 relocated residents to provide further insight into social interaction patterns after relocation from Atlanta’s public housing. This research finds that prior to relocation residents in public housing communities differed in terms of their ideal zones of action and preferred levels of inclusion and engagement in the neighborhood setting and in terms of their surrounding community scene. By examining these different ideal-types of residents in detail, I argue that prior to moving the residents, a better fit between resident and neighborhood can be constructed by housing authorities such that more beneficial social interaction outcomes can be achieved overall in the relocation process.

INDEX WORDS: Public housing, Relocation, Neighborhood effects, Interaction, Atlanta, MTO, Concentrated poverty, Dramaturgy
NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION IN PUBLIC HOUSING RELOCATION

by

CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM PELL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2012
NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION IN PUBLIC HOUSING RELOCATION

by

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Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
December 2012
DEDICATION

For my mother - who said I had to do this.

For my Nana - who always believed I could finish.

For my daughters - who grew so much as these words were written.

For my wife - who held my hand through every step and stumble I took.

For my sister - who taught me how to unwrap the gifts of life.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to give my thanks first to Dr. Lesley Reid, for guiding me diligently in the process of transforming social research into a readable manuscript. She, along with Dr. Erin Ruel, and Dr. Deirdre Oakley were awesome mentors and comrades in the undertaking of a research project of such epic proportions. Together, we and the student members of the Georgia State University Urban Health and Well-Being Initiative shared in an amazing experience, which continues to document and impact the lives of approximately 400 residents from Atlanta’s former public housing communities. Thanks also to the Dan E. Sweat Dissertation Committee for providing me a fellowship which in part supported my research. Also, thanks to Dr. Danya Keene for allowing me to take part in her post-doctoral research, an experience without which I could not have completed this dissertation. Many thanks go to the residents who took part in the study as well; I will never forget the times I spent with you. Lastly, I would like to thank all those who supported me throughout the journey including my own neighborhood friends (Beauregard, Michael, Josh, and Chelsea), the Georgia State University staff, my cohort, my athletes, and most of all my amazing family - Sidney, Faith, Sorcha, and Simon.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Neighborhoods are a central component of daily life. We are both connected to and affected by the elements of our neighborhood’s physical landscape, the individuals and families that serve as our neighbors, and the social interactions we share or avoid within the neighborhood setting. In the present day, neighborhood social interaction may consist of talking with neighbors, playing with local children, sharing information and resources in the community, or watching over someone’s house while they are away. For some individuals, interactions such as these are a given part of their daily routine; for others, interaction with neighbors is a rarity or even an unwanted occurrence. To social scientists focused on issues of the neighborhood, interaction in the neighborhood setting is a key to differences in life outcomes for all residents, but especially those living in disadvantaged areas (Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley 2002; Wilson 1987). In this dissertation, I examine the processes affecting neighborhood social interaction for a specific group of people, relocated public housing residents. My goals in studying neighborhood social interaction in public housing relocation are the following: to better understand the processes underlying neighborhood social interaction in relocation; to advance the use of a dramaturgical framework in studies of neighborhood interaction; and to provide information beneficial to the policy makers and housing officials charged with relocating individuals from public housing into new neighborhoods.

Theories of neighborhood social interaction flourish in research on public housing and have shaped national housing policy for decades (Mayer and Jencks 1989; Goering 2003a). The engineering of beneficial social interaction outcomes has manifested into nationwide deconcentration strategies, working to relocate public housing residents into less-disadvantaged neighborhoods (Goering 2003a). Within better neighborhoods, relocated residents arguably have
more incentive and opportunity to take part in beneficial social interaction, offsetting potential increases in employment, education, and health and decreases in welfare dependency and exposure to crime (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Goering 2003a). However, some studies reveal social interaction patterns for relocated residents either remained the same or decline, despite situational gain in incentive and opportunity for interaction (Hanratty, McLanahan, and Pettit 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Katz, Kling, and Liebman 2003; Goering 2003b). This raises important questions concerning why predicted social interaction patterns have not occurred between relocated residents and new neighbors. By providing answers to these questions, this study will advance theory on neighborhood interaction to better inform housing policy.

Current research addressing outcomes of public housing relocation argues social interaction itself must become the focus of study if engineering beneficial outcomes is ever going to occur (Ladd and Ludwig 2003). Most studies concerned with neighborhood social interaction conceptualize social interaction as individuals’ self-reports of how often they engage in particular interactions with a particular network of actors (Curley 2010). Social interaction data measured in this way is useful for determining change in levels of social interaction and regressing selected outcomes on effects of interaction (Curley 2010). Yet, this data is not capable of answering why individuals either interact or choose inaction in the face of incentive and opportunity. I propose through this study to shift the theoretical conceptualization of social interaction to focus on why interaction either does or does not occur after relocation versus whether or not it occurs.

I answer this research question by examining longitudinal public housing data collected in Atlanta, Georgia from 2008 – 2010. I examine pre-move and post-move survey data from a representative sample of 248 relocated residents to establish whether or not significant patterns
of change in social interaction exist for the relocated residents. I then apply a dramaturgical framework to in-depth interview data collected from a random sub-sample of 40 residents. Influenced by the theoretical works of Goffman (1959), the dramaturgical framework specifically addresses components of actors, setting, and scene existing in the interview data and helps to expose how stage-based elements, including role-play, scripting, boundary-work, sense of community and stigma effect outcomes of social interaction between relocated residents and their new neighbors. Using this framework, I address the rational actions and interpretive meanings relocated residents employ when dealing with key elements of neighborhood social interaction: actors (neighbors), setting (neighborhood), and scene (community). By attending to relocated residents’ perceptions and choices concerning these three elements, I provide an answer to why social interaction either does or does not occur for relocated residents in new neighborhoods. The coding of interview data consists of grounded theory methods, where I transform interview data into concepts, indicators, and variables capable of theoretical analysis. I then apply the dramaturgical frame to the variable constructs to answer the research question of why relocated residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with neighbors in new neighborhoods.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In Chapter 2, I begin by explaining why neighborhood social interaction is thought to be important and how it became a central concept in public housing research and policy. Looking first at the fields of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage, I examine how over time neighborhood social interaction came to be the focal point for research concerned with how neighborhoods affect residents’ life outcomes (Sampson et al. 2002; Wilson 1987). I detail this literature to explain how the concept of neighborhood social interaction evolves and merges into the theoretical models supporting public housing relocation. I then provide critiques of both
neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models (Mayer and Jencks 1989; Ellen and Turner 1997; 2003). I use these critiques to segue into the topic of the emergence and significance of deconcentration policy. Here, I give a brief overview of the Gautreaux Program and the Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing (MTO) study (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Rosenbaum 1995; Goering 2003a; 2003b).

After introducing how theories on neighborhood interaction have been translated into policy, I present the MTO study findings related specifically to neighborhood social interaction (Goering and Feins 2003). I examine how social interaction patterns for relocated residents either remained the same or declined after relocation and I argue for focusing research on why social interaction either does or does not change (Hanratty et al 2003; Katz et al. 2003). I conclude Chapter 2 arguing for a study focused on residents’ perspectives concerning why interaction between relocated residents and new neighbors does or does not occur. I argue that gaining the residents’ perspective is necessary to understanding unpredicted outcomes in the neighborhood social interaction occurring in deconcentration strategies like MTO.

In Chapter 3, I address how to best focus on why interaction either does or does not occur between relocated residents and new neighbors. Here, I pull away from studies of neighborhoods and public housing to focus on the study of social interaction in general. I begin by detailing both the rational and interpretive approaches to analyzing social interaction (Thomas 1923; Mead 1934; Blumer 1969; Homans 1958; Coleman 1990; Alexander 1988). Through explaining these two approaches, I discuss how both residents and new neighbors develop shared definitions of situation necessary for engaging in social interaction. I then examine existing public housing research investigating why social interaction does or does not occur between relocated residents and new neighbors. In this section, I highlight three branches of research relevant to social inter-
action in public housing relocation: place attachment, community attachment, and attachment to kinship/friendship groups (Kleit and Manzo 2006; Tester, Ruel, Anderson, Reitzes, and Oakley 2011; Clampet-Lundquist 2010) I argue that these three areas of research complement each other and I suggest a framework using the dramaturgical perspective is needed to address how each element relates to the social interaction of relocated residents.

Concluding Chapter 3, I detail how Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical framework can be applied to better study neighborhood social interaction in public housing relocation and to further neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models. I apply Goffman’s (1959) concepts of personal fronts, impression management, decorum, role-play, and stigma to the situation of public housing relocation to question why relocated residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with new neighbors. I argue this research question is best answered by applying grounded theory methods and a dramaturgical framework to a study of public housing relocation in Atlanta, Georgia.

In Chapter 4, I detail the Atlanta, Georgia public housing relocation study and the methodology I use to address both survey and in-depth interview data collected from the study. I begin with a presentation of the background literature used to formulate the expectations and hypotheses connected to both the survey and in-depth interview data. I then present the two portions of the study, beginning with the survey data. I explain first how I use the survey data to establish whether change in interaction either does or does not occur for the study sample across relocation. In this section, I provide descriptive characteristics of the sample and detail how I handle the data prior to and during analysis. I explain how I use the survey data to measure social interaction in the forms of the social support measures, giving help to and receiving help from neighbors. Next, I address how I use the in-depth interview data to answer the research question.
I conclude Chapter 4 with a review of diagnostics, analysis techniques, reporting procedures, study limitations, demographic breakdowns, participant profiles, and descriptive frequency tables for both the survey and in-depth interview portions of the study.

In Chapter 5, I report the findings of the quantitative survey data gathered from a sample of 248 residents in the Atlanta, Georgia public housing relocation study to establish if change in neighborhood social interaction either does or does not occur for these residents. I begin by reporting t-test comparisons from baseline to post-move for the dependent and independent variables to examine significant change in mean scores after relocation. Next, I report bivariate analysis of categorical variables to examine the mean scores on the dependent variables for different groups of relocated residents. Last, I report linear regression results to examine the associations between the dependent variables and reported social interactions of giving and receiving social support. I find that reports of social interaction in the form of giving help to neighbors decline for this sample, while report of receiving help are not significantly changed. The social interaction of giving help to neighbors holds a significant positive association with presence of children in the household and amount of friends living in the neighborhood, while the social interaction of receiving help from neighbors holds a significant positive association with age, presence of children, and community attachment. I conclude Chapter 5 with a discussion of these findings in relation to the larger research question and explain how the quantitative section helps to inform the analysis of the in-depth interviews, which will attempt to establish why social interaction either does or does not occur for these residents after relocation.

In Chapter 6, I analyze in-depth interviews from a sub-sample of 40 residents chosen from the larger Atlanta, Georgia public housing relocation study. In this chapter, I use grounded theory methods through the open- and axial coding stages and apply a dramaturgy framework to
explain why social interaction either does or does not occur after relocation from public housing for these residents (LaRossa 2005). Through the residents’ perceptions about neighbors, place, and community, I establish how the residents’ levels of engagement and inclusion, zones of action, integration and need fulfillment affect whether or not they participate in neighborhood social interaction. Also, I examine the effects that stigma and the staging of neighborhood interaction have on the relocated residents’ interactions with new neighbors. Through this analysis, I am able to explain how the use of the dramaturgical framework bridges the theoretical gaps in the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models. The use of the dramaturgical framework reveals how elements of role-play, boundary work, and developing sense of community work to influence whether or not relocated residents will engage in social interaction with their new neighbors.

In Chapter 7, I extend the analysis of the in-depth interviews from the axial coding into the stage of selective coding (LaRossa 2005). Through the selective coding stage of the grounded theory methods, I establish that different ideal type resident groups exist and that they experience relocation from public housing differently. I argue that during relocation a mismatch can occur between the ideal type residents and best-fit neighborhoods and that this mismatch can lead to limited social interaction between neighbors. I conclude by arguing housing policy can improve neighborhood social interaction for residents by aiming to meet the differential needs of these ideal type resident groups prior to relocation.

In Chapter 8, I close the study by discussing the combined analysis from Chapter 5 through Chapter 7 and illuminating residents’ differential accounts for why neighborhood social interaction either does or does not occur after relocation. I then use the analysis of residents’ perceptions to discuss policy implications and make suggestions regarding next research steps. I
conclude Chapter 7 by re-emphasizing that relocated residents are not a uniform group of individuals. I also suggest that future studies should use interactional-level data, wherein residents’ new neighbors are incorporated to determine where inconsistency and discrepancy occur in individuals’ accounts of neighborhood social interaction (Tach 2009; Curley 2010).

PROJECT GOALS

In this dissertation, I examine the underlying processes affecting neighborhood social interaction for a specific group of people, relocated public housing residents. My goals in studying neighborhood social interaction in public housing relocation are the following: to better understand the processes underlying neighborhood social interaction in relocation; to bridge the theoretical gap in neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models; to advance the use of a dramaturgical framework in studies of neighborhood interaction; and to provide information beneficial to the policy makers and housing officials charged with relocating individuals from public housing into new neighborhoods.

As a key component of my projected goals, I aim to advance the models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage. As Chapter 2 explains in greater detail, the models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage have been intertwined over time to support the demolition of public housing and the removal of public housing residents in a variety of mass relocation projects. Critique exist that these models lack sufficient explanation as to the mechanisms that determine why neighborhood interaction and/or isolation occur in any given neighborhood (Ellen and Turner 1997; 2003). One goal of this dissertation is to provide a new framework that will bridge this theoretical gap.
CHAPTER 2: INTERACTION, NEIGHBORHOOD, AND PUBLIC HOUSING RELOCATION

INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood social interaction is a central topic throughout research on public housing and key ideas on social interaction in neighborhoods have propelled decades of change in public housing policy nationwide. In this Chapter, I explain how neighborhood social interaction came to be a focal point in public housing and present an argument for extending social interaction research in the study of public housing relocation. I begin by addressing the development of the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models, the enactment of deconcentration policies, critiques of models and policy, and research outcomes for mobility experiments related to neighborhood interaction. Through these points, I present how public housing policy predicts relocation will increase neighborhood interaction, but research findings do not agree (Hanratty, McLanahan, and Petit 2003; Katz, Kling, Liebman 2003). I conclude the chapter arguing what is needed is a better understanding of why social interaction either does or does not occur in the neighborhood setting versus whether or not interaction occurs.

NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECTS MODELS

For most individuals, the neighborhood serves as the background to daily interaction throughout most of childhood, adolescence, and even into adulthood. Some people never move from the neighborhood they were born and raised in, while others experience a multitude of ways people can communally cohabit and interact. Taken for granted by most, the neighborhood and the residents form web of opportunities. For some individuals, the neighborhood is a safe haven, a restful retreat after the workday, a place to play after school, or a place where neighbors share afternoons and weekends. Other individuals experience the neighborhood as a place to lay one’s
head, a possible daily threat to health, or even a place to avoid. Within the spectrum of neighborhoods, a vast range of social interactions with neighbors exists. Social interactions could involve sharing recipes or stories from vacation or discussing recent news with neighbors, could involve weekend sleepovers and swimming pool parties for birthdays for children, and could involve preparing food for Sunday brunch at the seniors’ center. Social interactions in the neighborhood could also involve ducking to avoid gunfire, confronting gangs and drug addicts, feeding neglected children, even extreme isolationism. For people residing in any neighborhood long enough, the social interaction witnessed most often can become normalized until alternate patterns of neighborhood social interaction become obscured by daily routine.

Neighborhood effects research argues neighborhood characteristics cause real and lasting impact on people’s lives in terms of opportunities and outcomes (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Sampson, Morenoff, Gannon-Rowley 2002). The neighborhood effects perspective argues organized forms of social interaction affect outcomes like crime, health, employment, and education at both the neighborhood-level and individual-level (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). Declines or deficits in organized interaction increase the likelihood of delinquency and crime (Skogan 1986; Krohn 1986) effect school efficacy and student attendance (Lee, Dedrick, and Smith 1991; Ainsworth 2002) decrease weak-tie networks beneficial to job searches (Bellair 1997; Granovetter 1973) decrease the likelihood of attaining social and political power and increase the likelihood of social and physical disorder and poor health at the neighborhood-level (Bursik 1988; Sampson and Groves 1989).

In neighborhood effects models, the neighborhood environment matters because it is the locus of organized social interaction; the characteristics of the neighborhood affect the likelihood and effectiveness of organized social interaction, further affecting neighborhood and individual-
level outcomes (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). Current models of neighborhood effects generally consist of three parts: exogenous neighborhood characteristics, such as SES level, residential mobility rate, unemployment rate, female-headed households, and welfare dependency; mediating social organization outcomes, such as informal social interaction, participating in formal organizations, and collective efficacy; and life outcomes, such as rates of mental health, delinquency, crime, employment, and education (see Figure 1). This general form of neighborhood effects modeling originated from turn of the century social ecology models of neighborhood growth and models of social disorganization, arguing tenure and residential mobility have a significant effect on residents’ participation and attachment to the community (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925; Shaw and McKay 1942; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous neighborhood characteristics</th>
<th>Social organization</th>
<th>Life outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SES</td>
<td>• local social interaction</td>
<td>• crime exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• mobility</td>
<td>• institutional participation</td>
<td>• health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• female headed household</td>
<td>• collective efficacy</td>
<td>• employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• education</td>
</tr>
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**Figure 1:** General Neighborhood Effects Model

From the ecological perspective, neighborhood characteristics persist over time as a function of stability; where community structures hold constant, good areas remain good and bad areas remain bad, but change in community structure changes a neighborhood’s character. The premise of neighborhood characteristics shifting because of mobility and tenure eventually took root in the field of criminology, solidifying as social disorganization (Shaw and McKay 1942). One variant of neighborhood disorganization research argues rapid change in neighborhood make-up increases the rates of offending at the aggregate level (Bursik and Webb 1982). Similar to the ecological models, crime researchers argue when neighborhood change occurs relatively
quickly, existing institutions and agencies undergo radical alteration and can be lost completely; during a destabilized interim, crime is most likely to occur (Bursik and Webb 1982). This argument on why some neighborhoods thrive where others fail connects issues of spatial distribution of crime, gangs, and bad neighborhoods to questions on how local community interactions are organized (Bursik and Webb 1982) and supports other neighborhood effects research focusing specifically on how neighborhood interactions mediate the effects of neighborhood characteristics on life outcomes (Sampson et al. 2002).

Neighborhood effects researchers argue a mediating variable must exist between neighborhood characteristics and social outcomes, or else poor areas would automatically correlate with crime-filled areas (Kornhauser 1978). Sampson and Groves (1989) argue the mediator between neighborhood characteristics and rates of crime is the level of interaction and social organization, and the ability to instill and enforce shared values at the neighborhood-level. Their study reveals the exogenous variables in the neighborhood effects model (including SES, residential stability, heterogeneity, family disruption, and urbanization) independently and interactively causes changes in local kinship and friendship groups and in levels of participation in local institutions. Through this work, Sampson and Groves (1989) extend the neighborhood effects model to incorporate social interaction as a mediating factor to account for why changes in neighborhood characteristics might affect crime outcomes.

In neighborhood effects models, social interaction and organization of a neighborhood affect crime in two ways. First, forming neighborhood social ties increases the ability to spot strangers and enact in guardianship when necessary, decreasing potential for crime (Skogan 1986). Second, high-density networks, where community members know each other and frequently interact, are more capable of restricting deviant behavior (Krohn 1986). Therefore the
researchers consider interaction in the neighborhood central to outcomes of crime (Sampson and Groves 1989).

Social interaction is also considered a central to health and education outcomes. Neighborhood effects models examine how health care differs by community and link the social organization levels of neighborhoods to family health management and child well-being (Sampson 1992) stroke mortality (Nesser, Tyroler, and Cassel 1971) and low birth weight (Morenoff 2003; Burka, Brenna, Rich-Edwards, Raudenbush, and Earls 2003). Likewise, neighborhood effects models also examine how social interaction mediates neighborhood effects on adolescent school behaviors (Bowen, Bowen, and Ware 2002) school dropout rates (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2000) and school efficacy and educational outcomes (Lee et al. 1991; Ainsworth 2002; Garner and Raudenbush 1991). Neighborhood effects models promote social interaction as the key mediating factor between the effects of neighborhood characteristics on individual-level outcomes and link levels of social interaction to the neighborhoods’ relative level of advantage.

Neighborhood effects models suggest a decrease in local social interaction is the result of a decrease in a neighborhood’s relative level of advantage. As social interaction and organization decrease, neighborhood- and individual-level outcomes are negatively affected. The connections between neighborhood characteristics, social interaction, and life outcomes are useful for examining social patterns for groups of individuals across different neighborhoods, but they cannot explain interaction in terms of the strategies and actions used by specific individuals within neighborhoods. Neighborhood effects models can examine increases and declines in social interaction, but cannot explain why people decide whether to interact.
CONCENTRATED DISADVANTAGE MODELS

As neighborhood effects models gained prominence through the late 1980s and early 90s, social researchers began incorporating models of concentrated disadvantage into neighborhood effects literature, forming an overlapping argument for why neighborhood matters (Mayer and Jencks 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). Concentrated disadvantage models are an extension of Wilson’s (1987) theory of concentrated poverty. Wilson’s theory of concentrated poverty addresses how and why poor African Americans came to be living in concentrated clusters experiencing negative life outcomes. The model of concentrated disadvantage addresses environment specific macro-level causes for individual-level declines in social interaction. Within poor African American neighborhoods, interaction declines due to a decrease in local jobs and middle-class black residents, and an increase in political, social, geographic, and economic isolation. According to concentrated disadvantage models, decreased social interaction mediates both the decreases in levels of employment, education, and health and the increases in levels of welfare dependency and exposure to delinquency and crime (see Figure 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concentrated disadvantage</th>
<th>Isolation</th>
<th>Life outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• national economic decline</td>
<td>• economic- job loss</td>
<td>• increased crime exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• middle-class out migration</td>
<td>• human- school loss</td>
<td>• poor health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• female headed household</td>
<td>• social- role model/resource loss</td>
<td>• under-employment/illegal employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• limited employment opportunities</td>
<td>• geographic- transport/proximity loss</td>
<td>• low level of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• percent minority</td>
<td>• political- representation</td>
<td>• increased welfare dependency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: General Concentrated Disadvantage Model

Wilson’s theory of concentrated poverty is a response to Lewis’ (1969) culture of poverty arguments. Lewis (1959) argues poor African Americans have lost any cultural desires to escape
poverty due to living in ghettos and receiving welfare for multiple generations. Culture of pov-
erty blames poor African Americans for both their continued poverty and the compounded dis-
advantages they face in terms of limited education, limited employment opportunities, poor
health, and over-exposure to crime. Further, the culture of poverty stance suggests poor African
Americans know no other way of surviving, and prefer the disadvantaged state of being. Wilson
(1987) discounts the culture of poverty argument for ignoring poverty-causing forces operating
at the social-structural level of society.

Wilson (1987; 1996) argues the combined effects of economic downturn, increased
growth of service sector jobs, and middle-class African American migration to the suburbs re-
sults in inner-city areas where nearly all residents are black, jobless, living well below the pov-
erty line, and both geographically and socially isolated. As social and economic changes took
root in America, middle class African Americans relocated from the all-black ghettos to the
mostly-white suburbs following the job market and fair housing laws. This, Wilson (1987) ar-
gues, removed the economic and social resource bases supporting much of the ghetto community
in terms of educational funding and support, support for local businesses, political representa-
tion, positive role modeling, and social networks. As shifts to the economic and social structures
of ghetto neighborhoods occurred, community incidence of joblessness, female headed house-
holds, out of wedlock births, and welfare receipt each increased significantly, as did incidence of
and exposure to gang and drug related crimes.

Further, Wilson (1987) argues the remaining residents in ghetto neighborhoods became
geographically isolated from outside areas, without resources or role models, leading to commu-
nity detachment from mainstream patterns of behavior. Long-term estrangement from main-
stream attitudes and behaviors hindered mainstream employment, favored underground illegal
activity, and downplayed social norms such as work and marriage. Wilson (1987) theorizes these events caused startling increases in concentrated poverty, joblessness, welfare receipt, criminal activity, and female-headed households within poor African Americans neighborhoods across the 1970s and 80s. Where Lewis (1969), Moynihan (1965), and others construe African American poverty as the result of impoverished culture, Wilson (1987) sees ghetto culture as the result of poverty-engendering socio-structural forces operating in African American communities nationwide.

Since 1989, neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models have become nearly inseparable in housing research (Mayer and Jencks 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). This fusion arises from the placement of social interaction as the intermediary force between macro-level forces and individual-level outcomes. Over time, neighborhood researchers extended the models of concentrated poverty into models of concentrated disadvantage, to signify the overall importance of multiple deleterious exogenous variables in the model, including but not limited to poverty, or low SES (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997). Taken together neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models reveal a great deal about social interaction in decline. Change in characteristics of SES, available jobs, residential stability, middle-class out-migration, and female-headed households, and percent minority are thought to have a significant effect upon social isolation and ability to organize, affecting outcomes of joblessness, welfare dependency, delinquency, crime, health, and education for neighborhood residents. Like neighborhood effects models however, models of concentrated disadvantage are criticized, in part concerning the models’ emphasis on social interaction as mediation between exogenous variables and social outcomes (Mayer and Jenks 1989; Ellen and Turner 1997; Greenbaum 2008).
THE EMERGENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DECONCENTRATION POLICY

Though critiqued for exclusive focus on concentrated poverty (Mayer and Jenks 1989), the narrow research agenda utilized in neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models explains why neighborhoods matter, especially for disadvantaged groups of people (Sampson et al. 2002). From the synthesized findings, neighborhood effects researchers argue impoverished neighborhoods across the nation face persistent negative outcomes, including the continued inequality based on class and racial segregation, geographic isolation, and bundled social problems operating at the neighborhood-level (Sampson et al. 2002). Further, Sampson et al. (2002) argue because patterns of concentrated poverty and affluence increased over the last two decades, similar neighborhood effects consistently appear for concentrations of poor African Americans regardless of geographic level of operationalization (i.e. census tract, neighborhood, or community).

Jargowsky (1997) argues every major city has neighborhoods with concentrations of poor, black residents containing some form of government public housing. Since the 1960s, the housing authorities have created policy and programs to address racial segregation and concentrated disadvantage in public housing; most notable are the Gautreaux Program, MTO, and HOPE VI (Goering 2003a). These programs employ a variety of strategies to either permanently relocate residents to less segregated, less disadvantaged areas or temporarily relocate residents in order to demolish and renovate the existing public housing into mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhoods. Sampson et al. (2002) deem poverty deconcentration studies and mobility experimentation programs as highly relevant to research on how and why the residents of specific neighborhoods bring about change through interaction. Concerning changes in social interaction,
the question becomes what effect does relocation through mobility experiments have on residents’ levels of neighborhood social interaction?

Looking at changes in interaction for populations of poor, black residents relocated out of highly disadvantaged neighborhoods two points must be addressed. First, poor African Americans historically and currently are hyper-segregated from middle class and affluent African Americans and from whites of all socioeconomic levels (Massey and Denton 1993). The continued segregation isolates poor African Americans to areas with low quality schools, limited healthcare, job limitations, higher environmental hazards, health risks, and violent crime (Massey and Denton 1993; Lareau 1987; Bullard and Feagin 1991; Rosenbaum 1995). Further, patterns of social isolation based on race and class have increased over time (Mayer and Jenks 1989). Neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models predict the combined effect of intensified segregation from other races and classes along with prolonged economic, social, and geographic isolation decreases the likelihood of beneficial social interaction taking place at neighborhood- and individual-level (Sampson et al. 2002; Wilson 1996).

Second, racial and economic segregation establishes differences in the form and function of social interaction, manifesting specific individual-level outcomes. Noted differences emerge in terms of parenting styles, community gathering, work patterns, and attitudes towards educational attainment (Lareau 1987; Ogbu 1978; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Brashears 2006; Peterson and Krivo 2000). Research on segregation suggests economic and racial isolation affects adolescents especially in terms of dropout rates, pregnancy rates, and childhood IQ (Crane 1991; Brooks Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, and Sealand 1993; Jenks and Mayer 1990). For adults in economic and racial isolation, social interaction supporting daily survival can be costly and create more stress. For example, in situations with tense family ties, or with high reciprocal expecta-
tions, interaction with friends and kin can diminish valuable time and energy, stretching residents beyond limits (Miller-Cribs and Farber 2008; Dominguez and Watkins 2003). Social interaction for economically and racially segregated African Americans is therefore a specific experience, dissimilar from social interaction occurring in mainstream studies.

Further, the population of income poor African Americans residing in government-run public housing is a unique subset of the larger population of disadvantaged African Americans. Apart from being resource poor, both the environment of public housing and its residents are highly stigmatized by outsiders and considered ghetto underclass (Venkatesh 2008). The stigma of living in public housing stems from a culture of poverty mentality. Outsiders view public housing residents as rejecting mainstream paths to gainful employment and self-dependency, helplessly imbedded in a system of poverty, with no ability or desire to get out of ghettos and disadvantaged neighborhoods (Lewis 1969). This stigmatization is a critical determinant of the level of social interaction of public housing residents, past and present.

In the minds of most people, American public housing is gang-infested and drug-filled, riddled with junkies, prostitutes, and welfare mothers (Waquant 2007; Venkatesh 2008). In reality, most individuals use public housing as a safety net from ending up homeless, or as a step out of homeless shelters, and spend on average 3.5 years on federal housing rosters before transitioning into other housing options (HUD 2003). Overall, less than 30% of residents live in public housing for more than 9 years and over 45% reside there for 3 years or less (HUD 2003). Despite the statistics and lived reality of residents, the notoriety of housing projects like Robert Taylor Homes and Cabrini Green Homes in Chicago perpetuate ideas of all public housing projects being destitute.
Negative beliefs about public housing lead many researchers to predict living within
ghetto neighborhood conditions decreases social interaction; they believe residents seek to avoid
risks from exposure to gangs, drugs, and violent crime (Morenoff and Sampson 1997; Sampson,
Morenoff, and Earls, 1999; Elliot et al. 1996; Boardman, Finch, Ellison, Williams, and Jackson
2001). At the individual-level, stereotyped and over-generalized depictions of life in public hous-
ing can compound the pressures for residents living in isolated and disadvantaged neighbor-
hoods. Individuals revealing their public housing address stand to lose decent employment, edu-
cation, health services, police protection, and even friendship and mate selection (Massey and
Denton 1993; Waquant 2007). At the structural-level, negative depictions of life in public hous-
ing can compound pressure for residents, if such views lead to deconcentration policy geared to-
wars the removal of disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Housing authorities utilize poverty deconcentration strategies to systematically relocate
public housing residents out of original neighborhoods and into new or redeveloped neighbor-
hoods (Goering 1986; 2003a). The populations affected by deconcentration strategies are majori-

ty poor, black residents with female head of households with limited access to living-wage em-
ployment, quality education for themselves and their children, quality health care, or resource
amenities such as nearby grocery stores, libraries, churches, or community centers (Goering
1986; 2003a; Massey and Denton 1993; Bullard and Feagin 1991; Patillo 1998; Sampson et al.
2002). The models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage argue public housing
populations have low levels of social interaction due to low perceived and real safety, high fear
of crime, and limited community resources (Wilson 1987; 1996; Sampson et al. 2002). Building
on Granovetter's (1973) strength in weak ties argument, Sampson et al. (2002) argue social in-
teraction occurring in disadvantaged neighborhoods lacks efficacy due to limited power of con-
stituent actors and their social networks. For example, resource poor residents with limited weak ties will have limited access to job referrals outside the neighborhood (Bellair 1997; Ioannides and Datcher 2004; Sampson et al. 2002). The policy implication of this argument is relocating residents from concentrations of high poverty and isolation into areas with lower amounts of crime and racial and economic segregation, should increase residents’ incentive to engage in social interaction. Also residents’ new neighbors should have more resources and beneficial weak ties, offsetting favorable outcomes such as increased employment, education, resource attainment (Goering 2003a; Sampson et al. 2002).

The best-known attempts at enacting poverty deconcentration policy are the Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing (MTO) and Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) which grew out of a civil rights era desegregation project known as the Gautreaux Program (Goering 2003a). As relates to questions of declines in interaction, the three programs produced different results. The Chicago-based, Gautreaux Program revealed promising outcomes in decreased isolation, but the five-city MTO study and the HOPE VI projects, now enacted in multiple cities, produced less conclusive findings on interaction (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Rosenbaum 1995; Goering 2003b). In part, these differences may be due to the voluntary nature of the Gautreaux Program and the restrictions placed upon residents on where they could or could not move (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Rosenbaum 1995; Goering 2003a).

Though critiqued on study implementation, the MTO study is considered the most rigorous of the three mentioned mobility experiments, in terms of experimental design (Goering 2003b; Ellen and Turner 2003; Sampson et al. 2002; Curley 2010). As a key component of MTO design, researchers focus on social interaction of residents to determine if increased neighborhood advantage brings about the predicted outcomes of decreased isolation, increased network-
ing, and increased attainment of resources (Goering 2003a; Rosenbaum, Harris, and Denton 2003; Hanratty et al. 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Katz et al. 2003; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003). The focus on interaction outcomes in the MTO design makes this mobility experiment a good starting point for discussing social interaction in relocation. A closer examination of MTO findings illuminates the complexities of addressing changing social interaction with the enactment of nation-wide policy.

MTO STUDY FINDINGS

The MTO experiment examines relocation in five cities, focusing on six core sets of outcomes for participants: educational achievement; employment, earnings, and welfare; neighborhood, school, and housing conditions; rates of delinquency, deviant peer behavior, and criminal behavior; safety and exposure to violence; and physical and mental health status (Goering 2003a). The study hypothesized relocation from high poverty to low poverty neighborhoods would cause gains in education, employment, earnings, neighborhood and housing conditions, and safety and health, while decreasing welfare use, exposure to crime, and youth delinquency (Goering 2003a). Based on the Gautreaux Program findings, researchers predicted low social isolation and low hostility in the form of stigmatization and racism in MTO (Rosenbaum 1995; Rosenbaum et al. 2003). Goering (2003a) explains that decreases in isolation and stigma, coupled with safer neighborhood conditions are expected create better paths to engaging in positive social interaction for residents.

Looking at the MTO outcomes, clear, positive improvement does occur, most notably in terms of neighborhood satisfaction and safety. Significant increases in neighborhood satisfaction, perceptions of safety, and significant decreases in fear of crime and perceived social disorder consistently occur across all demonstration sites (Goering 2003b). As well, significant increases
in quality of housing occur (Rosenbaum et al. 2003) and access to neighborhood resources and institutions, such as daycares increase in some cases (Hanratty et al. 2003). Crime rates for the participants also decrease in receiving neighborhoods (the exception to this being higher property crimes in some neighborhoods) (Hanratty et al. 2003). Youth criminal victimization significantly decrease (Katz et al. 2003). Likewise, male youth involvement in delinquency and arrests for violent crime decrease significantly (Ludwig, Ladd, and Duncan 2003). Researchers attribute the increases in property crime conviction for youth to higher policing and arrest for property crimes in higher SES census tracts, not higher incidence of crime (Ladd and Ludwig 2003). For MTO analysts, establishing safer environments for residents is one path towards improving social interaction.

As well, the combined neighborhood effects of better housing, perceived safer neighborhoods, and decreased exposure to crime does manifest into significant effects on health. Consistently, adults report a significant decrease in anxiety and fear related to the increased safety of the neighborhood (Ladd and Ludwig 2003). Katz et al. (2003) also found significant increases in adult self-report health due to lack of injury from violence and decreased asthma attacks. While youth report fewer injuries requiring emergency care, no reports occur of physical health improvements for children (Katz et al. 2003; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003). In terms of mental health, while girls report a harder time adjusting to the move, boys report less anxiety and depression and less need of adult assistance (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003). For MTO researchers, better physical and mental health is also expected to promote increases in social interaction in the new neighborhoods (Goering 2003a).

However, not all residents report better health and social outcomes; adolescent girls report higher involvement in drinking alcohol and having peers involved in theft (Leventhal and
Brooks-Gunn 2003). Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2003) suggest the lack of integration and higher delinquency for adolescent girls moving to the suburbs is due to increased awareness of differing social class brought on by the move from high poverty to low poverty. Where boys make friends and new networks quickly, girls isolate themselves. These findings raise questions for researchers about the age and gender differences in social interaction outcomes (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003).

Overall, researchers expect social isolation to decrease because of relocation from the concentrated disadvantage of traditional housing projects into safer, healthier environments (Goering 2003a). By improving neighborhood conditions and the relative economic status of the neighbors, MTO researchers expect the opportunities and incentives for local social interaction and weak tie formation to increase (Sampson et al. 2002; Goering 2003a). However, in terms of adults’ social interaction, the LA study found decreases in church attendance and fewer numbers of kin and friends living in the neighborhood for MTO movers, as compared to Section 8 and control groups (Hanratty et al. 2003). The LA researchers argue social involvement does not increase or decrease overall but instead remains outside of the neighborhood area like prior to relocation (Hanratty et al. 2003). Katz et al. (2003) report similar non-significant impacts of relocation on adult isolation, explaining pre-existing extra-local friend groups remain constant throughout the relocation. The LA study reports relocated children have similar levels of interaction as compared to the control group; however findings reveal girls in the study have higher mental health concerns, decreases in expectations for the future, increases in behavioral problems such as substance use, and increases in delinquent peer characteristics (Hanratty et al. 2003). These findings cause concern to researchers expecting decreases in isolation and increases in social interaction for relocated residents (Goering 2003b).
CRITIQUES OF NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECTS AND CONCENTRATED DISADVANTAGE MODELS

Both neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models receive criticism regarding theoretical premise, methodology, and policy application. The first criticism of both models is theoretical arguments focus on concentrated poverty at the expense of other areas of interest, like concentrations of affluence or middle class. Mayer and Jencks (1989) warn the supposed connections between affluent neighborhoods and individual-level outcomes suggest interaction in the neighborhood is always mutually beneficial for all actors involved. While acknowledging the potential positive effect interaction with affluent neighbors can have in terms of political power, institution building, and attaining resources, Mayer and Jencks (1989) warn social interaction with affluent neighbors can also disadvantage low-income neighbors when resources are already scarce. Mayer and Jencks (1989) argue when scarcity occurs affluent neighbors may use economic, social, and political power advantages to horde resources or exclude poorer neighbors from important decision making processes (Mayer and Jenks 1989). Likewise, research on mixed-income developments shows when residents team up with larger entities to enact neighborhood change, less affluent neighbors are underserved and minimally included in the process while affluent community stakeholders can experience a variety of benefits (Fraser and Kick 2007).

Research outside of the neighborhood fields offers similar critiques. Conflict theorists criticizing social capital explain social interaction potentially has negative outcomes, and argue any beneficial outcome generated for one group using social capital, necessarily manifests at the expense of some other undisclosed social group (or groups), and therefore generates negative externalities (Portes 1998; Sobel 2002; Ostrum 1994). For example, when resident groups use
social and political power to keep waste dumps out of their neighborhoods, the dumps will eventually be placed in less organized neighborhoods with no power to stop the process (Bullard 1990; Bullard and Wright 1993). Similarly, some research suggests group interaction may not be beneficial to group members should membership encourage or demand risk-taking behavior or increase likelihood of injury, such as with local gangs (Gordon 1967; McIlwaine 2001).

A second branch criticism of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models focuses on methodology and argues the connections made between neighborhood characteristics and individual-level outcomes may not even exist. First, Ellen and Turner (1997) argue neighborhood effects research faces multiple methodological challenges and offers limited data to back up causal claims. They argue no consensus exists on specific neighborhood characteristics affecting specific outcomes. Second, Grannis (1998) claims the definition of the neighborhood is highly subjective; data collected at the census tract-level have little to no correlation with perceived neighborhood boundaries. Third, Greenbaum (2008) argues no model distinction exists concerning how the benefits or costs from organized social interaction parse out within the neighborhood, meaning the rewarded or burdened parties for attaining resources remain unclear. Fourth, Sampson et al. (2002) argue that neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models suffer from a lack of standardization in methods, decreasing generalization strength and continued theoretical development. Ellen and Turner (1997; 2003) suggest neighborhood effects research needs more focus on why, how, and for whom neighborhood matters.

A third branch of criticism argues neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models influenced social policy before critical testing of the theoretical models was complete (Meyers and Jenks 1989). In the early 1990s, national mobility programs emerged to contend with the racial and economic clustering within and around public housing projects. The MTO
and HOPE VI programs developed in part because of neighborhood effects research and ideas on social capital, isolation, concentration of poverty, and social interaction (Goering 2003a). In turn, the outcomes of both programs began to reshape the models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage (Sampson et al. 2002). While Sampson et al. (2002) suggest the best way to study changes in neighborhood outcomes and social interaction is examining data collected from mobility experiments like MTO, critics warn promoting policy based on incomplete models, without considering alternative strategies geared at affected individuals, can have unseen negative consequences (Mayer and Jencks 1989).

CRITIQUES OF POVERTY DECONCENTRATION POLICY

Poverty deconcentration in the United States is an outgrowth of the court-mandated Gautreaux program of Chicago, forcing housing authority officials to enact relocation strategies whereby public housing residents could volunteer to move to less-segregated areas (Goering 1986; Rosenbaum 1995). Begun in the late 1960s, the program was hailed as a success for providing public housing residents with homes in safer, less-impoverished, and less-segregated surroundings without resulting in significant racist backlash from whites receiving white, middle-class neighbors (Goering 1986; Rosenbaum 1995). The so-called success of the Gautreaux program eventually became the arguing point for programs like MTO, HOPE VI, and a number of other similar removal and relocation strategies aimed at public housing residents (Goering 2003a). However, while desegregation attempts and poverty deconcentration strategies in the United States have achieved some of their goals, no achievement has occurred in increasing employment and earnings and decreasing use of federal assistance. Continuation of public housing demolition and the relocation of its residents, despite these failures, generate criticisms for poverty deconcentration, and create a dichotomy in public housing debate between supporters and
opponents of poverty deconcentration (Goering 2003b; Boston 2005; Joseph 2006; Greenbaum 2008; Goetz 2010).

One of the first key criticisms of poverty deconcentration efforts is resident placement. In the Gautreaux program, residents’ new neighborhoods were carefully selected to insure resident moved out of high poverty areas and into cooperative neighborhoods (Goering 1986). More recent relocation programs are less successful at actually relocating residents away from poverty concentrations (Goetz 2010; Boston 2005; Leventhal, Fauth and Brooks-Gunn 2005; Oakley 2008; Oakley and Burchfield 2009). For the multiple sites of MTO and HOPE VI, reports consistently show residents do move out of the most impoverished regions, but only relocate to suburb areas if forced to, and even then would move again within a two year period (Goetz 2010; Boston 2005; Leventhal, Fauth and Brooks-Gunn 2005). Further, when not forced to move to suburb locations, on average relocated residents from all programs move within 3-5 miles of their original neighborhoods (Goetz 2010; Fischer 2003; Kingsley, Johnson, and Pettit 2003; Goetz 2003; Trudeau 2006; Reed 2006; Oakley 2008; Oakley and Burchfield 2009). Therefore, instead of moving away from impoverished and segregated areas, relocated residents move to similar neighborhoods or move to the suburbs briefly then move back to low-income, segregated neighborhoods. While the areas are less-impoverished than the original public housing neighborhoods, the areas are found to be becoming poorer over time (Goetz 2010). This pattern of relocation is also considered a prime reason as to why no significant increases in children’s schooling occur, due to parents either keeping their children in the same schools after relocating or moving them into similar low-funded schools systems (Ferryman, Briggs, Popkin, and Rendon 2008). Orfield (1989) suggests this pattern of relocation occurs in poverty deconcentration policy because researchers attempt to create a scientific design where resident groups pick the new loca-
tions instead of researchers actively designating the areas where residents would relocate to. Researcher attempts at “pure science” have not been successful, in part due to researchers attempting dual poverty deconcentration programs, such as MTO and HOPE VI, in the same city simultaneously (Shroder 2001; Curley 2005).

A second criticism of poverty deconcentration policy is relocation did not affect key outcomes of interest (Goering 2003b). In the MTO study, reports of children’s education outcomes are limited, and no impacts are reported on employment and earnings or receipt of public assistance (Hanratty et al. 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Goering 2003b). For HOPE VI similar non-findings are reported in terms of employment, earnings, and income (Goetz 2010; Clampet-Lundquist 2004; Curley 2006; Goering 2003b; Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000). In fact, some report greater financial insecurity due to increased housing costs experienced in relocation (Goetz 2010; Barrett, Geisel, and Johnson 2006). With health and safety, both MTO and HOPE VI reports reveal some lower mental health concerns amongst adults and lower mortality, but some reports reveal declines in health as compared to non-moving groups (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003; Boston 2005; Manjarrez, Popkin and Guernsey 2007). With delinquent behavior amongst youths, no significant decreases occur in MTO, but increases in property crime occur for boys and increases in delinquent peers occur for girls (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003). Combined, these facts argue public housing relocation can cause more, not less, struggle for residents dependent upon public housing assistance.

Concerning social interaction and social networking, poverty deconcentration policies increase isolation and diminish social networks residents depended upon for daily survival (Clampet-Lundquist 2007). While reports from the Gautreaux Program reveal low social isolation and discrimination faced by relocated residents, reports from MTO reveal either no signifi-
cant change in neighborhood interaction or slight decreases (Rosenbaum 1995; Hanratty et al. 2003; Katz et al. 2003). Reports from multiple HOPE VI projects reveal relocated residents are not likely to interact with new neighbors, report fewer neighboring behaviors (such as talking for more than 10 minutes or watching a neighbors child), and have fewer supportive relationships after relocating (Goetz 2003; Clampet-Lundquist 2004; Barret et al. 2006; Curley 2006). Studies also find youth are more isolated after relocation, and though they are more likely than adults to make new friendship networks youth are unlikely to interact with adults in new neighborhoods or view adults as role models (Gallagher and Bajaj 2007; Clampet-Lundquist 2007).

Poverty deconcentration policy therefore arguably diminishes social networks, decreases mechanisms of social support, decreases safety, and disrupts access to social resources (Greenbaum, Hathaway, Rodriguez, Spalding, and Ward 2008; Clampet-Lundquist 2010; Curley 2009; Keene 2010). Despite early MTO findings suggesting relocation to suburban areas would significantly increase the chances adults would have college educated friends or friends earning $30,000 or more, critics argue relocation instead increases isolation and feelings of loss of place, home, and community among relocated residents (Shroder 2001; Greenbaum et al. 2008; Clampet-Lundquist 2010; Kleit and Manzo 2006; Keene 2010). Findings also suggest receiving neighbors can overtly denied neighborhood interaction with relocated residents and when neighborhood interaction does occur the effort mostly falls to the relocated residents themselves (Greenbaum et al. 2008; Tach 2009). Further, Fraser and Kick (2007) argue when new neighbors include relocated residents in social networking and neighborhood organization, the relocated residents are only included in superficial decision making and the decisions made tend to only benefit the wealthier neighbors.
FOCUS ON SOCIAL INTERACTION BETWEEN NEIGHBORS

Critiques of programs such as MTO and HOPE VI support the argument for researchers needing to achieve a better understanding of why beneficial neighborhood interaction is expected to occur between neighbors in public housing relocation (Ellen and Turner 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003). In programs like MTO and HOPE VI, the expectation is relocated residents will interact with more-educated and affluent neighbors and will model their actions and life-expectations after the new neighbors (Goering 2003a). When these predicted outcomes did not manifest, despite incentive and opportunity for interaction, researchers began to examine both methodological and theoretical explanations to account for their findings (Rosenbaum et al. 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Ellen and Turner 2003; Hanratty et al. 2003). Looking at MTO findings, Rosenbaum et al. (2003) examines processes working as facilitators and barriers to residents’ adjustment to neighborhoods. These researchers examine residents’ perceptions of how they were treated upon moving in and residents’ feelings of geographic strain upon kin and friendship groups (Rosenbaum et al. 2003). In Chicago, both MTO and Section 8 movers express low-hostility and general welcoming receptions in new neighborhoods, and both groups report similar levels of interaction with friends living outside of the neighborhood (Rosenbaum et al. 2003) The research team equates this finding with no geographic strain (Rosenbaum et al. 2003). At the individual-level no reports of overt barriers to social interaction exist to explain why no social interaction gains emerged when incentive to interact exist.

In part, while residents report feeling at home in their neighborhood and feeling the neighborhood is a good place to live, they do not feel living in the neighborhood is important and do not plan to stay in the neighborhood long (Rosenbaum et al. 2003). These findings, along with the LA study findings on decreases in church attendance (Hanratty et al. 2003), suggest residents
strategies and actions in relocation may be working in opposition to the central theories of neighborhood effects and residential stability (Shaw and McKay 1942; Bursik and Webb 1982; Sampson et al. 2002). Despite feeling welcome, safe, and better off than before, relocated public housing residents might actively avoid interaction with new neighbors.

Looking at HOPE VI and other non-experimental programs, some researchers focus on the destruction of social networks and the loss of place, home, and community occurring in public housing demolition and relocation (Greenbaum et al. 2008; Clampet-Lundquist 2010; Kleit and Manzo 2006; Keene 2010; Tester, Ruel, Anderson, Reitzes, and Oakley 2011). Unlike MTO, HOPE VI relocations into mixed-income communities involve mandatory removal of residents. Involuntary displacement creates situations whereby residents might oppose relocating from public housing (Greenbaum 2008). This forced relocation from locations where residents have established a sense of place and community attachment may result in what Fullilove (2004) refers to as “root shock,” causing impediments to residents’ quality of life in new residences (Tester et al. 2011). In HOPE VI and other similar programs therefore, reasons for why interaction does not occur includes residents’ lack of willingness to move, attachment to prior place and community, or residents feeling no community exists within new neighborhoods (Tester et al. 2011; Kleit and Manzo 2006; Barrett et al. 2006; Gibson 2007; Clampet-Lundquist 2007).

From the perspectives of researchers concerned with neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage, answers to why relocated residents might show declines in social interaction, despite incentives and opportunities to interact, involve measurement error, sources of researcher bias, inadequate definitions of concepts, and the changing economic, political, and social landscapes from the era of Gautreaux to MTO and HOPE VI (Ellen and Turner 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Goering 2003b). Some researchers also argue HOPE VI demonstrations affect
the MTO populations under study and possibly obscured significant findings in MTO (Curley 2010).

Overall, researchers fail to show decreasing the concentration of poverty positively affects neighborhood social interaction (Goering 2003b). Increases in opportunities to enact weak tie relationships and increases in access to local institutional participation do not manifest across MTO sites (Wilson 1987; Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Goering 2003b).

Ellen and Turner (2003) argue despite the difference in results, both the Gautreaux Program and MTO findings transform the question of whether neighborhoods matter into questions of why neighborhoods matter, for whom, and how. Yet, neighborhood- and individual-level models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage have limited power to address how social interaction matters for relocated residents. Ladd and Ludwig (2003) argue future program designs must make the promotion and study of interaction processes a priority. To accomplish this goal of focusing on social interaction, emphasis must be placed on the level of theoretical conceptualization and the level of empirical data. Conceptualization of social interaction in public housing research exists primarily at the individual-level, due to a heavy reliance on self-report surveys and in-depth interviews, yielding individual-level data. Yet, reliance on individual-level empirical data does not bind research to an individual-level theoretical framework. Research conceptualized and empirically measured at the same level is ideal, but is not necessary to produce quality research to advance theory (Klein, Calvert, Garland, and Poloma 1969; Ruano, Bruce, and McDermott 1969).

In an attempt to advance both the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models, I will address some of their standing critiques by bridging the gap between neighborhood conditions and outcomes of community interaction and resident isolation. Using a drama-
turgical framework, explained in detail in the following chapter, I seek to explain with greater clarity, why residents either do or do not choose to interact in the neighborhood setting. By providing this information, a clearer connection will be provided to explain how the elements of exogenous neighborhood characteristics and relative neighborhood advantage affect the outcomes of beneficial neighborhood interaction and isolation amongst residents.

CONCLUSION

In Chapter 2, I argue while social interaction connects many aspects of public housing research, neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models can not sufficiently explain why relocated residents either do or do not to engage in social interaction with new neighbors. This causes concern for researchers and policy analysts attempting to guide social interaction outcomes for relocated public housing residents (Goering 2003b). Findings from MTO study sites expose the complexity in mobility experimentation and suggest patterns of social interaction in new neighborhoods may run counter to the predictions of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models. To answer some of these concerns, I suggest shifting the focus of study to examine the causes of social interaction for relocated public housing residents. By studying the causes of social interaction in relocation, data measuring how much and what type of interaction occurs will transform into data explaining why interaction either does or does not occur.

To get at why social interaction does or does not occur for relocated residents, research must utilize a theoretical framework focusing on interaction between individuals, despite reliance on individual-level data. Current conceptualizations of social interaction focus on how much interaction occurs by observing patterns in isolation, networking, and resource attainment. Shifting the research focus to why interaction occurs will highlight the differences in strategy and action
patterns for residents relocated from public housing (Alexander 1988). Social interaction for public housing residents is complex due to segregation, stigma, and focus on day-to-day survival; as MTO research shows, this complexity does not always diminish when residents relocate into new housing options. Addressing the compound complexity of relocated residents’ experiences with social interaction requires a focus on why interaction takes place between neighbors and can reveal relocated residents’ perceptions on changes in their social interaction. In Chapter 3 of this study, I argue for bridging the theoretical gap between neighborhood characteristics and social organization outcomes by focusing specifically on why social interaction does or does not happen for relocated residents. I argue for using dramaturgical theory to capture social interaction experiences of relocated public housing residents and suggest that this will strengthen both the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage frameworks.
CHAPTER 3: DRAMATURGY AND THE STAGING OF NEIGHBORHOOD INTERACTION

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, I begin to address the question of why relocated residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors by addressing the interaction process that must occur between the exogenous neighborhood characteristics and the community organization outcomes presented in neighborhood effects concentrated disadvantage models. Addressing both rational and interpretive approaches to analyzing social interaction, I discuss why neighborhood social interaction matters and how it shapes relocated residents’ lives. Highlighting key theories of symbolic interaction, I discuss how residents’ shared interpretive meanings and rational actions affect interaction with receiving neighbors. I provide an account of existing research related to social interaction changes in public housing relocation focusing on three branches of literature: place attachment, community attachment, and attachment to kinship/friendship groups. Drawing on the subject areas of place, community, and friendship/kinship groups, I explain how a dramaturgical framework is most appropriate for studying change in social interaction for relocated public housing residents. By gaining access to relocated resident’s rational actions and interpretive meanings and am better able to answer the research question of why social interaction either does or does not occur for relocated residents. By placing the research focus on Goffman’s (1959) concepts of personal fronts, impression management, decorum, role-play, and stigma and the elements of neighbor, neighborhood, and scene-specific role-play and answering why relocated residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors, I can bridge the theoretical gap in the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage frameworks.
RATIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE APPROACHES

Models of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage focus on how neighborhoods differ from one another in terms of resources available to residents. Both perspectives suggest relocation into safe, less-poor neighborhoods will generate opportunity and incentive to engage in social interaction, and relocated residents’ social interaction should increase (Sampson et al. 2003; Wilson 1987). These broad-based theories, however, cannot detect barriers keeping interaction from occurring despite increases in opportunity and incentive and lack of open hostility from new neighbors. To understand why residents might choose inaction in the face of incentive, public housing studies require an approach focused on interaction between neighbors.

However, key theoretical differences exist regarding why social interaction matters. For studies focused on outcomes of interaction, social interaction leads to the civic organization and community participation needed to provide safety and resources for neighborhoods (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). For studies focused on causes of interaction however, social interaction forms the basic constructs of reality and gives meaning to the lived situation (Thomas 1923; Mead 1934; Blumer 1969; Berger and Luckmann 1967). Where studies of interaction effects primarily contend with tangible outcomes gained in interaction, studies focused on causes of interaction delve into how symbolic forces (or the composite meanings individuals interpret and apply to situations) determine the shape and distinctive character of those tangible outcomes (Mead 1934; Blumer 1969). For examining changes in public housing relocation this means moving conceptualization of social interaction from the tangible to the symbolic and examining how residents interpret attitudes and gestures of neighbors and translate those interpretations into meaningful responses understood by those neighbors (Mead 1934; Blumer 1969). Therefore, instead of examining how interaction does or does not result in desired outcomes for
relocated residents, this study seeks to examine how individuals perceive and respond to interaction with neighbors, in order to explain why they either do or do not choose to engage in neighborhood social interaction.

In general, theories on interaction take two approaches to examining social interaction, both suited to the study of interaction in public housing relocation: they are the rational approach and the interpretive approach (Alexander 1988). The rational approach examines the social interactions of relocated residents aimed towards fulfilling needs and wants; how residents negotiate rewards and costs of relationships is critical to this approach. The interpretive approach examines the meanings relocated residents attach to social interactions and how those meanings promote or deter interaction in the given environment. Focusing on the determinants of social interaction permits researchers to study what individual residents are actually doing alongside what they claim to be doing, and why (Alexander 1988). Researchers using this perspective can first address whether relocated residents are interacting, and then determine why or why not, from the perspective of the resident (Alexander 1988). Attending to both rational and interpretive motivations for action allows for clearer examination of processes affecting social interaction for relocated residents.

The rational approach to studying causes of interaction embodies the ideas of rational choice and exchange theory (Alexander 1988). Rational choice addresses the way individuals use interaction to acquire resources and satisfy desires (Homans 1958); exchange theory addresses the ways individuals continue or discontinue interaction based whether the benefits outweigh the costs (Coleman 1986). This rational approach views actors as continually making economic based-choices to procure resources. Interactions based in rational motives are easy to examine because they are conscious and often overt decisions resulting in observable patterns of action or
inaction. The rational approach to examining interaction is similar to the focus on rational outcomes of social interaction. However, where prior theory suggests a trend toward maximization of incentive, the rational interaction approach argues each decision made by an individual comes at the cost of other decisions (Homans 1950; Homans 1958; Coleman 1986). While this theoretical focus eventually developed into more formal mathematical models of rational action and has been co-opted by economists and political scientists, the basic tenets of this approach provide a better understanding of why relocated residents might rationally choose not to interact (Blau 1964; Coleman 1973; Coleman 1990; Scott 2000). Relocated residents forgoing the choice to partake in beneficial neighborhood social interaction may be the result of needing to interact elsewhere and in other ways.

The interpretive approach to studying interaction embodies the ideas of symbolic interaction and addresses the social meanings attached to human actions and interactions (Alexander 1988). Theories of symbolic interaction argue humans collectively apply meanings to their situations and through these meanings address each other, and the rest of the world (Mead 1934; Blumer 1969; Snow 2001). Together, the co-constructed and shared meanings of actions establish common, environment-specific rules of interaction, referred to as the shared definition of the situation (Thomas 1923). The interpretive approach views all social interaction as co-created and situation dependent; if the situation parameters break down, the shared definition of the situation will lose meaning, and rational interaction will break down due to the inability to predict rational outcomes. Breakdown of the definition of situation can lead to psychological breakdown (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918) and what Durkheim (1897) referred to as anomie. Applying this argument to relocated public housing residents, declines in social interaction in the neighborhood might be the result of a breakdown in the shared definition of the situation for the resident, de-
creasing residents’ ability to predict rational outcomes, attain resources, meet goals, and satisfy desires.

Rational and interpretive conceptualizations suggest relocated residents continue making needs-based choices for daily survival, but in new environments where a shared definition of the situation might not exist. In-depth social interaction between relocated residents and new neighbors might not occur therefore due to situation breakdown on the part of the relocated resident. Having entered into a new scene with new definitions of situation, relocated residents have limited grounds for establishing the rules of interaction necessary to acquire needed resources.

A theoretical framework attending to both interpretive and rational conceptualizations of interaction is therefore useful when the goal of public housing relocation is to engineer a breakdown of the original situation, in order to construct a new definition of situation in its place. Poverty deconcentration policy aims at introducing new environments, neighbors, cultural scenes, and modes of social interaction in an attempt to reshape relocated residents’ prior definition of situation (Joseph, Chaskin, and Webber 2007; Small and Newman 2001). By changing the interpretive definitions surrounding the relocated residents, policy makers hope to remodel residents’ rational needs and wants. Once residents’ rational desires match the mainstream, residents’ desires can be met through societal-accepted patterns of interaction, barring structural barriers (Wexler 2001; Wilson 1987). Both rational and interpretive aspects of social interaction are therefore central to the theory of poverty deconcentration and critical to understanding social interaction patterns for relocated residents.

Place, Community, and Friendship/Kinship Group Attachment

While no overarching theory of interaction in public housing relocation exists (Moffitt 2003), several public housing studies do address relocated residents’ rational and interpretive
interactions in neighborhood settings. In particular, three branches of public housing research (place attachment, community attachment, and attachment to kinship and friendship groups) are insightful into how neighborhood matters for resident groups relocated from public housing. One similarity is these studies approach neighborhood as a source of interpretive meaning for its residents (Vale 1997). Focus on the interpretive and rational elements of neighborhood reveals how residents interpreted meanings in the neighborhood setting influence their level of social interaction and perceived value of social interaction. The study of these topic areas presents possibilities for examining how residents’ definition of the situation might breakdown. As the definition of the situation breaks down for relocated residents, social interaction might become less possible between residents and new neighbors (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918; Thomas 1923).

One branch of research focused on meanings of neighborhood is the study of place attachment (Tester et al. 2011; Goetz 2010; Perkins and Brown 2003; Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001). Place attachment research in public housing relocation most often focuses on the loss of place incurred through involuntary mixed-income relocation strategies, such as HOPE VI and other similar programs (Tester et al. 2011; Goetz 2010; Kleit and Manzo 2006; Gibson 2007). To date, little connection exists between place attachment and MTO research due to the voluntary nature of the MTO study (Goetz 2003). Because the definition of attachment hinges on unwillingness to part from something, volunteering to leave a place arguably negates the existence of such place attachment (Vale 1997; Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001). However, critics argue volunteering to relocate does not necessarily negate attachment to prior place; for people in public housing neighborhoods, the opportunities afforded in relocation may rationally outweigh the interpretive attachment to prior residence (Manzo and Kleit 2006; Goetz 2003; Goetz 2010).
Therefore, while public housing residents may hold attachment to the neighborhood setting, the advantages afforded in relocating may be too good to bypass.

Place attachment research argues the concepts of neighborhood attachment and neighborhood satisfaction are not the same (Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001). As was shown in MTO outcomes, residents may find satisfaction with the neighborhood, but feel little connection to the place itself (Rosenbaum et al. 2003). Existing place attachment research in public housing is limited however, and generally focuses on attachment to pre-move neighborhoods (Tester et al. 2011; Manzo, Kleit, and Couch 2008). Regardless of their focus pre-move attachments, Tester et al. (2011) argue that removal of residents from places where they experience attachment can lead to what Fullilove (2004) called “root shock,” impairing residents’ ability to interact with neighbors in new settings. This “root shock” impairment may cause a breakdown of the situational definition, and therefore may be one cause for limiting social interaction after relocation (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918; Thomas 1923) To address one possible point of situation breakdown where levels of neighborhood social interaction might be affected, longitudinal studies should observe residents’ levels of place attachment both before and after relocation.

A second branch of public housing research concerned with interpretive interaction in the neighborhood examines the concepts of neighborhood culture and community scene. Where place attachment addresses the intimate connection between the resident and the home or surrounding neighborhood setting, the study of community attachment addresses the connection between the resident and the community-specific cultural scene (Tester et al. 2011; Clampet-Lundquist 2011; Greenbaum, Hathaway, Rodriguez, Spalding, and Ward 2008; Goetz 2010; McMillan and Chavis 1980). Neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage researchers consider sense of community, or common cultural scene, necessary to establishing effective
neighborhood organization (Sampson et al. 2002; Wilson 1987). However, Wilson (1987) argues sense of community in disadvantaged areas is either non-existent or, when present, ineffective and detrimental, due to residents’ use of and reliance on forms of interaction not supported in the mainstream. Here, Wilson (1987) is referring to community members condoning illicit activities such as drug-dealing or selling food stamps for cash, or possibly dangerous social interactions such as joining into gangs. Clampet-Lundquist (2011) critiques this stance, arguing effective interpretive bonds between the resident and the community scene do exist within public housing communities. Further, McMillan and Chavis (1980) argue community culture is neighborhood specific and helps to define the situation for residents via cultural cues of membership, shared values, and shared emotional connections.

As with place attachment, existing research on sense of community in public housing relocation typically focuses on the loss of community experienced by relocated residents (Tester et al. 2011; Manzo, Kleit, and Couch 2008). In addition, these studies usually focus on the involuntary removal of residents occurring in HOPE VI relocations and not on voluntary moves made through MTO (Tester et al. 2011; Clampet-Lundquist 2011; Goetz 2010). Regardless of whether the move was voluntary, deconcentration strategies guided by models of concentrated disadvantage intentionally aim to remove and rebuild resident group memberships and pre-existing community values (Popkin 2004; Clampet-Lundquist 2004). Again, Tester et al. (2011) associate the loss of community to the possibility of a “root shock” effect in residents, whereby social interaction is impeded due to breakdown a breakdown in the definition of situation (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918; Thomas 1923). Longitudinal studies of attachment to community before and after relocation, would address a second possible point of situation breakdown where individual residents’ neighborhood interaction might be affected.
The third branch of public housing research concerned with residents’ interpretive connection to the neighborhood focuses on access to friendship and kinship groups. In studies focusing at the individual-level, kinship and friendship groups mediate the flow of information, resources, and interaction necessary to achieve organizational outcomes (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Rosenbaum et al. 2003; Bursik 2000; Sampson and Wilson 2005). In studies focusing on interaction, however, friendship and kinship groups mediate the interpretive and rational elements lost or distorted through involuntary relocation (Clampet-Lundquist 2004; Kleit 2001; 2005; Popkin 2004; Joseph 2006; Goetz 2003; Curley 2006; Barrett et al. 2006). Within public housing neighborhoods, people look out for one another and make friendship connections helping to define the situation and normalize daily existence in concentrated disadvantage (Clampet-Lundquist 2010). Further, family and kin groups are highly prevalent in these communities (Sampson and Wilson 2005). Studies focusing on interaction are interested in how individual residents experience this shift and possible removal from friends and family members. It is possible that the loss of friends and familiar actors in daily routine might generate a breakdown in how residents’ manage social situations. Longitudinal studies of residents’ connections to friendship and kinship groups before and after relocation would address a third possible point of situation breakdown and provide insight into residents’ choices of whether or not to interact in the new neighborhood.

Attachment to place, community, friends, and kin have a significant, but undetermined effect on the neighborhood social interaction experienced by residents. Most research on social interaction in public housing relocation obscures social interaction patterns by focusing on organized resource attainment and by treating all public housing residents as one collective group (Ben-Shalom, Moffitt, and Sholz 2010; Goetz 2010). These three topic areas of public housing
research provide a basis for arguing future studies account for the residents’ definition of the situation, and address both interpretive and rational accounts of why interaction does or does not occur (Thomas 1923; Alexander 1988). To better observe social interaction patterns in public housing relocation, I suggest using a dramaturgical perspective to incorporate the interpretive meanings and the rational actions developed through attachment to place, community, and friendship and kinship ties.

DRAMATURGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The dramaturgy research frame places emphasis on the performance of interaction between specific actors, incorporating a particular setting, and following scene specific rules (Goffman 1959). This framework views relocated residents as actors performing within the setting of new neighborhoods, with mostly new neighbors as the other actors, according to rules embedded in the new neighborhood’s specific cultural scene. Dramaturgy is the perspective best suited to discussing change in neighborhood social interaction, especially for groups of people experiencing a life-changing opportunity while simultaneously facing the possible removal of familiar kinship and friendship groups, setting, and sense of community. Framing relocation in terms of moving actors between stages allows for an in-depth analysis of change across a spectrum of inter-connected conceptual dimensions.

Goffman (1959) argues social interaction involves a setting and scene-specific definition of the situation, co-created by all actors on the stage. From the dramaturgical perspective, the actual performance of social interaction is considered a way of managing tension between rational, human wants and needs and interpretive, social understandings of the way things work in a particular scene. Interpretive interactions are necessary in order for actors to communicate meanings of actions to each other and to co-create the operative definition of the situation.
(Thomas 1923). This shared definition of the situation is necessary for rational choices and exchanges to occur (Homans 1958; Coleman 1986). For relocated residents operating within new neighborhoods, need-fulfilling interaction cannot occur until neighbors establish common rules of interaction.

Most importantly, the dramaturgical framework is best equipped to examine change across points of relocation. Through longitudinal measurement, the dramaturgical frame reveals how relocated residents change across geographic locations in terms of their shared meaning systems and established rules of interactions. The dramaturgical framework offers an examination of actors, scene, and setting from pre- to post-relocation and explains how and why changes in each dimension can affect social interaction.

**Dramaturgy Actors**

Dramaturgy focuses on the interplay between actors, scene, and setting. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959:17) explains all social interactions consist of individual actors offering performances in order to display characters with believable, consistent, and task appropriate attributes and abilities. Actors’ performances do not require the individual’s belief in the impressions generated. These performances depend on the audiences’ acceptance of the reality presented however, though typically individuals and audiences both are sincerely convinced the staged performances are the real reality. Goffman (1959) derives his ideas on staged interaction from Thomas’ (1923) interpretive approach to interaction. Thomas (1923) explains the performances between actors work to establish a shared definition of the situation.

Over time, routine performances between two or more actors communicate to the entire stage what the expected norms and rules of social interaction will, and will not, consist of and a shared definition of the situation between actors forms the basis of rational action. Actors’ per-
formances can include any number of routine interactions, including non-action, or avoidance, but will always work towards maintaining the actors’ personal fronts (Goffman 1959). To varying degrees, relocated public housing residents must re-establish the social bonds mediating the tension between human and social needs. Performances between relocated residents and new neighbors communicate what the future of interactions will consist of. From this stance, lack of interaction in the neighborhood is the combined outcome of actions taken on the part of both the relocated resident and the receiving neighbors.

Goffman (1959) applies the term impression management to the total upkeep of the actors’ characters. Goffman (1959) claims actors accomplish impression management successfully when their personal fronts are consistent. Personal fronts consist of appearance and manner, scripts, teamwork, role-play, and decorum (Goffman 1959). When actors manage personal fronts skillfully, the actors are better aligned to determine what their level of social interaction on the stage will consist of. Actors socially construct personal fronts within the realm of the stage, and personal fronts are always scene-specific. An individual may have a range of personal fronts, but within the boundaries of the neighborhood they only exhibit a few select fronts, like neighbor, parent, or spouse while downplaying or concealing all other fronts, like factory worker or spiritual healer. Goffman (1959:56) argues the front of “neighbor” is not an original or genuine front, but over time has become an idealized impression of what individuals believe a neighbor is expected to be.

The performance of the personal front depends on the actors’ appearances and manners. Appearance includes the actors’ arrangement of self and expressive equipment, such as clothing or artifacts denoting the actors’ status. Appearance, and its capacity for change, offers one key to determining levels of neighborhood interaction. While individual residents may not be able to
change the environment they live in, individuals do have the ability to alter their appearance inside and outside of the neighborhood, thereby accepting or refusing to accept a status others construct for them. For example, if relocated residents begin to dress like their new neighbors, they will depict status equality and replicate an existing sense of status quo for the neighborhood. Goffman’s (1959) stance argues however, if relocated residents dress in ways depicting their prior residence in public housing neighborhood, they will distinguish themselves from all other members of the new neighborhood rather than acclimate. By refusing to adapt to the status of the new neighborhood, relocated residents give the impression of accepting a lower status compared to their new neighbors. By adopting expressive equipment of a lower station, relocated residents reaffirm their new neighbors’ expressive nature of higher status appearance and higher station in the neighborhood.

Likewise, the manner of the individual performer’s personal front affects levels of neighborhood interaction. Relocated residents’ mannerisms reveal their level of willingness to adhere consistently to the established paradigm of status and class. Manner consists of the actors’ affect and attitudes towards other actors and the scene. Goffman (1959:24) claims the manner of the performer gives the impression to others of the interaction role they “will be expected to play in the oncoming situation”, and other actors on stage often expect this manner to be consistent with the scene and the performer’s existing social status. Goffman’s (1959) theory argues if through their mannerisms relocated residents express an expectation to be included in decisions affecting the neighborhood they will have a higher likelihood of directing the course of those interactions than will performers expressing through their mannerisms the intention to follow the lead of others. By developing coherence between the appearance and manner of the personal front, actors
deliver a consistent performance conveying intent to define the interaction roles and levels of social interaction in the neighborhood.

Scripts are another key component of the actors’ personal fronts controlled by the actors’ performances. Scripts are seldom new, and even when ‘new’ to the individual actor, most scripts develop from a predetermined set of ‘well-established’ scripts (Goffman 1959). Actors can also interchange scripts and between various fronts and roles actors will often incorporate similar scripts (Goffman 1959:72). This lack of originality and variety between scripts affects the level of neighborhood interaction, primarily by limiting actors in the acceptable types of interaction available within the stage setting for all roles involved. For example, in many neighborhood environments, established home owners will invite new residents to join existing neighborhood associations, but new residents would not usually create their own neighborhood association upon moving in. Instead, new resident actors would be more likely to engage the standing order of pre-existing neighborhood groups, if they perceive greater resources and better outcomes are available for the neighborhood.

Navigating personal fronts using appearances, manners, and scripts, actors will work to uphold managed or passable impressions. Individual actor’s managed impression of self affects neighborhood interaction by re-establishing and confirming an individual’s social status and temporary ritual state compared to other neighbors. According to Goffman (1959:17), impression management also works to reaffirm reality for all the actors on the stage. Hence, Goffman (1959) argues a base importance exists for actors to maintain a coherent appearance, because impression management supports the continuation of the status quo. In a neighborhood setting, this status quo coherence allows neighbors to be aware when things are as they should be, and when they are otherwise (Goffman 1959:25).
Goffman (1959) also explains inconsistency in impression management evokes stigma from other actors on the stage. When neighbors feel others are not acting their part, a breakdown emerges in normative expectations for the neighborhood. These norm violations elicit social sanctions of varying degree and intensity against the violators. Relocated residents can often face stipulations to maintain their housing and so must work to avoid reports of negative social interaction reaching housing authorities, jeopardizing their voucher status. Therefore, for relocated residents, low interaction can become a necessary failsafe for maintaining their passable personal front and securing assistance from housing authorities.

Last, Goffman (1959) explains while successful impression management of the personal front can be limited to a lone actor management usually involves sets of teammates collectively attending to the appearance and manner befitting each teammate’s scene-specific role within the given setting. Actors try to surround themselves with rewarding teammates helpful to maintain complicity in their performance. Teammates help individual actors to be "themselves" and relieve the burden of constantly attending to their own personal front. When actors are not certain if they get to be themselves, avoiding interaction is best. Looking again at housing voucher mandates, prior public housing residents can have good reason to limit or avoid unsure contact with non-teammates. Thus, where relocated residents report having friends in the new neighborhood, they may be more inclined to interact routinely with neighbors; where relocated residents report having fewer or no friends in the new neighborhood, they may be less inclined to routine social interaction in the neighborhood due to lack of teammates needed to uphold their personal fronts.

Dramaturgy Scene

According to Goffman (1959), the scene affects the actors because actors’ performances of personal fronts are in large part preordained by their scene-specific role. Actors on stage co-
create and maintain roles they deem culturally-based to fit the scene. The role of neighbor for example, depends on multiple actors, each managing their individual personal front of neighbor, establishing between themselves what being neighbors consist of. Role play is therefore scene-based because actors are limited to the scripts, resources, and setting components readily available to them in order to complete their acts.

Like impression management, role-play in the scene helps to reinforce reality for actors. Role-play denotes what each actor does and does not do according to the community rules in their specific setting. Mismanaging role play can damage the personal front, resulting in stigma. Stigma arises when actors act differently than the community thinks they should. Here, Goffman (1959:19) draws on the argument of Park (1950) claiming in these roles actors know each other and come to know themselves. Thus, to the actors within any particular neighborhood, interaction negotiations between neighbors or between the neighbors and outside forces become “common knowledge”. In relocation from public housing, residents must adapt to playing the “neighbor” role according to the scene parameters of the new neighborhood, or run the risk of eliciting stigma and possible sanction from new neighbors. Again, mismanaging role-play can cause negative consequences for relocated residents in the form of losing necessary housing assistance.

Goffman (1959:22) explains scene-specific roles affect levels of social interaction by establishing and reaffirming class distinctions amongst actors. When actors engage in role-play using the personal fronts of “neighbors”, their actions determine the status hierarchy and membership for the collectivity of actors deemed “neighbors.” When performers commit themselves sincerely, or cynically, to roles whose predetermined script or front distinguishes them from other roles, whether subordinately or superordinately, they simultaneously reaffirm both roles and reduce the likelihood of different roles ever being adopted. Moreover, Goffman (1959:36) argues
what actors are actually reinforcing are the officially accredited values of society. Therefore, if relocated residents begin neighborhood role-play cautiously, by allowing others in the scene to hold dominant positions, these roles will be difficult to change at a later point in time, without affecting the shared definition of the situation. Once residents establish themselves as non-social actors, they may remain non-social to avoid upsetting a status quo.

Scene-specific role-play is most important to social interaction because it supports actors' idealized realities. Even when actors feel otherwise, they express continuity in situation-based routines to keep the collaborative scene from dissolving. When scenes dissolve due to non-compliance in role-play, actors feel disturbed, lost, and without guiding norms (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918). Therefore, even though every individual within the scene (apart from those naively sincere individuals) knows on some level they are merely going through the ritual motions necessary to secure rational and interpretive ends, they are in no way allowed to drop the pretense of scene-specific reality. However, while keeping reality afloat, this course of routine scene maintenance prevents actors from being able to collectively define, redefine, or reaffirm the idealized notions they promote through their personal fronts (Goffman 1959). Once set in their roles, relocated residents and new neighbors may continue using familiar fronts and scripts even when new roles might be more suitable. Relocated residents may especially consider the disturbance they cause by adjusting established patterns of role-play too costly and stigmatizing to attempt.

Through role-play and personal fronts, performers negotiate their levels of social interaction insofar as they reaffirm the established idealizations of reality. These acts begin the moment performers enter the stage and terminate at their exit, and change for the individual only as much as the collective supports notions of change (Goffman 1959). Collectivities rarely change their
roles, believing the rest of society expects them to perform in an expected fashion. Therefore, regardless of how accurate the reality is in comparison to the idealized notion of the overall performance, this co-created and shared definition of the situation determines the level of interaction in the neighborhood. Neighborhood interaction conforms to the idealized notions of what established members of the neighborhood expect and officially value. In order for social interaction to occur without mismanaging personal fronts, relocated residents must either sincerely or cynically adapt to scene-specific neighborhood role-play.

Difficulties arise however if relocated residents do not wish to be a part of, or cannot navigate, scene-specific role-play in the neighborhood (Clampet-Lundquist 2007). First, being part of a group, like a neighborhood community, implies a degree of mutual trust, a sense of belonging, and a shared emotional connection relocated residents may not experience (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Wilson 1987). This scenario extends the concentrated disadvantage premise of public housing residents having limitations in terms of role models and desires and abilities to engage in mainstream social interaction.

Second, and counter to models of concentrated disadvantage, relocated residents may avoid connection to a new neighborhood scene because they are still attached to the community scene from public housing (Goetz 2010; Manzo et al. 2008). Recent research argues despite depictions of extreme social isolation in public housing, friendship and kinship groups exist and persist between residents prior to relocation (Gibson 2007; Greenbaum 2008). Where attachment to the prior public housing scene is high, relocated residents may be less willing to establish membership in new neighborhood communities, and instead exhibit low attachment to the new scene, or avoid role-play altogether (Kleit and Manzo 2006).
Third, lack of role-play in the new community scene by relocated residents may be due to high levels of independence, whereby relocated residents refuse to take part in reaffirming the neighborhood reality, in case receiving neighbors attempt to relegate them to positions of low or stigmatized status. These individuals resist the scrutiny of outsiders and avoid interaction not required to keep their voucher. In line with this argument, neighborhood role-play with new neighbors may not occur because relocated residents may choose to role-play in settings outside the neighborhood, like, work, school, or church settings (Hanratty et al. 2003). Prior to relocation, these residents may have opted to forgo neighborhood social interaction in order to avoid costly interaction when living in public housing (Miller-Cribs and Farber 2008; Dominguez and Watkins 2003).

Dramaturgy Setting

Goffman (1959:22) claims role-play performances take place in a particular setting. Goffman views this staged setting as composed of all background items and props necessary for the human action being “played out before, within, or upon it.” Further, the setting is generally (though not always) fixed geographically, so actors cannot begin their performances until they reach the set stage and must end their performances upon leaving. Therefore, the setting is necessary to social interaction because it supplies the boundary of where role-play interaction will reasonably take place. While actors remain within the setting boundaries they confine themselves to their established roles, however once outside the setting boundaries actors can move between different roles fitted to other sets and cultural scenes (Goffman 1959). For relocated residents, adapting to a new neighborhood involves learning the boundaries of the set and maintaining the personal fronts and roles while within those boundaries.
Further, Goffman (1959:107-125) denotes two specific set regions, front stage and back stage, determining the boundaries of interaction for actors. While in the front stage region, individual actors expect other actors to view and judge their actions, but once in the back stage region actors are free to drop their personal fronts and attention to role-play. In the neighborhood setting, for example, the actor’s front stage region may consist of any area outside the front door, while the actor’s back stage region remains confined to inside the house. Actors socially construct culturally fit the boundaries of these regions to specific scenes (Goffman 1959). This means depending on the neighborhood scene, front stage may extend into the actors’ houses, limiting or removing any back stage regions. Likewise, actors may define the entire neighborhood setting as a back stage region while treating other, more important interaction settings as front stage. Again, the relocated residents’ choices of boundaries will work to either promote or detract from the shared reality of the neighborhood community. Any detraction from the shared setting rules for the neighborhood can result in stigma for relocated residents (Goffman 1959).

While setting primarily affects social interaction through establishing boundaries for actors, how the actors incorporate the setting into their performances also establishes rules for interactions with other actors. Goffman (1959) refers to actors’ attention to setting as decorum. The actors’ decorum communicates to the entire stage how actors expect their personal areas, the personal areas of others, and the common/shared areas of the stage to be treated by other actors and themselves. Actors express their relationship with decorum as an extension of self and/or as a meaningful attachment to place (Goffman 1959).

Along with role-play expectations, housing authorities expect relocated residents to develop standards of decorum reaffirming the established reality of the neighborhood community. Relocated residents learn the neighborhood expectations of decorum from the way community
members maintain, or fail to maintain, their neighborhood setting. Examples of neighborhood attention to decorum might include mowing the lawn, picking up trash, or sanctioning against vandalism. When relocated residents partake in shared decorum, they further promote the shared definition of the situation and reaffirm reality; when relocated residents fail to partake in shared decorum, they deny the collective attachments to the setting and risk jeopardizing their managed impressions in the new neighborhood.

Examining neighborhood social interaction from the dramaturgical perspective reveals how elements pertaining to setting might deter neighborhood social interaction for relocated residents. First, neighborhoods and their boundaries are often nebulous due to the relative nature of how boundaries form (Grannis 1998). Upon moving away from the established boundaries of the public housing community, relocated residents must acclimate to new neighborhood boundaries. The difficulties arising in re-establishment of boundaries is highly relative to the relocated resident’s pre-existing familiarity with the neighborhood. This process of establishing the boundaries will differ for residents based on their access to transportation and based on the hours of the day most commonly spent in the neighborhood setting. Residents working the night shift and riding the bus will learn the boundaries differently from residents working the day shift and with access to an automobile (Bullard and Johnson 2004). Because where one actor draws the boundary of the neighborhood may not align with the place where another actor draws the boundary, disconnect may also exist in determining where neighborhood role-play begins and ends. For example, if relocated residents perceive the neighborhood role-play to end when they leave the vicinity of the house, they may face role-play related stigma if new neighbors witness them acting out of character in a near-by grocery store.
Likewise, relocated residents and new neighbors may have different definitions of where front stage and backstage actions occur. Residents may view the neighborhood setting as the beginning of the backstage, and as such, may afford no effort to maintaining a personal front while in the neighborhood. Also, relocated residents may have no prior concept of back stage, and therefore run the risk of trespassing into the backstage region of other actors in the neighborhood setting. For relocated residents both scenarios end in outcomes evoking stigma, prevent a shared definition of the situation in the neighborhood, and disrupt role-play with established rules of interaction. Relocated residents may also accrue place-based stigma in the new neighborhoods due to having no prior concept of decorum. Public housing complexes are highly stigmatized settings, theoretically distanced from the characteristics endearing residents to the setting (Waquant 2007; Venkatesh 2008). Assuming the concentrated disadvantage perspective, relocated residents may hold no shared expectations of decorum due to living in neglected and decrepit settings and may receive stigma for neglecting upkeep of property and possessions (Wilson 1987). Relocated residents may also unfairly receive stigma due to lack of finances or resources necessary to maintain setting standards.

Despite concentrated disadvantage depictions however, many relocated residents view their old residences and the larger public housing complexes as a sanctuary, a barrier to homelessness, and most importantly as “home” (Manzo et al. 2008). Therefore, residents may avoid connections to a new setting due to lingering attachment to prior settings, prior established boundaries, and prior shared definitions of decorum and region (Manzo et al. 2008; Vale 1997). Thus, how residents vary in attachment to setting prior to relocation may affect attachment to setting post-relocation. For example, high attachment to public housing setting might translate to low attachment in the new neighborhood. Relocated residents’ low attachment to the new neigh-
borhood can communicate to the stage relocated their low expectations of themselves and others in regards to upkeep and treatment of their new home and neighborhood. Consciously or unconsciously communicating messages related to the setting, might therefore affect social interaction between relocated residents and new neighbors.

DRAMATURGICAL STUDY OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN RELOCATION

The dramaturgy perspective argues social interaction for relocated public housing residents consists of routine performances between relocated residents and new neighbors, with all actors aiming to maintain a passable personal front (Goffman 1959). These ongoing performances are highly scripted forms of role-play, co-created by the actors in the setting, and are specific to the neighborhood's cultural scene. Therefore, different resident groups will have different definitions of what passable fronts will consist of, and will have different chances at pulling off passable fronts. If actors are unable to pull off a passable front, their actions will evoke stigma from the other actors. Therefore, applying dramaturgy to the study of how public housing relocation affects social interaction, the first element to consider is stigma.

According to Goffman (1959) stigma occurs when a person’s actual social identity is revealed to be less than their social identity original imputed upon them by others. Goffman (1959) argues when people meet a stranger they anticipate a social identity based in part upon structural attributes, such as ones neighborhood or occupation, and in part upon personal attributes such as exposed physical characteristics and dispositions. People create for the stranger a virtual social identity and later compare this to an actual social identity. Goffman (1959) argues for most people the virtual and actual social identities are nearly identical due to people’s continual use visual estimations of social norms. However, a stranger’s attributes might reveal mismatch between their virtual and actual social identity. In the case of public housing relocation, this could occur if
new neighbors expect relocated residents to be of a similar social standing and then find out otherwise. Goffman (1959) defines this revelation as stigma if the findings cause other actors to diminish their views of the individual. Goffman (1959) argues this act of lessening causes people to be reduced in our minds from whole/usual people to tainted/discounted people. Therefore, if relocated residents suffer stigmatization due to former residence in public housing, their chances of local social interaction can decrease.

According to Goffman (1963:14) three types of stigmatizing attributes exist: physical abominations, character blemishes, and tribal or group stigmas. Relocated public housing residents experience group-related stigma. Despite the lived realities of most public housing residents, outsiders stigmatize American public housing as being gang-infested and drug-filled, riddled with junkies, prostitutes, and welfare mothers (Waquant 2007; Venkatesh 2008). Goffman (1963) argues social stigma based on physical, personal, or group attributes matters overall because the stigmatized receive discrimination and reduced life chances due to other actor overlooking all characteristics except the one eliciting stigma. Massey and Denton (1993) and Waquant (2008) argue individuals living in public housing can be kept from attaining decent employment, education, health services, police protection, and even friendship and mate selection if forced to reveal their local address.

Goffman (1963) claims actors facing stigma fall into two sometimes overlapping categories, those whose stigmatizing attributes are visible and those whose attributes are concealed. Stigmatized actors work to negotiate what is visible and what is concealed in order to manage their stigma. Relocated residents might avoid or limit interaction with new neighbors to downplay potential stigma from former public housing residence. This concealment or decreased visibility might also cause limited neighborhood social interaction. However, beyond overt stigmati-
zation of living in public housing, relocated residents may experience social stigma over other shortcomings related to role-play in the neighborhood and as a result may limit interaction with neighbors.

For example, relocated public housing residents may feel they lack the role models or expressive equipment necessary for presenting passable appearance and mannerisms and as such may avoid interaction to prevent stigma (Wilson 1987). Relocated residents and their new neighbors may also use different definitions of the situation concerning the role of neighbors and these differences could prevent social interaction from occurring (Tach 2009). As well, relocated residents might avoid social interaction because their former teammates are no longer available to help maintain passable performances in the neighborhood (Clampet-Lundquist 2010).

As social interaction relates to the neighborhood’s cultural scene, scene-specific role-play may not occur because relocated residents and neighbors do not share established rules of interaction. These shared rules of interaction may not develop between neighbors either because the relocated residents do not feel connected to the community scene or because they do not perceive any neighborhood community exists (Goetz 2003; Gibson 2007). Relocated residents might avoid role-play because they hold lingering attachment to their prior community, or because they reject membership in any community (Clampet-Lundquist 2007). Being part of a group, like a neighborhood community, implies a degree of mutual trust, a sense of belonging, and a shared emotional connection relocated residents may not experience (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Wilson 1987).

Likewise, elements of setting may prevent routine social interaction from developing in new neighborhoods if relocated residents and new neighbors establish different neighborhood boundaries, have different conceptions of front and backstage regions, or have different expecta-
tions with regards to decorum. Residents experiencing lingering place attachment to prior neighborhood or residents with low place attachment in general due to high mobility from having moved multiple times, may reject shared definitions of the neighborhood held by other actors (Manzo et al. 2008). Further, while residents may like the new setting and find the area safe, they may find the neighborhood lacks symbolic meaning (Rosenbaum et al. 2003). Residents may agree the neighborhood is an improvement, but improvement need not equate to a sentimental connection (Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001; Vale 1997).

Relocated residents’ positioning concerning their attachment to other actors, the scene, and the setting can hold real and lasting consequences for their level of neighborhood social interaction. Policy makers and researchers expect increased opportunities and incentives for social interaction will drive relocated residents to connect with new neighbors (Goering 2003a; Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafson, and Turner 2004). Through improved connections in the new neighborhood, policy makers and researchers expect relocated residents to learn about new resource opportunities, experience new ways to interact fitting the main stream, and develop a desire to maintain and protect the neighborhood setting collectively with other neighbors (Goering 1986; 2003a; Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Wilson 1987; Popkin et al. 2004). However, research reveals little conclusive evidence regarding positive change in the patterns of neighborhood interaction from pre- to post-relocation (Goering 2003b; Hanratty et al. 2003; Katz et al. 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003).

Applying a framework focusing on interaction between neighbors to public housing relocation policy, four primary assumptions must be addressed. The first guiding assumption of public housing relocation policy is all public housing residents are essentially the same. The second assumption is relocated residents and new neighbors will have compatible frameworks for stag-
ing neighborhood interaction. The third guiding assumption is relocated residents will view the new neighbors' modes of role-play as superior to their own, and will automatically attempt to downplay any forms of interaction deemed culturally inappropriate for the neighborhood. The fourth guiding assumption of public housing relocation policy is relocated residents hold no attachment to their former neighbors, neighborhood scene, or neighborhood setting to prevent them from assimilating into the new neighborhood and interacting with new neighbors. Use of the dramaturgical perspective helps to avoid these biased assumptions, by asking explicit questions pertaining to the components of staged interaction. This perspective offers rational and interpretive stage-specific explanations for why relocated residents either do or do not to interact in new neighborhoods.

Specifically, applying a dramaturgical framework challenges these assumptions by asking relocated residents about how they perceived interaction with their old neighbors and how the experience interaction with their new neighbors. Rather than assume that all relocated public housing residents feel the same way about neighbors, neighborhoods, and social interactions, this framework opens up the possibility that residents’ experiences vary on a host of issues including but not limited to perceived or actual stigmatization, differences in role-play interaction rules, and differences in geographic and social boundaries including front stage and back stage interaction. By challenging the assumptions that relocated residents are universal in both their attitude and approach to interacting with their new neighbors, the addition of a dramaturgical framework serve to extend both the neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage frameworks by explaining the variety of ways that relocation from disadvantaged residences might influence outcomes of either social interaction or isolation in newer, more advantaged neighborhoods.
Attending to these assumptions, the use of the dramaturgical framework supplies a missing aspect capable of bridging the exogenous characteristics and social organization/isolation outcomes in neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage models (see Figure 3). According to this framework, the characteristics of a neighborhood, either good or bad, will partially determine the patterns that social interaction will take by shaping the scripts and fronts actors use in role-play interaction will occur, designating the setting where interactions will occur, and providing the structure for community responses to social interactions. As neighborhood characteristics work to design the patterns of social interaction and community response, the social organization outcomes are formed. Therefore, if neighborhoods provide limited resources and opportunities, actors will be limited in terms of interactive role-play, which will limit organized patterns of interaction that can extend into and beyond the local neighborhood-level. However, neighborhoods providing more resources and opportunities will foster less-limited and more efficacious forms of role-play between actors in a wider variety of settings, promoting a higher likelihood of effective social organization activities both within and beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Characteristics</th>
<th>Dramaturgical Factors</th>
<th>Social Organization Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SES</td>
<td>• role-play frames</td>
<td>• local social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• mobility</td>
<td>• geographic and social boundaries</td>
<td>• institutional participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• national economics</td>
<td>• sense of community</td>
<td>• collective efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• employment opportunities</td>
<td>• personal fronts</td>
<td>• economic, human, social, geographic, and political isolation or inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• educational opportunities</td>
<td>• impression management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• percent female headed household</td>
<td>• decorum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• percent minority</td>
<td>• stigma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3:** Neighborhood Dramaturgical Framework
CONCLUSION

While housing policies expect public housing residents will automatically perceive relocation as an improvement, the expectations may not align with the rational and interpretive realities of residents’ lived experiences. Addressing the question of why relocated residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors using a framework sensitive to the differences in the shared definition of situation and the staging of neighborhood role-play, new possibilities emerge to explain how residents choosing to not interact with new neighbors might be as rational as residents choosing to interact with new neighbors. Relocated residents’ prior attachments to neighbors, neighborhoods, and communities may be as critical to social interaction as a desire to escape public housing and improve life chances. Likewise, relocated residents’ expectations and desires may conflict with perceived and actual stigma and fear of retribution and voucher loss leading to possible patterns of actions that do not align with housing policy expectations. By addressing these possibilities using a dramaturgical framework as a guide, I am better able to answer the question of why relocated residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors, while avoiding the bias that all relocated residents necessarily apply the same rational actions and interpretive meanings to the experience of relocating from public housing.
CHAPTER 4: METHODS

INTRODUCTION

To address the research question of why increased social interaction either does or does not occur in public housing relocation and to explain how social interaction choices connect to both prior attachments and shared rational and interpretive definitions of the situation, I conduct a mixed-methods study of residents relocated from Atlanta, Georgia public housing from 2008-2010. First, I use survey data collected from 248 relocated residents through the GSU Urban Health and Well-Being Initiative (later Urban Health Initiative) research program and 40 in-depth interviews collected from a subsample of the Urban Health Initiative study respondents. I examine the survey data to determine for this study if relocated residents report changes in social interaction with neighbors after relocation from public housing. Housing policy argues that relocated residents should interact with new neighbors, but research on relocation does not agree. My goal in assessing if change occurs in these residents’ social interaction is to support my subsequent analysis of residents’ in-depth interviews. I conduct in-depth interviews with a subsample of the larger study to ascertain specifically why residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with new neighbors after relocating.

Chapter 4 details my methodology for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study. I begin this chapter by explaining my connections to the Urban Health Initiative and my relationships in the research field. I then explain the sample selection for both parts of the study, and then provide a separate section detailing all variables and analysis techniques I use for the survey and a section detailing the interview process and coding procedures. Together these sections explain all of the steps I take in preparing and executing this study.
In the summer of 2008, the Georgia State University (GSU) sociology department began documenting the social and health concerns of individuals undergoing involuntary relocation from public housing in Atlanta, Georgia. This study’s focus is on the experiences of public housing residents from seven housing complexes (six slated for demolition, one remaining intact). During the summer of 2008, GSU faculty operated as both primary investigators and team members to lead multiple teams of graduate students and staff in establishing entrée and administer a baseline survey. Together the team completed 382 interviews before relocations commenced. In the time following the initial interviews, the GSU team has worked to maintain contact with all residents from our original sample and has conducted interviews 6 and 24 months post-relocation. Since 2008, the original survey project housed in the GSU Department of Sociology has expanded into a much larger research endeavor, called the Urban Health and Well-Being Initiative and later referred to as the Urban Health Initiative. I worked with the Urban Health Initiative from summer 2008 to fall 2010, and through the project I was able to propose and complete my own research on public housing residents’ social interaction after relocation.

As a graduate student researcher on the project, I shared multiple responsibilities, which guided me towards my eventual research questions. I assisted with designing survey instruments, implementing the pre-move survey (either in the original public housing communities or on campus at GSU), tracking and retaining residents as they relocated, conducting phone surveys, and implementing the post-move surveys either in residents’ new homes or on campus at GSU. I also assisted in running focus groups, helped with journaling projects where residents digitally recorded and photographed their experiences with relocating, helped to complete built environment audits by walking through residents’ neighborhoods and systematically recording neighborhood characteristics, assisted in managing study data, and helped in training and supervising
of undergraduate interns in the research field. My intense involvement with relocated residents in Atlanta during this period and my prior research interests in public housing policy led me to question why residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with their new neighbors. Through this line of inquiry, I developed my general research questions and my approach to gathering and analyzing data.

In spring 2010, the study expanded to include in-depth interviews that were completed with a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Michigan. This segment of the public housing study was concerned with psychosocial and material stressors and coping mechanisms for relocated residents. For this part of the study, team leaders developed a randomized subsample of residents from the original sample of 382 residents and completed 40 in-depth interviews. Components of place attachment and neighbor attachment already existed within the proposed interview guide. I was allowed to incorporate extra questions into the interview guide covering sense of community, neighborhood interaction, and choice in relocation. The team agreed the addition of these research questions strengthened the guide and helped to generate richer data without causing excess burden on the respondents.

Over a total period of 17 days in spring 2010, 40 interviews were conducted. After each interview, team members detailed notes about the session, attempting to capture overall impressions of the individual respondent, family members and neighbors, the living arrangements, the neighborhood, the community scene, and any instances where they felt people were unwilling to discuss issues or were untruthful. Team members shared these notes daily. Together the experiences in the interviewing process were detailed, allowing for monitoring of consistency in interviewing techniques and for alerts to the ways the results were possibly influenced.
To answer the question of why relocated public housing either do or do not engage in neighborhood social interaction, I complete a mixed methods study by analyzing secondary data from both the quantitative and qualitative components of the Urban Health Initiative study. In the quantitative component, I analyze data on respondents’ self-reported levels of neighborhood interaction to establish whether or not my chosen sample of relocated residents experience a significant change in social interaction with neighbors after relocation. Through the quantitative analysis, I am able to make associations between variables in order to test hypotheses generated from pre-existing literature concerning communities, individuals, and neighborhood social interaction. In this case, associations between the change in community and individual traits and change in social support after relocation can be tested for the selected sample of relocated public housing residents. Through the qualitative component, I analyze in-depth interviews from a subsample of respondents to examine why relocated residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with neighbors after relocation. The qualitative analysis helps to expose the processes underlying the associations between community and individual effects and social support outcomes. Using this combination of methods, I discern both the how and why of resident social interaction in the neighborhood setting and provide a clearer picture as to how these associations might serve as an intermediary stage between neighborhood characteristics and outcomes of both social organization and social isolation. In the following two sections, I detail both the quantitative and qualitative methods I use to complete the study and answer the research question of why relocated residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with neighbors after relocation.
QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Survey Questionnaire

The Urban Health Initiative project generated a survey instrument of over 400 questions. Survey completion was voluntary and confidential, with only the primary investigators and approved graduate researchers having the ability to link participants to their responses. Participants received cash payments of $10-25 for each part of the study they completed. Pertaining to my research purposes, I use the survey data about relocated residents’ levels of interaction, amount of friends and level of attachment to determine if relocated residents’ levels of social interaction with neighbors change after relocation.

Survey Sample Selection

The original sample of respondents for the GSU study consists of 311 residents selected from six public housing complexes in Atlanta, GA scheduled for demolition; two senior/disability high rises and four family developments. The four family developments were Bankhead Courts, Bowen Homes, Herndon Homes, and Hollywood Courts. The two senior high rises were Palmer House and Roosevelt House.

The survey study was not able to capture a total random sample of leaseholders and opened the study up to volunteers. The final sample of 311 residents is 73% of the desired sample size and consists of 208 randomly chosen respondents and 103 volunteer respondents. While this was a major limitation of the data set, the study leaders conducted comparison tests between the random and non-random groups were completed on all variables with no significant differences found. Because the occupied units of the housing projects were made available prior to sampling, principle investigators were able to construct post-survey sampling weights in order to make the sample proportionate to the six housing communities. Representativeness of the sample
is negotiated by determining that no significant differences exist between the randomly selected residents and the volunteers and by applying the calculated sampling weights. Despite this weighting, caution must still be applied when generalizing from this sample.

The six-month follow up survey, carried out from November 2009 to August 2010 had an 88% response rate; resulting in a final 248 cases for the study. The same survey format was followed as in the pre-relocation interview, and the majority of survey questions overlapped. For my study, I removed the 63 respondents not completing the second wave survey and compare only the 248 cases completing both the pre-relocation and post-move surveys.

Profile of Survey Participants

Survey participants were all age 18 or older, more than 90% were the leaseholder, and only one member per household participated. Study participants selected were overwhelmingly black, female, and low income per public housing requirements. The profile of the survey sample is 96% African American, 86% female. Approximately half of the sample has a high school diploma or GED and 33% of the sample reported being employed either full or part-time. Approximately 4% of the total sample was married. Households with children have on average 2.9 children in their home and the number of children in each household ranges from 0-8. On average residents had spent 6 years in public housing, though 50% have spent 3 years or less (see Table 1).

BACKGROUND ON KEY QUANTITATIVE VARIABLES

To best utilize the Urban Health Initiative data set to answer my research question I first focus on ways to measure residents’ social interaction between neighbors. The literature suggests the use of perceived social support measures as one way to derive interaction indicators from the resident’s responses to a survey questionnaire. The concept of social support developed out of
Table 1: Descriptive Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable name</th>
<th>Mean or %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma or GED</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full or part-time</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in household</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in public housing</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 248

Theoretical frameworks of family stress, and is defined in general as support which is “provided by other people and arises within the context of interpersonal relationships.” (Hirsh 1981:151)

Support of a social nature is therefore one possible outcome of social interactions between networks of people (Cooke, Rossmann, McCubbin, and Patterson 1988). The use of perceived social support as a measure of social interaction in lieu of actual social support stems from Rogers’ (1961) arguments that perception is truth to individuals; this makes perceived interaction as useful as actual reported interaction. Further, House (1981) argues that social support is only effective to the extent which the people involved perceive that it is effective. While perceptions of social support are acceptable, those social support measures should not be uni-dimensional; the measures require multiple dimensions. (Cooke et al. 1988; House 1981; Cobb 1982; Bruhn and Philips 1984) These dimensions are not wholly agreed upon, but can include dimensions such as emotional, instrumental, and informational support and appraisal, love, or security (Cooke et al. 1988; House 1981; Cobb 1982).

Social support has been examined in numerous contexts in terms of effects at the individual and societal level. At the individual level, social support has been examined in terms of how
people draw strength and protection from social networks in order to master difficult life events. For example, social support been examined in terms of buffering individuals from trauma and depression and has been shown to be negatively associated with depressive symptoms and suicidal behaviors (Lincoln, Chatters, and Taylor 2005). Lincoln et al. (2005) test the roles of both social support and negative interactions in depressive symptoms in African Americans and find that negative interactions were unrelated to depressive symptoms, while higher levels of support from network members buffered individuals from such symptoms. This study controls for exogenous individual characteristics such as gender, age, level of education, and marital status finding no associations with individual characteristics and social support (Lincoln et al. 2005). Likewise, Halpern’s (1995) study of the Eastlake refurbishment project suggests that social support and increased social cohesion have positive impacts on self-esteem. Tester et al. (2011) also find positive associations between self-esteem, social support, and community attachment for public housing residents.

Beyond findings of social support’s connection to mental health outcomes, the literature suggests observing other individual-level elements that may have connections to social support and social interaction of age, education, tenure in public housing, and presence of children. While Lincoln et al. (2005) found no associations between age and education and social support, Tester et al. (2011) find a positive association between senior housing and community attachment. Tester et al. (2011) view the differences between senior and family housing project as differences in location, level of physical and social disorder, and proximity to crime and violence; however, the difference in mean ages between senior and family dwellings should not be overlooked. Overall, Tester et al. (2011) find residents in senior housing had more positive associations with community and place attachments compared to residents in family housing, net of all
other variables including social support. This may imply a positive association between age and social interaction in the community.

In terms of education, Tach (2009) argues that difference in education levels may contribute to mismatched frameworks between relocated residents and new neighbors. It is implied, but not stated that if relocated residents have higher levels of education, they will be better matched to modes of social interactions with their neighbors. Tester et al. (2011) also look at the effects of tenure on community attachment, finding that tenure does have a significant positive association with community attachment. As tenure increased community attachment increased as well. However, these associations are not directly extended to social support, except to say that the effects of tenure on community attachment hold controlling for social support.

In terms of presence of children Ishii-Kuntz and Seccombe (1989) find that while non-parents may garner more support in certain areas such as marital support, households with children present draw greater amounts and more varied forms of social support. However, key differences can exist for the amount of social support given and received depending on gender and family structure; Marks and McLanahan (1993) argue that with single-parent households the most social support comes from networks of friends and not from family members. This is an especially salient finding given the Los Angeles MTO study by Hanratty et al. (2003) that finds relocated residents’ interactions with friend groups from prior residence either diminish or remained equally non-existent after relocation.

At the larger level of neighborhood and community, social support is argued to have a positive association with social cohesion, collective efficacy, and community and place attachment (Coulton, Korbin, and Su 1999; Sampson et al. 2002; Stanfeld 2006; Tester et al. 2011). Social cohesion involves the collusion of neighbors and community members based upon mutual
respect and perceived similarities regarding issues of social control at the local level (Sampson et al. 2002; Markowitz, Bellair, Liska, and Liu 2001). This social cohesion between neighbors offsets collective efficacy, or the ability to engage in both neighborhood-level social control activities and large-scale community organization (Sampson et al. 2002). At the neighborhood- and household-level, Tester et al. (2011) find positive associations between social support, collective efficacy, and tenure in public housing and community attachment and between social support and tenure in public housing and place attachment.

On the whole, these findings on social support have been generated outside of physical relocation of residents and neighbors. However, they provide a composite sketch of what can be expected in studies of social support in relocation and generate steps towards answering whether or not public housing residents’ social interaction patterns change after relocation. Based on these findings in the mental health literature, I expect to find social support is negatively associated with depression and positively associated with self-esteem. However, while Lincoln et al. (2005) found no association between age and social support, I expect to find that senior report giving and receiving social support more than non-seniors. This expectation stems from the Tester et al. (2011) finding that senior housing residents experienced more positive association with community attachment as compared to the residents in family housing.

Regarding other individual-level variables, I expect to find positive associations between social support and education level and presence of children. However, where Tester et al. (2011) find positive associations between tenure and attachment to both community and place, I expect to find a negative association between tenure and social support after relocation. If tenure increased attachment to the place and community in public housing, it is possible long-term public
housing residents will experience “root shock” as explained by Tester et al. (2011) and eschew social interaction with new neighbors.

While place attachment is rooted to the original public housing community, community attachment has the potential to shift in relocation. As such, I expect the association between social support and community association should remain positive; if residents come to like their new neighborhood better than their public housing neighborhoods, I expect they will engage in social support activities. Based on findings from neighborhood effects literature and public housing literature from the MTO study, I expect social support to be positively associated with both social cohesion and number of friends living in the neighborhood. Due to the nature of relocations however, I expect the number of friends living in the neighborhood to decrease and associate it with a decrease residents’ patterned social support activities after relocation.

**Table 2: Hypotheses to be Tested**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Greater depression is associated with decreased social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Greater self-esteem is associated with greater social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senior residents will give and receive more social support compared to non-seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Residents with high school diplomas or GED will give and receive more social support compared to those without high school diplomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residents with children in the household will give and receive more social support compared to residents without children in the household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Long-term residents of public housing will give and receive less social support compared to short-term residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Higher place attachment will be associated with less social support given and received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Decreased number of friends living in the neighborhood is associated with decreased social support given and received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Increased social cohesion is associated with increased social support given and received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Increase community attachment is associated with increased social support given and received.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VARIABLES AND MEASURES**

From the Urban Health Initiative survey results, I want to examine first the change in residents’ reports of neighborhood social interaction six months after relocating. I measure social
interaction using two survey instrument measures, “social support received” and “social support given.” In these measures, the survey asks residents “In the past month, have you given help to/received help from neighbors with” (1) housework, yard work, and repairs; (2) transportation, errands or shopping; (3) and advice, encouragement and emotional support. Each item has yes or no response set which yields a combined score ranging from 0-3. From these scores, I calculate the scores for change in help given and help received. These scores range from -3 to 3, with positive scores representing a decrease in help given or received after relocation (see Table 3).

In the final models for this study, I include four individual-level variables to test their associations with giving and receiving social support. First, I include a measure of respondent age to distinguish between senior and non-senior respondents. The survey instrument measures age at baseline survey. I use the age score to create an age category, splitting respondents into senior and non-senior groups. I code residents whose ages are 18-54 as 0 for non-seniors. I code residents whose ages are 55 and older as 1 for seniors. I include this measure with the expectation that seniors and non-seniors will have different views on relocating and different outcomes after relocation in terms of social support.

Second, I include a measure for tenure in public housing. The survey asks respondents how many years they had resided in public housing at the time of the baseline survey. I code residents who lived in public housing 0-3 years as 0 for short-term. I code residents who lived in public housing more than 3 years as 1 for long-term. I include this measure because I expect a negative association between tenure and social support, where long-term residents of public housing will be more affected by relocation than short-term residents and will therefore exhibit greater declines in social interaction with neighbors after relocation. I expect short-term residents
Table 3: Variable Names and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable name</th>
<th>Variable definition</th>
<th>Mean or %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in help given</td>
<td>Scale reporting the change in level of help given to neighbors after relocation (ranges from -3 to 3)</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in help received</td>
<td>Scale reporting the change in level of help received from neighbors after relocation (ranges from -3 to 3)</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in amount of friends</td>
<td>Scale reporting the change in amount of friends from public housing living in the neighborhood after relocation (ranges from -3 to 3)</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in community attachment</td>
<td>Scale reporting the change in place attachment after relocation (ranges from -25 to 25)</td>
<td>-4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in social cohesion</td>
<td>Scale reporting the change in level of social cohesion between neighbors after relocation (ranges from -20 to 20)</td>
<td>-3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>Long-term = 1&lt;br&gt;Short-term = 0</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma/GED</td>
<td>Yes = 1&lt;br&gt;No = 0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Yes = 1&lt;br&gt;No = 0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Senior =1&lt;br&gt;Non-Senior=0</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place attachment</td>
<td>Renovate =1&lt;br&gt;Relocate =0</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

will have fewer attachments to public housing and will therefore have a higher likelihood of interacting with new neighbors compared to long-term residents.
Third, I include a measure for high school diploma or GED equivalent. The survey instrument measures high school diploma/GED by asking respondents “Do you have a high school diploma or GED?” Answers range from 1-4 for “GED,” “High School Diploma,” “Both,” and “No, Neither.” I recode this measure with responses 1-3 as 1 for yes and response 4 as 0 for no. I include this measure with the expectation that education will have a positive association with social support. I expect respondents with higher education will have an easier time in relocation and will integrate with new neighbors to acquire needed resources quicker than residents without a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

Fourth, I include a measure for the presence of children in a household. The survey instrument measures number of children by asking respondents “How many children under age 18 are living in your household (children that you are rearing full time)?” I recode this measure into responses of one or more children in the household as 1 for yes, and responses of no children in the household as 0 for no. I expect presence of children to have a positive association with social support. I expect this because children are likely to go outside and interact with other children, drawing the parent groups into more social interactions.  

Next, I create my household-level and neighborhood-level independent variables. I first include a measure for respondents’ place attachment to public housing. The survey instrument asks respondents if they would prefer to “renovate their public housing project” or “relocate”. The measure is coded 0 for relocate and 1 for renovate. I expect a negative association between

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1 I originally included measures for depression and self-esteem. In exploratory modeling, I tested controls for respondents’ reports of changes after relocation in reported depression and self-esteem over the last four weeks, the CES-D scale for depression, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale. I expected these variables might have some effect on the change in social support after relocation. After several permutations however, I conclude that these variables have no significant impact on the final models and therefore do not include them in subsequent models.
social support and place attachment to public housing. Residents with stronger place attachment to public housing may have experienced “root shock” in relocation, limiting their willingness to engage in social support activities with new neighbors (Tester et al. 2011; Fullilove 1986).

Second, I examine the survey items measuring the amount of friends that respondents report as living in their public housing complex prior to relocation and the amount of friends from the original public housing complex respondents report living in their neighborhood six months after relocation. Respondent choices range from 0-3 where none, a few, some, or all of a respondent’s friends live in their neighborhood. This is an excellent measure for addressing the change after relocation, because it captures how many prior friends relocate with the respondent, and not how many friends the respondent makes in the new neighborhood. I then use these scores to calculate the score for change in amount of friends after relocation. The score for change in amount of friends ranges from -3-3 with positive scores indicating a decrease in the amount of friends living in the neighborhood after relocation. I expect a positive association between social support and number of friends living in the neighborhood. I imagine residents who lose more friends after relocation will experience declines in giving and receiving social support.

Next, I examine change in community attachment using a scale that measures respondents’ level of agreement with five statements regarding their neighborhood. This scale was developed from Reitzes (1986) research on community identity. Specifically the instrument asks respondents if they agree that they feel both at home and proud in their neighborhood, that they belong in their neighborhood, and that the neighborhood is important to them and would be missed if they had to leave. Respondent choices range from 1-5, 1 meaning “Strongly Disagree” and 5 meaning “Strongly Agree.” Community attachment scores range from 5-30, with higher scores indicating greater community attachment. Using the baseline and post-move community
attachment scores, I calculate the score for change in community attachment after relocation. The score for change in community attachment ranges from -25-25 with negative scores indicating an increase in community attachment after relocation. I expect a positive association between social support and community attachment. Residents with increased community attachment after relocation will experience increases in social interaction with new neighbors.

Last, I include a measure of social cohesion. The survey instrument measures social cohesion using indicators taken from a larger measure of social disorganization (Sampson et al. 2002). These indicators measure respondents’ level of agreement with five statements pertaining to neighborhood cohesion and ask respondents how much they agree neighbors are willing to help each other, can be trusted, share the same values, get along and how much they agree the neighborhood is a good place to raise children. The responses to each question range from 1-5 with 1 meaning “Strongly Disagree” and 5 meaning “Strongly Agree.” I combine these scores to form an additive scale score ranging from 5-25, with higher scores indicating higher social cohesion. Using the baseline and post-move scores, I calculate a score for change in social cohesion. This score ranges from -20-20, with negative scores representing an increase in social cohesion after relocation. I expect a positive association between social support and social cohesion. Residents with increased reports of social cohesion after relocation will experience increases in social interaction with new neighbors.

Missing Data

After removing all respondents failing to complete the second wave of the survey, the number of respondents equal 248. However, the remaining respondents did not answer some questions or their answers are missing due to technical and coding error. A total of 97% of re-
spondents answer all survey questions comprising the indicators for the dependent variables neighborhood social interaction and social attitudes towards neighbors (see Table 4).

A total of 25 of the 248 respondents (approximately 10%) have missing values on indicators comprising the study’s pre-move independent variables amount of friends living in the

Table 4: Missing Data on Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Cases Missing One or More Dependent Variables N=8</th>
<th>Cases Missing No Dependent Variables N=240</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age*</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma/GED*</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place attachment</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in amount of friends</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in community attachment</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in social cohesion</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in self-esteem</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in depression</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

neighborhood and place attachment (see Table 5). A total of 36 of the 248 respondents (approximately 15%) have missing data for the post-move indicators for the independent variables amount of friends living in the neighborhood and place attachment. For both the pre-move and post-move independent variables, the majority of missing values occur in the social cohesion scale. Less than 6% of the sample respondents have missing data for the control variables place attachment, age, tenure, high school diploma/GED, and children.

I account for the missing data by mean imputing replacement scores. Mean imputation requires removing all missing responses, deriving the mean for each item, and then using the mean score as the replacement scores. Imputing mean scores for missing variables is an acceptable way to handle missing data and improves data analysis by retaining respondents that either
skip a survey question, misunderstand, or otherwise have their data distorted (Allison 2002; Bryk and Raudenbush 1992; Wayman 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Number of cases with missing data N=75</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Move Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of friends living in the neighborhood</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community attachment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social cohesion</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Move Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of friends living in the neighborhood</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community attachment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Cohesion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Attachment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma/GED</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Diagnostics and Regression*

With my selected variables, I conduct paired t-tests of the key variables between pre-move and post-move, present bivariate analysis of the categorical independent variables, and develop linear regression analyses to determine how change in individual-level and community-level variables is associated with measures of social support. Before analyzing the linear regression models, I perform diagnostics to determine if the models meet the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoskedasticity, and model specification. The key assumptions themselves are theoretical, but diagnostic tests can help me to assure the assumptions are met and the regression re-
results are valid reports of the relationships between the variables. I report here the diagnostics for the models presented in Chapter 5.

I first checked against multi-collinearity and looked for possible outliers. I ran a correlation matrix of the independent variables looking for direct linear relationships. Correlations ranging from .8 to .9 indicate possible issues of collinear independent variables. None of the independent variables under review exhibited correlations of concern. Next, looking at the regression models themselves, I ran VIF and tolerance diagnostics. For each model no VIF scores existed whose square roots exceeded 2, and no tolerances less than 0.1 existed to indicate multi-collinearity. Further, for every model no condition indices exceeded 3.49. Condition index scores of 30 or more would indicate issues of multi-collinearity.

Next, I checked for possible outliers and influential cases. Using case-wise diagnostics, I detected no issues with influential outliers. Leverage scores for the models were all less than 0.009 and Cook’s D scores report all below 1.0, indicating no issues with influential outliers. I observed residual scatterplots and found no outliers beyond two standard deviations of the mean. I verified this finding by re-running the case-wise diagnostics on the models and observing residual leverage plots.

After checking for issues of multi-collinearity and outliers, I examined the key assumption of normality by examining p-p plots for each regression model. For each model, the plot points lay across a straight line and formed a good fit. These plots indicated the assumption of normality is met. I also examined reports of the models’ residuals to look for signs of normality in the distribution. Skew and kurtosis were both close to zero and Q-Q plots looked normal for each model. For these models, I can assume normality.
To examine for the key assumption of linearity, I conducted partial plots of the dependent variables against the independent variables of the model. For each plot, I created fitted lines and found no indications of curvilinear relationships with the dependent variables. Second, I observed plots of the standardized residual values against predicted values for each model. Each plot exhibited a random scatter of points around zero. No consistent curvilinear patterns existed in the residuals to indicate non-linearity. For these models, I can assume linearity.

To check the assumptions of homoskedasticity, I looked for evidence of correlated error terms. First, I plotted studentized residuals against predicted values and examined the spread in the plots. Here I looked for indication of point clustering in specific regions, to indicate non-random variance in error, heteroskedasticity. These plots revealed a decent spread with very little clustering in the plotted points for each model, indicating constant error variance, or general homoskedasticity for the model.

The assumption of model specification implies I did not exclude key variables from the models or include improper variables in the model. While knowing if I excluded key variables using SPSS is impossible, a way exists to check if any predictors are improper for the model. To do this, I computed a squared version of each key predictor and ran the models including the squared predictors. If any of the models’ predictors were improper the squared computation would be significant. Significance did not occur with any of the squared predictors in the model, specifying the model predictors were proper and that I can assume the models as I present them are well-specified.

Overall, the linear regression models are free from possible concerns, such as multicollinearity and possible influential outliers. Further, based on the diagnostics I determined, these
models meet the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoskedasticity, and model specification necessary to complete the analysis of key variables using multiple regressions.

Survey Limitations

The survey instrument is composed of multiple pre-determined scales, meant to measure a variety of dimensions related to residents’ physical and social health. The survey tool was designed to have the highest reliability possible in all of its component parts therefore each dimension is composed of scale questions whose reliability has been previously established. The survey instrument is subject to error through researcher error or bias. Researcher error was minimized by extensive training of all staff and graduate researchers coupled with CITI ethics training, comprehensive interview manuals, and regular meetings for discussing and correcting mistakes in the field. Also, a structural limitation is the study was initially designed to capture lease-holders for each unit and information about those individuals legally residing in the unit. This limitation excludes individuals staying in the unit but not on the lease. Further extensions of this study should specifically aim to capture the experiences of individuals living in and relocated from public housing but are not on the lease.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

In-Depth Interview

The second component of this study consists of analyzing 40 in-depth interviews concerning relocation’s effects on specific social processes and health outcomes. Participants received $20 for agreeing to be in the in-depth interview study. With each participant, an in-home interview was conducted lasting 1-2 hours. All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed, and detailed notes were kept pertaining to each interview. Participants signed consent
forms to participate in tape recorded interviews aware they were under no obligation to answer any questions and could discontinue the process at any time.

In-depth interviews offer relocated residents a way to express and share their experiences and offer them a venue to have their voices heard. For my part, the in-depth interviews provide specific details on what respondent groups feel about the people, the communities, and the neighborhoods they have lived in and how those feelings process into actual outcomes of social interaction with new neighbors after relocation. The interviews speak to the way respondents experience the relocation and illuminates what underlying issues are most important with regards to social interaction in new neighborhoods.

*Interview Sample Selection*

For the in-depth interviews I analyze in this study, residents were randomly selected from the survey sample group. By employing random sampling methods, error decreases and every resident in the original sample has an equal chance of selection for the interview process. A random number generator was used to randomly select 15 respondents in each of four pre-selected categories (based on age and tenure of residence). From these four lists, 10 respondents were scheduled and interviewed (going in order of the list and based on availability) with a 100% response rate.

One explanation for this high response rate is respondent familiarity with the original GSU study. A prerequisite to being selected for an interview was the respondent had completed both the pre-move and the six-month follow-up. Therefore the respondents chosen were already very familiar with the GSU study and trusted it was official, but not affiliated with AHA, safe, and would actually pay them for taking part in another segment of the study. A second explanation for the high response rate is some respondents view the survey as a legitimate way to gener-
ate income. Through my participation in the GSU study, I was aware other organizations often recruited the participants in our sample to take part in research, increasing respondent familiarity with the research process to some degree.

Because the majority of the original GSU study sample was overwhelmingly black, female, and low income, typical group distinctions based on components of race, class, and gender serve limited functions in stratifying the subsample of residents. Instead differentiation of residents was made based on age and tenure. Age differentiations extend from the social treatment of seniors versus non-seniors, and from health concerns related to both senior public housing and relocation in general. As such, this study differentiates between the experiences of seniors and non-seniors by placing half of the subsample in each age group. Senior is defined as 55 years old and older; non-senior is defined as 54 years old and younger. Guiding literature also predicts tenure differentiations in relocation, and short term residents in public housing can be expected to have very different feelings about living in and relocating from public housing compared to long term residents (Tester et al. 2011). Bearing this expectation, the subsample was split evenly into short-term and long-term tenure groups.

Apart from the larger study limitations discussed above, practical criteria in selecting interview respondents were observed. First, the interview was completely voluntary. Second, respondents had to live within the greater Atlanta region. Study participants relocated further than 60 miles away were deemed ineligible. This automatically excluded any public housing residents relocated out of state. Third, some individuals from the original sample with mental health concerns were excluded, as their responses could invalidate interview data. These practical criteria helped the research team to shape the eventual body of respondents chosen for the in-depth interview portion of this study.
Profile of Interview Participants

The interview sample of 40 residents is 100% black and 88% female. The average age of respondent is 55 years old. 47% of households report having at least one child. Households have on average 1.2 children. Prior to relocation average tenure in public housing was 7 years, however, at least fifty percent of the respondents had lived in public housing 4.5 years or less. The subsample is highly representative of the larger original sample (see Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsample</th>
<th>Non-Seniors</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>Long Term</td>
<td>Short Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% black</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. tenure</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% w/ children</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% hs diploma</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% working</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% married</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=40

Interview participants are divided into four groups based on age and tenure. At a glance, the four respondent groups have key differences in their demographic profiles. The non-senior short-term respondents are 100% female, are on an average 29 years old and are more likely to have children than the other three groups (83% of households have children). On average this group also has the largest number children (2.8) living in the household. Non-senior short-term residents also have the highest reported employment of the four groups (66.7%) and their average tenure of residency in public housing prior to relocation is 2.3 years.

The non-senior long-term respondents are also 100% female, are slightly older than non-senior short-term respondents (an average age 41 years old) and are more likely to have a high
school diploma than non-senior short-term respondents. Of the four groups, the non-senior short-term respondents have the second largest percent of households with children (71%) and on average have 1.7 children in their households. Average tenure of residency for this group prior to relocation is 10.5 years, second only to long-term seniors.

The senior short-term respondents are 92% female, are on average 67 years old, and are the only respondent group with married respondents (8.3%). 33% of households in this group report having children under the age 18, which is the most for the senior groups, but fewer than both non-senior groups. Senior short-term households have on average less than one child per household (.75). 50% of the senior short-term respondents have a high school diploma and their average tenure in public housing prior to relocation was 2.2 years.

The senior long-term respondents are the population with the most male respondent (36%), are on average 64 years old, and have the fewest reports of high school diplomas (9.1%) of all respondents. The senior long-term group is the least likely to have children in the household (28%) and these households on average report having the fewest children (.64). On average members of this respondent group are unmarried, unemployed, and have an average tenure of 12.7 years in public housing prior to relocation.

BACKGROUND ON KEY QUALITATIVE VARIABLES

Beyond the question of whether or not public housing residents’ patterns of social interaction with neighbors changes after relocation is the question of why change occurs. While the emerging variables in the qualitative section of this study are constructed through the analysis of residents’ responses to the interviews, the guiding questions in the interview were based on key expectations derived from the literature. In order to explain the processes underlying social interaction in neighborhoods, I address key components involving the residents as actors in their
neighborhoods and the larger community. Looking first to literature on dramaturgy as explained by Goffman (1959; 1962), I anticipate that the role-play between actors will be determined by scripts, personal fronts, and avoidance of stigma as well as explanations driven by setting and scene. In terms of personal fronts and what the residents’ bring to the interaction, I expect to find residents patterns of interaction depend upon a willingness to engage with others and include others in interaction roles and that these fronts are driven by varying levels of perceived or real stigma from new neighbors.

Tach (2009) argues that relocated residents and receiving neighbors may have different frameworks for interaction, suggesting a mismatch between rules of role-play, sense of set boundaries and decorum, and definitions of the situation, or scene. Tach (2009) views these differences in frames as possible explanations as to why social interaction between neighbors does not occur at levels necessary to offset collective efficacy and community organization outcomes for relocated residents. Based on this assumption, I expect that mismatch driven by differences in individual characteristics will cause tension and stigma to the degree that receiving neighbors expect or require a uniformity that residents cannot readily attain. That being said however, studies by Oakley (2008) and Oakley and Burchfield (2009) have already shown that relocated residents are highly likely to end up in neighborhoods which are nearby and reflective of their prior public housing communities. Therefore, I expect that receiving stigma will more likely be the outcome for having lived in public housing as opposed to a mismatch in frameworks of interaction (Venkatesh 2008; Tach 2009).

In terms of how I expect the neighborhood setting will affect patterns of interaction, I draw on Grannis’ (1998) work on boundaries, as well as Goffman’s (1959) concepts of front stage, backstage, and decorum. Grannis (1998) finds that residents are more likely to interact
within the known boundaries of their setting. But space of the neighborhood can be broken up several ways. For example, Yancy (1971) argues that relocated public housing residents benefitted from having ‘semi-private space’ where they could enjoy more isolated interactions. Likewise, Goffman (1959) breaks down front stage and backstage regions, where actors are apt to allow in different sorts of people and are likely to behave in different ways while guests are present. I contend with these varying regional breakdowns by establishing the concept of zones of action, which begin in the resident’s home and extend to front porch/common room areas, into the bounded neighborhood, and into areas beyond the neighborhood. How and when residents enter these varying regions and how they approach other actors or express a sense of decorum will depend again upon personal fronts and the elements of the scene.

The scene and how it affects personal fronts within a given setting is driven by both a sense of community and residents’ perceived level of safety. McMillan and Chavis (1989) define a sense of community as being comprised of four central components: membership, influence, need integration and fulfillment, and shared emotional connection. They argue that given the right circumstances researchers could determine how these four components are affected across relocation (McMillan and Chavis 1989). Based on the study by Tester et al. (2011) which finds that a sense of community did exist for this sample prior to relocation and argues that a kind of “root shock” may have occurred in relocation, I expect to find that the four dimensions of sense of community as explained by McMillan and Chavis (1989) will have been negatively affected for some relocated residents. For residents negatively affected in terms of some or all dimensions of sense of community, I expect to find a decrease in neighborhood social interaction. However, where residents are accepted into the community and made to feel welcome and important, I expect to find increases in neighborhood social interaction.
In terms of both real and perceived safety, literature on public housing relocation studies, such as MTO, reveal significant findings of increased safety after relocation (Goering 2003b). Greenbaum (2008) argues however, that residents felt safer in public housing communities due to the shared social support the experienced. Measure of fear of crime, both perceived and real do exist and have been applied to urban settings and public housing research (Tyler 1980; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Skogan 1986; Ferraro and LeGrange 1987; LeGrange, Ferrarro, and Supancic 1992; Covington and Taylor 2005; Tester et al. 2011). Examining how fear of crime might affect interaction in public housing settings, Tester et al. (2011) found no significant associations between fear of crime and social support. Based on these findings, I expect that residents’ will continue to interact with neighbors despite perceived and real changes in neighborhood composition in terms of relative safety so long as the need for resources exists; however, I expect that perceptions of safety can and will influence residents’ willingness to move between zones of action and influence their likelihood of developing a sense of community after relocation. Overall I expect a positive relationship between safety and the underlying causes of interaction; where the perception of safety is improved the likelihood of role-play, travel between zones of action, and sense of community will increase. These expectations, taken together, form the basis for the qualitative variables under observation in this study.

ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE

To analyze the in-depth interview data, I first read and apply a coding scheme to nearly 1,000 pages of transcribed interviews. I use grounded theory methods (GTM) as explained by LaRossa (2005) to analyze the in-depth interviews, and develop variable connections using the three stages of GTM: open, axial, and selective coding. As I analyze the interview data, I com-
pare interviews to the survey data findings, looking for patterns that explain why residents either do or do not interact with neighbors.

Grounded theory methods begin with open coding. Open coding involves thoroughly reading transcripts and taking detailed notes in order to construct useful concepts from the data. In this phase of coding I use the indicator-concept-variable model to create variables. As I construct my concepts I continually cross-reference them with all other transcripts. By employing a constant comparison pattern I ensure internal validity for all my conceptual constructs. I then link constructs of concepts directly to the quoted text I derive them from and examine the text in terms of the question the respondent was asked. Linking concepts to direct indicators, or statements made by the respondents, limits the amount of researcher bias I introduce through the subjective process of analyzing qualitative data. Through intensive note-taking on the coding process and continual reference back to the research question (and the questions asked in the interviews), I form and transform the concepts. I continue coding until I accomplish theoretical saturation, meaning the interview data provide no more pertinent concepts for answering research questions.

Following the indicator-concept-variable model, I add variable dimensions to my concepts. Adding dimension to a concept is a process of elaboration and extension, where I consider the original concept in terms of type, level, and degree. For example, I extend the concept of “neighborhood attachment” into the variable “levels of neighborhood attachment.” I can now express “levels of neighborhood attachment” from low to high levels. For each variable construct I create, I take great efforts to return to the data to provide valid indicators of each variable category within the interview transcripts.
After open coding, I employ axial coding and selective coding. I use axial coding to determine how categories and subcategories of data interconnect in terms of their dimensions and properties. With axial coding, I transform the subjective realm of open coding into a realm for theory construction by asking explicitly whether and how different variable constructs interconnect. I complete this process by placing the variable constructs into multiple causal scenarios where I establish time order and observe the context, conditions, and contingencies surrounding the relationship between variable groups. Through a process of presenting all variable scenarios, I unfold the parts to make sense of the data and tell a comprehensive story.

Last, I employ selective coding. In the selective coding process, I choose my core variables in the analysis and determine how those variables are central to the study’s narrative. At this stage, I employ the use of the dramaturgical framework. In detail, I examine how aspects of personal fronts, stage boundaries, and role play affect social interaction between residents and their new neighbors. Through this two-part process, I am able to transform verbal interviews into data capable of further theoretical propositioning. I then arrange variable constructs into causal statements theorizing why social interaction either does or does not occur from the residents’ perspectives.

Interview Limitations

In terms of the in-depth interviews, one limiting decision was to interview only relocated residents and not their neighbors. Having interviews with the neighbors of each individual chosen to the subsample would have been ideal. Had interviews existed for both the relocated resident and their neighbors, I could better examine discrepancies and similarities between both groups’ accounts of social interaction and better explain the strategies and actions all neighborhood actors employ. However, when using self-report survey data and in-depth interview data,
interactional conceptualizations must contend with individual-level empirical data (Klein et al. 1969; Ruano et al. 1969).

A second limitation, similar to the survey, was to exclude residents from the control group. Since the focus of this study is on relocation effects on residents, gathering data from the stationary residents would be unproductive. Further, some control group residents have mental health concerns and interviews about relocation could cause unnecessary confusion. A third limiting decision was to only interview residents having completed both the pre-move and post-move survey. This limitation increases comparability on survey instrument and decreases the likelihood of the residents under observation missing valuable data. A fourth limitation in the interview process was introducing sampling categories based on age group and housing tenure. Both the age and tenure distinctions can be subject to exceptions in generalizing data. For example, residents determined short term tenure by the housing authority, may have been in their lease for three years or less, but might have lived in the same complex, or nearby for several years, or in some cases, their whole lives. Likewise, some senior high-rises consider the age of 62 as being a senior, and therefore placing 55-61 year olds in the same category as 62 and older may not be appropriate to isolating resident groups’ experiences. Barring these exceptions, however, each age/tenure group was evenly sampled and successfully interviewed in the allotted time frame.

CONCLUSION

Using secondary data from both a quantitative survey and qualitative in-depth interviews from relocated public housing residents, I am able to address the research question of why relocated public housing residents either do or do not engage in social interaction with new neighbors. By examining the survey data from the Atlanta, Georgia public housing study sample, I am able to determine if relocated residents report any differences in social interaction after leaving
their public housing communities. I am also able to assess whether the reports of social interaction patterns are associated with certain individual-level and community-level variables. Further, by examining the in-depth interview data from the subsample of respondents and using grounded theory methods for coding, I am able to use relocated residents’ responses to questions on neighbors, neighborhoods, and communities to produce an explanation as to why relocated residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors from the relocated residents’ perspective. From these two aspects of the study, I reveal the underlying processes involved in choosing to engage in neighborhood social interaction and better explain how elements of neighborhood change brought about through relocation, combine with residents’ previous lived experience to generate existing outcomes of social interaction with new neighbors in new neighborhoods.
CHAPTER 5: QUANTITATIVE FACTORS IN NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION

INTRODUCTION

The study of relocation offers a rare opportunity to observe the formation of the neighborhood and community bonds making up neighborhood interaction. As McMillan and Chavis (1989) note, relocation is often difficult to observe using statistical methods given the individual nature of relocating under the best of circumstances (for example, deciding to relocate one’s self or family without external pressures) and the lack of pre-move data in the worst of circumstances, such as relocating as refugees of natural disaster or war. Therefore, observing the expected relocation of several families and individuals from the same region, at the same time and under the same conditions, affords a unique chance to explore both how relocation alters patterns in neighboring and social interaction and how patterned neighborhood interaction emerges in a new setting.

For this sample of respondents, a research team collected both pre-move and post-move data making possible the study of change in actions and attitudes comprising neighborhood social interaction after relocation. To address the larger research question of why relocated residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors, I first examine whether or not social interaction patterns change from pre-move to post-move for the residents in the Atlanta, Georgia public housing study. Specifically, I analyze two dependent variables which measure respondents’ help given to neighbors and help received from neighbors both the baseline pre-move stage and six-months after relocation. My first goal in observing these dependent variables is to determine if change occurs in the mean scores of the key interaction variables after relocation. I use paired t-tests to assess significant change in the variables after relocation. Second, I examine the
bivariate analysis of the categorical independent variables to determine if different groups exhibit significant differences in mean scores for the dependent variables after relocation. In particular, these mean comparisons aid the analysis of the regression. Third, I conduct linear regression analysis to determine if changes in the dependent variables are associated with reported individual- and community-level variables. Using the pre-move to post-move survey data, I have the rare opportunity to tap into the reported change respondents experience in social interaction after relocation, and through this analysis I am better able to inform the qualitative analysis in Chapter 5 and answer why relocated residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors.

T-TESTS: VARIABLE CHANGE ACROSS RELOCATION

First, I examine paired t-tests on each of the key variables from pre-move to post-move to observe for significant changes in these variables after the relocation process. I examine the key dependent variables help given to neighbors and help received from neighbors and the key independent variables amount of friends living in the neighborhood, social cohesion, and community attachment. Using t-tests, I highlight significant differences in mean scores to indicate where changes in these variables possibly occur as a result of residents relocating away from public housing. From pre-move to post-move, I observe significant changes occur for the variables help given, social cohesion, amount of friends living in the neighborhood, and community attachment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable name</th>
<th>Baseline mean</th>
<th>Post-relocation mean</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help given</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>-2.72**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help received</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>-.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social cohesion</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>11.86***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community attachment</td>
<td>18.96</td>
<td>22.25</td>
<td>7.45***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of friends living in the neighborhood</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>-4.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>247</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01; ***p<.001
My first observation is a significant decrease occurs from pre-move to post-move in residents’ reports of giving help to neighbors ($t=\text{-2.72}$). A decrease also occurs in reports of receiving help from neighbors, but the decrease is not significant ($t=\text{-0.65}$). The decline in these mean scores suggests that for this sample some significant change in social interaction does occur after relocation. I also observe a significant decline in the amount of friends living in the neighborhood from pre-move to post-move ($t=\text{-4.30}$). This decline is understandable due to the nature of the relocations and the housing policy goals of deconcentrating poverty by separating the public housing residents.

My second observation is not all of the variables decrease after relocation. Social cohesion increases significantly after relocation ($t=\text{11.86}$), as does community attachment ($t=\text{7.45}$). These findings are also understandable given the housing policy goals of placing residents in nicer neighborhoods with more advantaged neighbors. Yet, these findings also present an interesting scenario concerning neighborhood social interaction after relocation. The relocated residents report an increase in social cohesion and an increase in community attachment in new neighborhoods, and still their post-move reports of receiving help decline and their reports of giving help to neighbors and the amount of friends living in the neighborhood decline significantly.

Also, important to note, is significant changes occur in the key variables within the first year of relocation. The pattern of the changes suggest that after relocation, respondents are significantly less likely to report giving help to neighbors and are significantly more likely to report fewer friends living in the neighborhood. This pattern exists despite residents being significantly more likely to report more social cohesion and significantly more likely to report being attached to their new community compared to their public housing neighborhoods. These patterns imply
giving help to neighbors might depend more upon the amount of friends living in the neighborhood than upon cohesion and community attachment.

MEAN COMPARISONS ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLE GROUPS

The t-tests show significant change exists in the mean scores for key dependent variables after relocation. Therefore, I next examine how different groups of residents might experience these changes. Table 8 presents the means and standard deviations for levels of change in neighborhood social interaction for all categorical independent variables in the analysis. These values reflect the average levels of change in each indicator of neighborhood social interaction for each category of respondents in the study.

I expected seniors and non-seniors to differ in the change in levels of help given and help received after relocation, but no significant difference exists. I also expected respondents with high school diplomas and GEDs to exhibit higher levels of change in both help given and help received after relocation, but I observe no significant difference between the groups.

Table 8: Mean Levels of Change in Neighborhood Social Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Help Given</th>
<th></th>
<th>Help Received</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-senior</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school/GED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0.04***</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Attachment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocate</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents with children significantly differ from respondents without children on both indicators of neighborhood social support. Respondents with children report slight increases in giving and receiving help after relocation, but respondents without children report decreases in help given and help received.

I expected long-term residents to differ from short-term residents, however these resident groups do not significantly differ from each other on either of the indicators of neighborhood social interaction. I also expected residents with higher place attachment to significantly differ from each other in terms of social support, but no significant difference was revealed in the bivariate analysis.

Prior to conducting the bivariate analysis, I checked all variables in terms of their correlations to one another as part of the diagnostic review. Theoretically there was some initial concern about including both categorical age and categorical presence of children in household variables, due to the likelihood of these variables being highly correlated. However, the correlation for these variables (-.54) is well below the level of concern (.8-.9). While in some circumstances seniors would have few to no children living in the household, in the case of this sample of public housing residents 28-33% of the seniors reported having children age 18 and under living in their household.

Overall, many of my original expectations are not supported in the bivariate analysis. I expected the tenure groups to report significant differences in neighborhood social interaction indicators, but I find them similar to each other on the whole. With the tenure groups, I expected the long-term residents to report more resistance to new neighbors after relocation. Similar to this, I expected more difference in the age groups and high school diploma/GED groups. Along with the significant group differences I report here in terms of presence of children in the house-
hold, these non-significant findings help to inform the following analysis of the linear regression models.

LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

To further examine the connections between these variables, I conduct a series of linear regression analyses to examine associations between the change in giving help to neighbors and receiving help from neighbors and specific individual- and community-level variables. Using the sample of 248 relocated residents from the Atlanta, Georgia public housing study, I complete two tests to determine how the change in social support variables after relocation is connected to change in amounts of friends living in the neighborhood, changes in social cohesion, and changes in community attachment. In each test, I control for respondents’ age, tenure in public housing, earned high school diploma or GED, presence of children in the household and place attachment to original public housing neighborhoods. To test the hypotheses listed in Table 2, I conduct two linear regression analyses. In the following section, I present the results of these analyses and offer an explanation of the findings.

FINDINGS

Tables 9 and 10 report the results of a series of ordinary least squares regression equations with change in help given to neighbors and help received from neighbors as separate dependent variables. Table 8 reports the effects of the presented independent variables on the change in respondents’ reports of help given to neighbors after relocation. Model 1, in Table 9, reports a baseline model containing the control variables measuring the categories of age, high school diploma or GED attainment, and presence of children in the household. As Table 8 suggests, the presence of children is significant and positive. Respondents with children in the household report significantly greater increases in giving help to neighbors after relocation than
respondents without children in the household. In Model 1, respondents’ reports of change in giving help to neighbors after relocation are 0.647 points higher for those with children compared to respondents without children (see Table 9). Looking at the bivariate analysis in Table 8, this reported change represents an increase in giving help to neighbors after relocation for those with children.

In Model 2 of Table 9, I add tenure in public housing and place attachment to prior residence. No significant change occurs to distinguish Model 1 from Model 2. In model 3 of Table 9, I add change in amount of friends living in the neighborhood, change in social cohesion, and change in community attachment. Consistent with my hypothesis, the change in the amount of friends is significant and positive, reflecting that as amount of friends living in the neighborhood declines respondent reports of giving help to neighbors also declines. After relocation, for each one-point decrease in amount of friends living in the neighborhood, reports of giving help to neighbors decreases by 0.214 points. In this model, the effect of having children in the household remains the same. No significance is detected for change in social cohesion or change in community attachment.

Looking next at Table 10, I examine the effects of the independent variables on residents’ reports of receiving help from neighbors after relocation. In Model 1 of Table 10, I present the baseline containing only the control variables for age, education, and presence of children. Inconsistent with the bivariate analysis, Model 1 suggests that both the age category and presence of children in the household are significant factors affecting reports of receiving help from neighbors. The age category is positive, indicating seniors reported more change in receiving help from neighbors after relocation compared to non-seniors. In Model 1 senior respondents’
Table 9: Regression of Change in Help Given

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Column 1</th>
<th>Column 2</th>
<th>Column 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.219</td>
<td>0.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.202)</td>
<td>(0.206)</td>
<td>(0.210)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree/GED</td>
<td>-0.293</td>
<td>-0.297</td>
<td>-0.295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.161)</td>
<td>(0.163)</td>
<td>(0.164)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in household</td>
<td>0.647***</td>
<td>0.628***</td>
<td>0.623***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.190)</td>
<td>(0.191)</td>
<td>(0.191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term resident</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-0.087</td>
<td>-0.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.163)</td>
<td>(0.162)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place attachment</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-0.249</td>
<td>-0.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.170)</td>
<td>(0.173)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in friends</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.214**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in social cohesion</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in community at-</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tachment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.450</td>
<td>-0.317</td>
<td>-0.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5.179</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001
N=248.

The report of change in receiving help from neighbors is 0.532 points higher than non-seniors. Looking at the mean comparisons in Table 8, seniors report increases in receiving help from neighbors after relocation, while non-seniors report decreases.

For the presence of children, the reported pattern is significant and positive, which is consistent with the findings in Table 8. Reports of change in receiving help from neighbors after relocation are 0.637 points higher for respondents with children in the household as compared to respondents without children in the household. Looking at the bivariate analysis, respondents
Table 10: Regression of Change in Help Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>0.532*</td>
<td>0.535*</td>
<td>0.603**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.219)</td>
<td>(0.224)</td>
<td>(0.254)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree/GED</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>-0.122</td>
<td>-0.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.174)</td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
<td>(0.178)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in household</td>
<td>.637**</td>
<td>.652**</td>
<td>0.607**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.206)</td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term resident</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>0.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
<td>(0.176)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place attachment</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.185)</td>
<td>(0.187)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in friends</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.098)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in social cohesion</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in community attachment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.034*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.484</td>
<td>-0.579</td>
<td>-0.665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001
N=248.

with children in the household report significantly more increases in receiving help from neighbors after relocation than do respondents without children.

In Model 2 of Table 10, I add the controls for tenure in public housing and place attachment to prior residence. As with Table 9, these variables create no significant changes from Model 1 to Model 2. In Model 3 of Table 10, I add change in amount of friends living in the neighborhood, change in social cohesion, and change in community attachment. Inconsistent with my hypothesis, change in amount of friends and change in social cohesion have no significant effect upon respondents’ reports of receiving help from neighbors after relocation.
Consistent with my hypothesis however, the change in community attachment is significant and positive, reflecting that as place attachment increases respondent reports of receiving help from neighbors also increases. After relocation, for each one-point increase in reported community attachment, reports of receiving help from neighbors increases by 0.034 points. In this model, the effect of having children in the household and respondent age remains significant.

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I attempt to better understand how relocation is associated with respondents’ neighborhood social interaction with new neighbors. Prior to testing the connections between the variables, I hypothesized changes in key variables after relocation would be associated with changes in residents’ neighborhood social interaction, in the forms of either increased or decreased social support given and received. My expectations based on literature reviews included positive associations between social support and age, education, tenure, presence of children, amount of friends living in the neighborhood, and community attachment and negative associations between social support and place attachment to prior residence. The t-test results furthered the expectation to see significant positive relationship between the amounts of friends living in the neighborhood and giving help to neighbors and the bivariate analysis increased the expectation of finding significant positive associations between social support and presence of children.

Consistent with my hypothesis, age, presence of children, amount of friends living in the neighborhood, and community attachment do have positive significant associations with social support. These findings also support findings in previous studies of social support (Ishii-Kuntz and Secombe 1989; Marks and McLanahan 1993; Hanratty et al. 2003; Tester et al. 2011) Inconsistent, with my hypothesis, tenure in public housing also has a positive association with social support, though it is not a significant association. Change in social cohesion, place attachment,
and levels of education all have negative associations with social support, but none are significant. That education and change in social cohesion hold negative associations with social support is also inconsistent with my hypothesis.

As I hypothesized, the reported amount of friends living in the neighborhood is significantly associated with help given to neighbors after relocation. The relationship between amount of friends living in the neighborhood and receiving help from neighbors is not significant however. While the association between presence of children in both giving help to neighbors and receiving help from neighbors after relocation was expected due to the bivariate analysis, the significant association with age was not. Both of these findings support the idea that significantly different groups exist amongst public housing residents and that these groups need to be addressed individually in the relocation process, especially concerning the presence of children’s role in both the giving and receiving of social support.

The change in the amount of friends living in the neighborhood is significantly associated with giving help to neighbors and change in community attachment is significantly associated with receiving help from neighbors. Understandably, losing friend groups has an impact upon asking for help and offering help in the neighborhood setting. Also, moving from public housing into neighborhoods with less perceived crime, violence, visible poverty, and physical deterioration are very likely to affect respondents’ actions and attitudes about community. However, the question remains, if community attachment and social cohesion towards new neighbors significantly increase in relocation, why do giving help to neighbors and receiving help from neighbors still decrease so significantly? Further, if these variables only explain 3-6% of the observed variation in these dependent variables controlling for age, tenure, number of children in the house-
hold, high school diploma or GED, and place attachment to prior residence what other unobserved factor must still be present?

In Chapter 6, I examine the in-depth interview data gathered from the 40 subsample respondents. The subsample answers specific questions pertaining to why social interaction with neighbors either does or does not occur in the neighborhood setting. In the in-depth interviews, respondents are asked specifically how elements of friendship and kinship groups, place attachment, and sense of community influence their decisions to interact with both old and new neighbors. The residents’ responses offer valuable insight into A) how friends, place attachment, and community affect social interaction with neighbors and B) why residents’ reports of social interaction with neighbors decline across the relocation process when reports social attitudes towards neighbors increase.

CONCLUSION

Through the examination of pre-move and post-move data for relocated public housing residents in the Atlanta, Georgia study, I find that a presence of children and a change in residents’ reported amount of friends living in the neighborhood affects the amount of help reportedly given to new neighbors and that presence of children, age, and change in community attachment affects the amount of help received from new neighbors. But even as residents report less social interactions due to loss of friends, I observe that increases in social cohesion and community attachment occur for the sample. This finding raises questions as to why residents are not interacting with new neighbors even if they have a greater sense of cohesion and community attachment compared to when they lived in public housing. The finding of differences based on age and presence of children on receiving help from neighbors also raises questions and leads to
new possible explanations concerning social interaction outcomes in public housing relocation for different groups of residents.

Through this quantitative examination, I am forced to revisit the fact that the survey used for this component of the study is extensive, but not exhaustive and as new questions arise through the analysis process it is not possible to return to gather more pre-move data to compare across relocation. Despite the inability to revisit the survey questionnaire at pre-move, these findings do clarify how changes after relocation reportedly affect public housing residents. Based on these findings, I establish social interaction does change after relocation for this sample. These findings also reveal that a complex of changing variables including friendships, attitudes, and demographics may be at the center of relocated residents’ decisions of whether or not to interact with new neighbors.
CHAPTER 6: EXPLAINING PATTERNS IN NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION

INTRODUCTION

Analysis of the survey data supported some of the hypotheses stated in Chapter 5, providing validation to the inclusion of several variables in the study neighborhood social interaction prior to relocation and after relocation. The presence of children in the household and the amount of friends living in the neighborhood were positively and significantly associated with giving help to neighbors, while presence of children in the household, age, and community attachment was associated with respondents’ reports of receiving help from neighbors. Together the presence of children, age of residents, amount of friends living in the neighborhood, and community attachment together explain roughly 5% of the observed variation in giving help to and receiving help from neighbors. This suggests other unobserved variables are associated with the patterns of social interaction, and suggests unexplained changes occur in these variables across relocation allowing social interaction to decrease while social cohesion and community attachments improve. The goal of the following two chapters is to explain these observed patterns in neighborhood social interaction for relocated public housing residents. These explanations are developed through secondary analysis of in-depth interview data gathered one year post-relocation from a sub-sample of 40 respondents selected from the full sample of residents relocated from Atlanta public housing.

For the sub-sample of respondents, in-depth interviews were conducted covering a range of topics related to the relocation. Important to this study are the questions pertaining to interactions with friends, kin, and neighbors prior to and after relocation, perceptions of both the public housing neighborhood and the new neighborhood, and the existence of community structure and
involvement, both before and after moving. For each respondent, these topic areas were addressed in detail with the stated purpose of gaining a more complete understanding of how social interaction with neighbors might be affected by the relocation process.

For this study, transcripts of the interviews were prepared and all sections of the interviews related to these questions and topic areas were selected and analyzed using the three stages of grounded theory methods (GTM) as explained by LaRossa (2005). In Chapter 6, I present the findings from the open and axial coding stages. In open coding I used the variable-concept-indicator model to create variables. I theoretically saturated each concept in the analysis, reaching a point where no new information was added to the concepts. I then dimensionalized the concepts into variables before beginning axial coding. During axial coding I developed the connections between the variables for each topic area. In selective coding, discussed in Chapter 7, I chose my core variables in the analysis and determined how the variables were central to the study’s narrative.

OPEN CODING

Open coding started with a line-by-line reading of interview transcripts, with the intent of developing indicators, concepts, and variables from the text. Developing indicators and concepts from the data requires the use of the “constant comparative” method whereby indicators (words, phrases, sentences or series of words, phrases, or sentences in the text) are first drawn out and repeatedly compared to each other by the researcher, and second, linked to a concept, or thematic label. (LaRossa 2005) As content areas were compared, I sorted concept indicators into the three relevant topic areas: neighbors, consisting of friends, family, and close neighborhood acquaintances; neighborhoods, encompassing any discussion of the places, locations, settings, or physical features including and connected to one’s domicile; and community, including neighborhood
functions, sponsored events, formal and informal gatherings, routine events, or collective outings for individuals or groups of residents and neighbors.

It is crucial to remember the indicators are actual words or segments of text, and any abstraction or generalization begins at the concept level. Many concepts or text segments from each resident encompassed more than one category as open coding began. As concepts were established, new and previous indicators were continually compared to the indicators under a concept label to determine if they too fall under a particular concept, or if a new concept should be created for the indicator. I continued open coding until I finished all 40 interviews; by this point the addition of further indicators brought no new information to the concept categories; a point referred to as theoretical saturation. (LaRossa 2005) The final steps in open coding for this study were then to a) sort text segments into topic areas, b) develop broader variables containing the concepts and their indicators, and c) dimensionalize those variables by incorporating and applying notions such as frequency, duration, and intensity to the variables. For diagrams of the open coded variables see Appendix A.

Analytic memos and marginal notes were kept and utilized throughout the study process. Within the memos, connections between indicators, concepts, variables, and general thoughts were constructed. These memos were usually made at the end of each coding session, making for a batch of roughly twenty memo clusters. Employing the constant comparative method, I continually returned to memos and marginal notes to corroborate my final narrative. Line-by-line coding yielded upwards of 300 indicators and 50 concepts with varying degrees of similarity or connectedness and theoretical saturation for most concepts did not prove a difficult challenge. Open coding proceeded as planned, with a systematic handling of marginal notes. Indicators were underlined in the text and connected by a thin line to enumerated concept lists arranged in the mar-
gins. Arrows linked similar concepts, and groups of concepts, as new possible linkages between indicators and concepts emerged or morphed.

As open coding continued, I repeatedly returned to the question of how to explain observed changes in neighborhood social interaction across relocation. In the end, I selected the variables I felt would best develop the narrative of the study in rich detail. Here, I present three summary tables to provide an overview of the key variables and brief examples of the quoted text I selected them from. For each topic area these variables were created through the use of the variable-concept-indicator model, developing specified answers to how and why reports of neighborhood social interaction declined and why reports of community attachment and social cohesion improved from pre-move to post-move in terms of friends, place attachment, and sense of community.

Table 11 presents the key variables I use to explain patterns of neighboring actions for the relocated residents. Throughout the process of open coding, respondents’ answers to questions of interaction revolved around or included five elements: inclusion, engagement, stigma, children, and welcome. I coded these elements into variables, defined how they are measured, and returned to interview texts to provide multiple, clear examples. The level of inclusivity measures how much the respondents report allowing neighbors and community members into their homes or social interactions. I view this as an important variable because respondents limiting outsiders allowance into their home or social circle seemingly diminishes their opportunity to interact with new neighbors. Likewise, I view the respondents’ reported levels of engagement as equally important to determining why relocated residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors. The level of engagement measures the extent respondents enter into the personal or
Table 11: Neighboring Interactions Open Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable name</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of inclusivity</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“I don’t need to have people in my home.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“many children came to my daughter’s house ‘…I would…do different things to make them feel that they…have a safe haven to come to”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of engagement</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“I don’t…interfere. I don’t like to get too friendly with people … I seen them, and I speak to them, but that’s about it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“kids got to playin’ and the grown folks got out there, start playing like kids. They come knock on your door… I couldn’t play of course, but I could watch ‘em…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of stigma</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“And uh, this guy, he didn’t seem prejudiced, you know. Uh-uh. No, he nice he come out and sit out there…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“…deal with me on a one-to-one. Not look at me as a number. Because you're stigmatized by being in the system as well, you see.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of children</td>
<td>Absence</td>
<td>“Aint no children in this building period…This building here is real quiet”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>“for the most part, I’ve always had children come up on my porch and talk and I’d play sports with kids sometimes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of welcome</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“No, nobody pays any attention when you are moving into a neighborhood,”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“But when I came out the next day… they were all like, ‘welcome to the neighborhood’… they put out a good impression for me.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

social spaces of others, such as entering into the homes or social interactions of neighbors and community members.

Coupled with accounts of whether or not relocated residents engage with new neighbors or include them in their daily lives are issues of stigma carried over from living in public housing. The variable level of stigma measures the respondents’ overall feelings of how they perceive others judge them about their prior residence in public housing. I view this variable as important to answering why relocated residents either do or do not engage in interaction because even when respondents reported feeling little or no stigma, it was evident in the interview that they
were highly aware that stigma could have negative consequences if they chose to act in certain ways.

I include the variable presence of children for multiple reasons. Presence of children measures whether the respondents report children living in the neighborhood pre-move and post-move. I view it as a key variable primarily because respondents with children report that a presence of other children in new neighborhoods a central means of meeting new neighbors, but also because many respondents without children were equally vocal about the presence or absence of children after relocation affecting interaction with neighbors. While some respondents were glad to be away from the presence of children, other respondents disliked the absence of children in the neighborhood or missed interacting with the children from the prior neighborhood.

Last, I include level of welcome in the key variables for neighboring actions. Level of welcome is measured by respondents’ reports of how welcome they were made to feel upon moving into their new neighborhoods. Respondents varied in terms of both how they were received upon moving in and how concerned they were about the reception, revealing important differences in relocated residents’ experiences and expectations connected to interaction with new neighbors. By including this variable, I am able to show that for some relocated residents the decision to interact or not is impacted within the first few days of arriving in the neighborhood.

Table 12 shows the key variables I use to explain how residents’ conceptualization of the neighborhood affect whether or not they choose to interact with new neighbors. Place-based elements impacting interaction with new neighbors include: place attachment, safety, viewing place as a resource, viewing place as people, and zones of action. The level of attachment to place measures multiple concepts including whether and how much the respondents miss their
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable names</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of place attachment</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“Yeah, I am gonna to move out here…I just can’t, can’t take it any longer, you know?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“The neighborhood is great, I love it. I mean, it’s totally different from the way I was raised and the neighborhood I just came from.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of feeling safe</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“You got to make sure your doors are locked. There was a lot of violence going on there. A lot of arguing, shooting, murder. I seen a lot of dead people…My kids have seen people die, take their last breaths, looking at ‘em.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“We had our own porch, our own patio…you didn’t meet no strangers… if I leave, I let somebody know I’m gone…I told them when I’m coming back, how long I’ll be gone. So they would watch my apartment.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of place as resource</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“…they don't have a playground… They have parks in this area, but they don't have an immediate playground in the apartment complex. So the kids really don't have much to do other than argue [and] ride their bike.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“The rooms are bigger... It's real space… we ain't touching each other… it's a backyard that's fenced in…the front yard… we can sit on the porch… There's just stuff they can do.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards people in place</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>“…some people just, instead of being dead, they lay down like they're dead…No one wanted to enlighten these people, to bring them to life… And so my spirit was always down, you know. I always felt a cloud of negativity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>“The people are friendly, like I know everybody…it’s my neighborhood. I miss it. I’ve been there since I was a little girl”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zones of action in place</td>
<td>Inside</td>
<td>“Uh-uh, I don’t even go around in this neighborhood. When I go out, I go where I'm going, and I come right back to this house.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Front patio/ common room</td>
<td>“Then we had… a gatherin’ place where you go down there, sit down and eat…[a] community room… and then out there we had a patio… pretty day like they go out there and play cards, barbeque and all that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood limited</td>
<td>“I walk around, you might have people speak, but I have like a couple people from Bankhead community stay out here. There's a couple there. Also my mom too, so.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood unlimited</td>
<td>“If you go back some streets, you got the houses. You hit [next road], you got the store… You got a lot of stuff around the area… walk all the way up about three or four blocks to get to the library… that’s real far.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
old place, how they felt when they heard they had to move, what they think about their new place thus far and whether they plan to move again (Tester et al. 2011). I include this measure to gauge how residents view their previous and current residences in general and to determine if level of attachments to either prior residence or new place can explain why residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors.

When discussing how place affects interaction, the level of safety respondents reported feeling, both in public housing residences and in their new neighborhoods, is a central element. I derived this measure from studies on fear of crime in place (Tyler 1980; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Skogan 1986; Ferraro and LeGrange 1987; LeGrange, Ferraro, and Supancic 1992; Covington and Taylor 2005). I include the variable level of feeling safe to measure the respondents’ overall feelings of safety in their original public housing neighborhood and in their new place, whether or not they join others as lookouts, and how close they feel they are to crime. While the majority of residents reported an increase in safety after relocation, some reported no change in feelings of safety and others reported declines in feelings safety, indicating that feelings of safety after relocation may cause variable outcomes in terms of interaction with new neighbors.

When interview respondents were asked what they liked or disliked about their neighborhoods, an interesting outcome was that place was discussed either in terms of the amenities it had to offer or in terms of the people who lived there. Because of this recurrence in response, I include the two measures level of place as resource and attitude towards people in place. The variable level of place as resource measures how much respondents describe their original residence and their new residence positively or negatively based on its general use value (i.e. a roof over one’s head), its centrality or closeness to/distance from other places, or in terms of its store of physical resources. The variable attitudes towards people in place measures the degree to which
respondents describe their original residence in a public housing complex and their new residence positively or negatively based on how they viewed the people who lived there and people from the surrounding areas. Both measures offer key insights into why relocated residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors.

Last in terms of place-based explanations for interactions in the neighborhood, I include a measure for residents’ reported zones of action. The variable zones of action in place measures the spatial limitations each respondent places on their daily actions and interactions in both their prior public housing residence and in their new residence. I derived this measure from literature on boundary work (Goffman 1959; Grannis 1998; Yancy 1964). In responses to questions concerning both pre-move and post-move interactions with neighbors, I find residents typically fall into one of four categories ranging from keeping inside the house or apartment to walking the entire neighborhood and beyond. I include this variable in the explanation of why residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors after relocation, expecting that how much and how far residents will go into their neighborhoods will impact how often and to what extent they will be able to interact with their neighbors.

Table 13 contains the key variables I use to explain how respondents’ views on sense of community affect their choices of whether or not to interact with new neighbors after relocation. The elements of sense of community are drawn directly from the work of McMillan and Chavis (1989) and include membership, influence, integration and need fulfillment, and shared emotional connection. Each element from McMillan and Chavis’ (1989) sense of community scale helps to establish how changes in community help to explain why residents either do or do not interact with
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable names</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>“And then when I moved over here, I wasn’t working, so everybody used to go to work. I was like, ‘Hm.’ That’s how I feel like, I don’t belong over here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>“I was the captain on my floor for the fire drills and everything. …I knew everybody name…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>“I tried to get a book club out there, get people to read books and change books. Tried to get a library out there, we never did get the library.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>“You tell these people you gonna work with them, you got to look them straight in the eye. … Say, ‘Hey, look. This is the problem that’s going. We need help.’ …It’s a lot of them out there right now, they need help. Serious help.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration/need-fulfillment</td>
<td>Social gatherings</td>
<td>“They had a big old field down there you could go down there and play ball, got a basketball court, then had tennis, another park ...And we had our own special day, they used to have Bowen Homes day.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Events for children</td>
<td>“They would take little trips with the kids, they would take them different places. … the YMCA … Recreation Center… swimming, …aquarium… movies… barbecues for the kids, parties, all types of things like that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Material goods and services</td>
<td>“And every holiday, I would cook and feed the whole neighborhood. … Canned goods and non-perishable items…And I shared until I gave it all away… to different peoples in the building.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support services</td>
<td>“… the kids could go to the community center and be able to associate with…and talk with some of the adults that could help them out with problems if they didn’t have anybody they could talk to”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protection and communication</td>
<td>“Everybody know what’s going on, and then they would … spread the word… we had…[a] president, and she, …she let everybody know what was going on.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared emotional connection</td>
<td>Absence of connection</td>
<td>“You got people who sit outside on the porch, have cookouts … parties outside…loud music… whenever that happens, I always leave the neighborhood and just go somewhere else.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence of connection</td>
<td>“I was made like I was crying…”They tearing down Hollywood Court, we ain’t going to see them no more.’ But I told them we was going to go over there and get us a brick. I want to get my apartment number off of there,”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their new neighbors. These elements are straightforward and provide excellent categories of response suited to creating variables for further coding. I begin by converting membership into level of membership, which measures the respondents’ feelings of whether or not they considered themselves to be part of the community. Most respondents were very clear about whether or not they felt they belonged to their community; those who felt they belonged were often animated about what community life entailed, while those claiming non-membership either denied the existence of community or expressed how they distanced themselves from it.

Next, I create level of influence, which measures the respondents’ reported influence in the community or how much respondents felt they were listened to and how well respondents felt they could organize people and resources in the public housing community. Residents typically either believed they were able to take charge of certain situations or they felt powerless against the larger housing authority and the conditions of the housing community. Many who felt personally lacking in influence however, commented that they knew the people who did have influence, and therefore knew who to go to in order to get help. Accompanying the ability to command respect and have others follow their lead is the residents’ ability to provide resources and integrate their neighbors into the larger community. With level of integration and need fulfillment, I am able to catalogue the many ways respondents mention creating community and having their needs fulfilled. The most common categories mentioned by these respondents include social gatherings, events for children, providing material goods and services, providing support services, and offering protection and communication.

Last, I create the variable level of shared emotional connection. This variable addresses the respondents’ overall feelings of emotional connection to their original public housing neighborhood and is measured by reports of emotional connection to having lived in public housing,
such as whether or not respondents kept a piece of the demolished complex. Responses to questions of emotional connection often elicited polarized sentiments from respondents who were either very sad to have left public housing or who considered attachment to the public housing community as an outward sign of low class.

AXIAL CODING

In the standard axial coding process, a variable constructed through the variable-concept-indicator model, employed in open coding, will be placed at the center of analysis momentarily to assess the six C’s: causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, co-variances, and conditions (LaRossa 2005). After one variable has been analyzed in this manner, the variable is shifted out of the center to allow the next variable to be explored using the same process. In this study, the larger topic areas of place attachment, sense of community, and neighboring interactions are shifted into the focal positions, and the component variables of each are arranged so residents’ responses explain how place attachment and social attitudes increase in relocation while overall social interactions decrease.

Place Attachment

To provide an explanation of how elements of place and place attachment are connected to social interactions I focus first on what residents liked and disliked in prior public housing. When asked what people liked about the old neighborhood, respondents with higher place attachment answer with the people, the resources or centrality, or the community or scene. For respondents in both seniors only and family units, probing on these responses elicited comments about sitting outside or in common areas with people, sharing food and childcare responsibilities, going to gatherings and participating in events, or being able to “get to” anywhere with relative ease. Some responses focused more on the physical property such as the community centers and
playgrounds for the families and the common rooms, porches, front desks, and lobby areas for the seniors. These places are remarked upon fondly for those with higher place attachment. One respondent, Ruby, explained missing the area by saying,

And I miss sitting on the porch. We would all get together, come sit on each other porch, have a cup of coffee. I be got up and cook breakfast, tell them, “Y’all get up and come eat breakfast.” They’ll get up then….Because they had put us our own porch out there. It was a big porch. We could sit out there and barbeque, eat. And I’d cook and tell them to come and eat. We just sit out there, sit out there all day, at night. Children have a playground, basketball court.

For those reporting low place attachments, people, resources, and community are referenced; however, few of these are mentioned in a positive light. For example, people reporting lower place attachments might claim all the people outside were noisy, disrespectful, or dangerous. Further, they were more likely to see resources as belonging to others and not themselves, to the people with children, children in general, or other people’s children and not their own. Respondents reporting lower place attachments were also more likely to claim avoiding community functions, for multiple reasons. For example, one respondent, Cathy, said,

Well, the other things I didn’t like about Bankhead Courts was the noise. Especially on the weekend. You know, it being a, you know, project area or a low-income area, you got people who sit outside on the porch, have cook-outs and stuff and then they have their little parties outside. And then there was loud music and everything. But for the most part, whenever that happens, I always leave the neighborhood and just go somewhere else. You know, like I said, I grew up in something like that, but you know, as I got older, you know, you do tend to want your peace and quiet.

One key reason used to avoid people, communal resources, and events and gatherings was fear of violence and a low level of safety connected to the neighborhoods in general. While most non-senior residents reported crime and violence were both real and scary, those with higher place attachments had a tendency to normalize the existence of violent crime, while those with lower place attachments viewed violent crime as a justification for avoidance. One respondent
Donald says, “Ain’t never a barbeque where you can be comfortable. You got to watch your back…’cause they get to drinking and smoking and then the young folk want to get to clowning, want to shoot and pull out guns and all that.” Meanwhile, the seniors overall reported hearing about crime and violence but not witnessing crime personally. One respondent from a senior facility, Henry, claims, “I heard about crime, you know, but I didn’t really see it. Other than that to me, it was unique.” Henry goes on to say about the apartment “You don’t hear any noise. You don’t hear anybody if they are fussing …There is always something going on, just like – here, let me show you…They’ve got all kind of activities.” Here then, level of safety can be seen as a contingency for participating with people and resources, possibly furthering attachment to community and social interaction.

Residents with lower place attachments most often account for this contingency by discussing their zone of action, rather than focusing on their personal role in avoidance or non-interaction. Those residents with low place attachments would often remark how they stay in the house to keep safe, or at most go out onto the porch. Also, for both seniors and non-seniors, going “somewhere else” not connected to the neighborhood, such as a friend or relative’s house, a church or community center elsewhere, or work or school allowed them to be away from low safety areas and more completely avoid unsafe people and situations accompanying the neighborhood, for example Ruby claimed “whenever they have issues and fights and stuff in the neighborhood and of course, they had shoot outs in the neighborhood. So I’d just be, I leave the neighborhood or I’d just be at work when all that happens.”

Meanwhile, those with higher place attachments often reported zones of action possibly ranging from their kitchens and living rooms to the front porch/community rooms, front yard, into the complex, and down the street to the local grocery/shopping centers. Residents reporting
larger zones of action often reported higher frequencies of stopping to talk, visiting, and being visited by others and reported higher frequency of participating in neighborhood community events. According to Kiana, “Like in Bowen Homes, you could have walked out your door and you seen everybody walk to the store everybody you knew was there. You didn’t need nobody’s number.” Looking at zones of action specifically, these zones are highly contingent upon feelings of safety, but also co-vary with presence of household amenities, work status, transportation, friends and kin inside and outside of the neighborhood, proximity of neighbors similar in age and family status, and the presence of children and communal resources.

In relocation, key changes were reported in terms of safety, amenities, similarities, presence of children, and resources. For most residents from family complexes, reports of violent crime in the neighborhood diminished. This decreased the ability to use fear of safety to account for personal avoidance of neighbors and the neighborhood. In the place of fear for safety, pointing to the increased existence of household amenities was used to account for staying inside. Prior to moving, even respondents with very low place attachments reported sitting outside due to lack of air conditioning in the household. For example Donald claimed,

A lot of old folks ready to go because they’re tired of all this clowning and shooting and capers through the night. It’s bad when you can’t sit on your own porch. You know, it’s hot in the house and we don’t have no air, and use the fan, you know what I’m saying, turn the TV up. But see here I got air, central air, central heat, you know what I’m saying, I got cable, in Bowen we didn’t have no cable, see here I have more things that I didn’t have in Bowen Homes, and then like I can see more things on TV, I relax better in my home with air,”

Post-move many of these respondents reported they now had heat and air conditioning and even respondents with high place attachments prior to moving reported going outside less due to increased comfort levels inside. Further, those reporting larger zones of action prior to moving reported staying indoors more for the following reasons: nowhere to go; too far away
from people and things to do; no children in the neighborhood; no places to walk, ride bikes, play ball, have a gathering; not being allowed to gather and barbecue; and no stores close enough to walk to. Even though safety increased, making going outside less risky, post-relocation the people, resources and community worth visiting had been removed. According to Kiana,

You got a lot of stuff around the area it’s just so far, then me, I don’t have no license so I don’t got no way of getting around except the bus, and you got one bus that comes on Hopkins Street and that’s far to me and another bus comes at the top at Ralph David and Langhorn and that’s at the Shell gas station. Then you got to walk all the way up about three or four blocks to get to the library which is on People’s Street, that’s real far. Then you got to walk back. I mean, everything could have been closer or they could make a bus route somewhere. It’s a nice neighborhood to stay in but I don’t like everything because it’s so far away, like walking. I don’t got a problem with walking but some of that stuff be too far. You don’t want to leave ‘cause you gotta walk back or something. Ain’t nothing but houses. That’s it. There ain’t nothing to do out here. No, it’s just hard.

Residents who reported low pre-move place attachments, and/or reported spending a majority of time indoors or elsewhere, were typically least affected by moving away from centrally-located and community resource-laden areas; this holds for both seniors and non-seniors. Meanwhile those with high place attachments prior to moving found the new areas very nice, but quiet and/or boring and reported missing people more than those with low place attachment. Of these high attachment respondents, the most affected seemed to be those lacking transport, proximity to public transit, and a system of kin/friends with automobiles. Some younger respondents mentioned connecting with old friends via internet, but most claimed to have lost, or neglected to get, phone numbers. Many respondents reported watching more TV and spending more time indoors. Also mentioned was the lack of social gatherings either due to lack of communal space, lost contact with old friends, neighborhood regulations restricting parties, or simply a lack of cohesive community. The grandchild of one respondent claimed,

‘Cause when we moved from Bowen Homes I never like, I don’t even come outside no more. When I used to stay at Bowen Homes I used to always go out-
side…If I go outside, as far as I go is the porch… When we stayed at Bowen Homes, I used to play on the football team and I used to be a boxer…had their own recreation center out there by them and everybody like from Bowen Homes like family members and everybody get along with each other they let each other know what’s going on and how the children can get involved in something.

Addressing the quantitative data regarding community attachment and social cohesion overall respondents reported being significantly more satisfied with the neighborhood post-move and feeling it was more important to both themselves and their former relocated neighbors. Further, they reported new neighbors were more connected to each other and shared values more than prior neighbors. However, during interviews the respondents did not report new neighbors shared “their” own values. Reports of increased social cohesion therefore, may actually be due to not knowing their neighbors well enough by the time of the first survey and interview to distinguish what new neighbors’ values specifically are.

Many senior and non-senior respondents moving into apartment complexes lump their neighbors into one of two categories: they all go to work, or half go to work. In situations where “they all go to work” during the day, respondents report new neighbors are different than in public housing and new neighbors leave and return at similar times. One respondent, Donald explained,

You don’t have too much over here of that. ‘Cause everyone over here go to work. You don’t even see them sometimes. You don’t see them ‘til Saturday, Sunday. By Friday night you might see them and Saturday, ‘cause Sunday is they go in again ‘cause they’re going to work. They’re going to work, everyday, rain, shine, you hear them cars start up at three or four o’clock in the morning, all up to go to work.

This may give the appearance of similar or shared values, but high similarity between new neighbors is unlikely given other respondent comments stating nobody shares time together outside. Where respondents report “half go to work” during the day, more open resentment exists towards these new neighbors, marked by the respondents’ use of the term “ghetto” and increased
Reports of people hanging out in parking lots, drinking, smoking, and doing drugs. Respondents also report more incidence of neighborhood crime where new neighbors do not work all day. For example, when discussing new neighbors one respondent, Tiffany, made the following statements,

Well, I mean, it's certain people that hang with each other every day and certain people just do like me, come home and go to work and don't really socialize with people unless it's involving their kids or you know, something like that. So I think everybody just have, keep their distance from each other, like...the people I'm saying, they're very, you know, ghetto. I mean, they hang out, they, it's a lot of polices be out, riding out...the most action going on. Like a lot of drug dealers hanging out and shooting... But I notice the guys hanging out, drinking and smoking and you know, like how it would be in public housing.

*Sense of Community*

Shifting sense of community into the focal category, new variables enter into the explanation of why social interaction decreased in relocation despite the significant increase in reports of community attachments and social cohesion. McMillan and Chavis (1986) denote four key dimensions of sense of community: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Prior to relocation, both senior and non-senior respondents were clearly aware of the existence of a sense of community in public housing, whether they felt connected to the community or not. Of the four dimensions, membership and integration and need fulfillment were most commonly mentioned by respondents questioned about community.

Membership was overtly referenced mainly when respondents perceived themselves to be a non-member, or part of the out-group. When respondents felt left out or apart from the community scene, they accounted for non-membership as being due to differences in age, difference in attitudes and lifestyles, or having/not having children. If non-members had children, they accounted for refraining from community based on differences in lifestyle, while older non-members tended to blame their age or lack of children. Some respondents felt they were unfairly
disliked, and seemed to resent being left out of community functions. For example, one respondent, Marilyn, lamented her treatment in her prior neighborhood by saying,

Well, they didn’t, they didn’t like me too much. So uh, I guess I was up front all the time with everything I do, you know. So the older peoples, they said I didn’t like children. But I like children, ‘cause I’m a mother of eight. I got six living, I got two dead…No, they didn’t like me ‘cause they, they said I didn’t like children. But I had to like children to have all them. But I just didn’t want to be bothered with all of them children, you can’t tell ‘em nothing you know, and they turn around and you know, say bad, things to you.

Connection to the community is foremost contingent upon tenure in public housing; long-term residents overwhelmingly felt a strong connection where short-term residents could report either way. Many short-term respondents reporting feeling connected to the community prior to relocation told similar stories about how they came to be members. Connection stories included nearest neighbors inviting them to come outside to the from porch/patio area or involved their children meeting and playing with each other at school or in the closest communal areas. For example, Tiffany said this about finally meeting her neighbors,

By me working, being a full-time, working seven days a week, I really didn’t have time to meet everybody, so it – I’d say that first year I didn’t go outside, I didn’t really talk to everybody…So my neighbor, she was the nice one though, she was like, “I see you working everyday and you take care of your kids and you doing it by yourself.” … And she, you know, telling me. She was like, “Come outside.” She was like, “You always in the house.” So I was like, “’Cause I don’t know nobody out here.” She was like, “Well I’m your neighbor and if you need anything, let me know.” And my other neighbor, she was like, “You stay here?” She was like, “I didn’t even know nobody stay here…Wow. How many boys y’all got?” I was like, “I got three boys.” She was like, “Wow, I got five girls.”…My other neighbor, she was kinda old, she like, “I’m Miss P----, you know, I’m your other neighbor,” and so on and so on. We got a row full of women, single women, raising they kids. And that was like the connection that all of us had.

Most long-term respondents explained membership in the community more abstractly, in terms of growing up with others in the community and/or raising children in the community.

Many long term residents spoke of community in terms of the parts they enjoyed the most and
how they came to be connected to that specific aspect. Here, integration and fulfillment of needs becomes most salient. As one respondent, Linda, explained,

Well uh, well, liked the community center. You know, it was at supports. People use to come around and, uh, treat the kids out there, you know, to events, you know, they give 'em clothes, foods, or whatever they may need, or even Bible Study. You know, stuff like that. And that was real nice. And even the adults, not just only the kids. It was some good people that used to come out there, you know. The school. The school was -- all my daughters went there. Well, all my kids went there, you know. 'Cause like I said, I been out there a good long time. I have eight kids, five boys and three girls. All my boys are out now, but I still have my girls.

Integration and fulfillment of needs is primarily discussed in five key categories: gatherings and social events; events for the children; receiving material goods and services; support events; and protection/information/communication. Both members and non-members reference the social gatherings occurring in both senior and family public housing. Family and senior complexes alike held gatherings annually and semi-annually to celebrate being in, and a part of, a particular residence or neighborhood. Respondents claimed gatherings had attendance ranging from the hundreds to the thousands. One respondent, Sherry, commented, “It wasn’t even cold. It was hot. It’s like summer time in December …So, and then I was around a lot of folks. It was probably about 200 peoples at that church. They was just so many folks.” Such gatherings always involved food and music, and often involved drink alcohol, though some respondents modestly claimed to abstain from the drinking. As one respondent, Vanessa, said,

It was a like a cook-out but it was more enjoyable, everybody get to talk -- you know, it's like ain't gonna walk ten feet and there goes somebody to talk to. And drinking, you know, and all that. I didn't get drunk or nothing, I barely drank, so . But we had a good time. Barbeque. Everybody got their barbeque, so you go from here to there. Stuff like that. So we always get ours with our neighbor. Yeah, so everybody come out.
The use of illegal drugs (usually marijuana) and the occurrence of fighting and displays of aggression and violence were mentioned most frequently by those with low place attachments. For respondents with high pre-move place attachments and a sense of membership in the community, gatherings are mentioned with extreme fondness and nostalgia. In many cases gatherings are referenced with sadness because such events can no longer take place, mostly due to an inability to coordinate such events with everybody now spread around the city. As Vanessa said, “And the reunion and they don't -- they said they're gonna cut the reunion. They said that was the last one, this year might be the last one, you know. But it ain't like it used to be. I mean the reunion, it was just fun.”

Gatherings were also reportedly open to all former neighborhood residents and offered a way to return and reconnect with prior neighbors, friends, and acquaintances. Post-relocation, gatherings became a lost tradition some residents had participated in for many decades. Many long-term residents living in family units explained how these sorts of social events could not be regained or re-created in new residences because the new neighbors do not interact in the same ways. This finding seemingly contradicts both the reports of low social attitudes in public housing and the reports of shared values in new neighborhoods. Donald, commenting on the decrease in neighborhood gatherings, said the following,

I don’t know a park out here. They got a field down here where the children kick a soccer ball, but play with the soccer ball, but that’s just some children, you know. They got the playground over here and a little slide on down, but they need a big place, you know, where community can get to know each other, you know, instead of two or three at a time. See in Bowen Homes it be 50 or 60 of them at one little party you know what I’m saying?

Prior to relocation, receiving material goods and services and events for the children were the second-most mentioned functions related to integration and need fulfillment. In senior housing, provision of material goods and services typically consisted of prepared meals in a group
setting or a “meals on wheels” delivery service, clothing donation, provision of transport to stores and churches, and in-house church service and bible study. In non-senior housing, provision of services, material goods, and events for children were mentioned most often, even by those without children. Services and goods for adults were mentioned secondarily. A certain pride accompanied how community endeavors provided for children: field trips, coats in winter, toy drives, boxing and basketball leagues, day camps and carnivals, clothes and food. Keeping the children fed, clothed, and entertained throughout the year was an accomplishment, and while many respondents were not personally responsible for organizing, they knew the organizers and reported volunteering or at the least attending to help keep an eye on the children. This was either due to a sense of obligation due to having grown up in the community, or due to having children of their own taking part in the events. According to Vanessa,

I went to the community center and the little, uh, people came out, uh, the little church, they'll come out and talk to. They always come and they always see us on the porch… Yeah, a lot of little stuff like that. And people -- I can't think -- it was some kind of church. They come and get the kids and they go down to the park and they feed 'em and uh, they do like little events, paint they face and stuff like that.

Third mentioned behind the receiving or participating with material goods and services and events for children, was participating in support services offered in the community. Key amongst these were church services and bible study, and also mentioned were teen pregnancy support groups, AA and NA, and educational and job support groups. Beyond involvement for social or tangible resource benefits, respondents referenced community support in prior public housing as offering a break from daily routines of working, watching, children or sitting around the house/apartment all day. Getting out to socialize or to watch the children playing offered a release from daily stress and provided needed distraction from hardship, struggle, anxiety, or even boredom. One respondent, Nikia, explained,
Yeah, I can go down there to the summer camp and sit with the kids or help watch the kids. Um, go to church with my son and, like, me, I’ve been going to bible study ever since I was 12. So after I had got pregnant when I was 15, the lady, she was still coming out there, helping other teenagers who got pregnant… So I used to help her and I used to go with her, with other teenagers…And she helped me a lot when I was pregnant, so I used to go to church, go to bible study with her. Or just go to the park and just watch everybody kids.

Lastly, community was mentioned in terms of protection and communication. In senior housing community most often circulated near or around the front desk, community room, and patio areas, allowing for easier flow of information and sense of connectedness for seniors in isolation. In non-senior housing information spread through chain-reaction word of mouth, and through the children quickly across the whole neighborhood. As Donald said, “Never a day [went by] without someone knocking on my door or window telling me what was going on.” Community informers played a large role in preparation for relocation. While the attempts to utilize community to stop or slow relocation were ineffective, people were at least well informed quickly about what was going on and how the relocation would affect them.

In terms of influence, some respondents made direct mention of the key actors/actresses involved in orchestrating community affairs while others simply made mention of community being delivered to them. Of those interviewed in depth, a few were community organizers or key members of neighborhood leadership. These individuals on the whole only differed from the other respondents because they held a deeper sense of obligation. Many argued they had no more resources than their neighbors, but felt they had been called upon to handle the situation. Many referenced a divine calling claiming “God had put them in this place to help” or “God had given them the ability to listen, talk, or the ability to sit by and do nothing.” Others spoke of leadership or community role-play as productivity and goodwill. Some felt if they did not lead, nobody
would. Still others just wanted to love others and be loved in return. One respondent, Virginia, explained,

[I]t’s better than pulling away from each other. ‘Cause when you pull away, no one gains. No one gains, you know, everybody loses. Because you won’t watch my house and I’m not gonna watch yours, you know. But when you interact and pull together, you have so much to look forward to, you know.

This segues into the final component of McMillan and Chavis (1986) sense of community: shared emotional connection. Few examples could properly address shared emotional connection better than the story of bricks. A simple question draws the line between those with a shared emotional connection and those without: Did you get a brick? Answers in the affirmative are the testimony for the love and kindred spirit contained in the experience of living in Atlanta public housing. Bricks, street signs, apartment numbers, letters written on the wall in marker, and tears shed at seeing and hearing the housing had all finally been removed, for better or worse, are the markers for a former sense of community. Answers in the negative provide signs of non-membership, a desire to deny ever living in public housing or being a part of public housing. As an example it is easy to observe Ruby’s shared emotional connection in this response, “I was made like I was crying. I said, ‘Oh they calling up. They tearing down Hollywood Court, we ain’t going to see them no more.’ But I told them we was going to go over there and get us a brick. I want to get my apartment number off of there,” versus the lack of connection in Irene’s response, “No, I didn’t think about that…I didn’t get nothing there.”

For many interviewed, nothing post-relocation had yet emerged in the form of community to take the place of what once had been. However, a select few had the fortune to relocate with friends and kin close to sustain some send of community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) argue true sense of community is achieved when members are forced to respond to items or traumatic experiences. Some residents able to relocate together did report establishing closer bonds across
the move. In fact, several seniors relocated to a new high-rise apartment together, reported redirecting the stress of relocation into creating a new sense of community. As one respondent, Henry, said,

Well, basically about reestablishing, is the community is already here... I got a guy I play checker with there in the end. Other than that we go to dancing on Fridays. We meet in a group down here. But other than that this place is wonderful. It’s just magnificent. Go way back from the fifties and sixties. Those people you met, or known from during the time of going to school, I see them here.

This new sense of community forged by these select seniors was fueled by a high-rise management with a proactive stance in establishing community bonds amongst residents. Respondents claim this management focused on building upon the bonds formed in the prior communities. For these respondents, membership and need fulfillment remained high or even increased across relocation. However, for those not fortunate enough to move with friends and kin, loss of community support was harder, especially for those with a strong sense of community prior to relocation. For those with low sense of community and low place attachment prior to relocation, not interacting with members of the new neighborhood seemed less troublesome.

How interview respondents discussed sense of community post-relocation depended strongly upon their pre-move sense of community and what they were comparing their new neighborhoods to. Bearing this in mind, we asked respondents to describe their new community scenes to the best of their ability. In the early stages of relocation we did not expect respondents to have overwhelmingly been accepted into local community affairs, but we did expect respondents to have already gained a sense of whether or not components of a sense of community might exist in their new neighborhoods.

Responses were that no community existed whatsoever, some existed but was just being established, community was well established but excluded respondents, or community was well
established and included respondents. Where respondents reported no sense of community, this was due to feeling isolated and alone, either literally being the only resident on the street, the only person home during the day, different age group, or isolated due to kids or stigma from being in public housing. One respondent, Sheila, explained,

> It’s quiet. Like, the thing is, you don’t hardly see nobody. You see just a few cars going up and down the street, but it’s just really quiet around here. You don’t hardly see nobody. And there’s just a handful of children around here. It’s just, and they smaller children. There ain’t hardly no children around here.

Reports of developing sense of community came from enclosed areas, such as senior high-rise communities or areas with younger children and similar income/age situations amongst residents. For example, one respondent, Dorris, claimed she had a card club, a member’s only exercise room, a recreation center where everybody who was able could get together and socialize, and neighbors who looked out for each other.

> Oh yes. Yes, my friend Miss ---, next door. She comes over, askin’ me, “Do you need to go to the grocery store? My son gonna take me.” “No thank you.” “Do you need me to go with you to the laundromat?” I say, “Miss ---, I do not.” Stuff like that. See, I’m 73.

Reports of well-established, exclusive communities came from higher social class areas with fewer children in the situation, where the housing units were more spread out and abandoned during the work week. One respondent, Jocelyn, said,

> I haven’t got involved in any of the things yet because I don’t really know nobody… No, not too much because they already got their people they use to organize them, so, you know, then they find out I’m Bowen Home and all that stuff. You know, they’re probably looking down on me.

Reports of well-established inclusive communities came from lower income, working class areas with children and closer/insulated units. Respondents viewed these areas as similar to their previous neighborhoods in terms of organization and connectivity. According to Virginia, interaction and community remained similar after the move.
[The neighborhood is] just like Bowen. Most of the children come to our house. Saturday, we have my little grandson a birthday party. Little get-together. Wasn’t much, but we had ice cream and cake and hot dogs and hamburgers and chips and what have you. And they came, they just had fun. They had fun, you know… A new couple moved right next door …So I think they gonna be an access, you know, to the neighborhood and all. The thing is, the houses are bein’ rented apart…and there’s no empties, you know. And when you got empties, you got trouble, you know. You got trouble. So everybody’s interacting really well… And there’s a lot of churches around, and you know.

Though no one claimed entering into leadership positions in the community, a number of respondents seemed adept at targeting the influential members of the community, locating resources, and assessing whether or not people and resources would be available to them at present or in the near or distant future. Respondents’ answers to questions of sense of community post-move revealed a good deal about their individual characters and provided some real insight into why interaction declined overall in relocation. Key to the descriptions of the new community was what kind of neighbor they were: the involved type or the type leaving things alone. These character types again coincided heavily with place-based zones of action.

As neighboring interactions are moved into the focal position of axial coding, the connection between zones of action, neighboring styles, and sense of community become more salient and help to answer why neighborhood interaction would decrease in relocation despite increases in community attachment and reported high social cohesion.

**Neighboring Interactions**

With regards to interactions with friends and neighbors, interview respondents were asked specifically to describe their neighbors pre-move and post-move, and were probed to discuss whether or not they felt they could depend on neighbors, trust them, and whether or not they could reach out to them, either in a time of need or for more mundane/routine help. Trust and reliance were unfounded for the most part; you simply did not have blind faith in anyone. How-
ever this did not forego including others into what you did or engaging in what other people presented to you. Inclusion and engagement therefore are the central variables in neighborhood interaction, and they are affected by the following: how isolated/welcome others make you feel, how much various kinds of stigma play a role, and whether or not children are involved.

For most people, trust seemed to be lost at some point, wherein they thought somebody was a close friend and the person betrayed trust either through backstabbing, snitching, lying, cheating, stealing, fighting, or the person engaged in criminal activities endangering housing status, property, person, or children. However, loss of trust in general does not negate socialization. Respondents still have to interact in some capacity to instigate integration and need fulfillment and for many respondents the level of daily interaction could be fairly high. For these individuals rather than shun interaction they instead proceed with caution. A typical statement would be like this one from Sherry,

You know, you make friends with people like them, you basically making friends with the devil. (laughs) There are two kinds of devils. There’s one that’s nice, that’s – be nice, that’s being nice to you, but you owe her. But then there’s another who will be nice to you, but when you owe them and you don’t pay them, they want to fight you. OK? They – these – there were two types of ladies that I dealt with, that I didn’t too much want to deal with, but I had no choice because, you know, I want to keep peace.

Therefore, the kind of interactions between neighbors involves necessity and routine more than trust. Routines are culminated over years of surviving in potentially desperate and/or dangerous areas, where need was real and pronounced and where no boundaries could be taken for granted. Respondents spoke of having homes broken in multiple times, while at home or away, by strangers, neighbors, and even maintenance and management. Respondents spoke of having seen strangers, neighbors and children shot and killed in front of them and in front of their own children. They spoke of bullets coming through walls and windows, police chases and
spotlight searches, prostitutes, drug addicts, gang members knocking on their doors, sitting on their back porches, following them into elevators. Yet the respondents still exhibited a vast range of inclusion of others from the neighborhood and engagements with others in the neighborhood and community.

Prior to relocation, low inclusion was reported as closing and keeping the door closed, ignoring people, staying out of others’ business, or in many cases only coming home to sleep, then leaving to go to work or elsewhere. Low inclusion was usually correlated with feelings of low place attachment and non-membership and a zone of action not extending into the neighborhood or through the seniors’ building. Accounts of low inclusion ranged from fear of safety, to avoidance of drama, to extreme distrust and even hatred of outsiders. One attitude met in the interview process is that there is no outside; there is no neighborhood. Once the door is closed “they” do not exist.

On the other end of the spectrum however, are those reporting opening their doors to everybody, regardless of the person or situation. Respondents spoke of feeding children, feeding neighbors, letting people sleep on the couch, or on the floor, or letting people come to them to talk or receive help. Respondents, like Donald, reported giving people a beer, or food, a few dollars or whatever they had to offer a person in need. “You need it, and I got it, it’s yours, you knock on my door and need a place to stay, come on in.” Many younger respondents and long term respondents spoke of growing up with several neighborhood children in their house, and their house being a place where children knew they could be fed or cared for. Younger respondents saw these children as their friends, and accounted for extreme inclusion as “how I was raised” to keep friends close and inside to limit playing outside, to keep more eyes on all younger
siblings, and to increase group protection from the numerous external elements. One respondent, Kiana, explained,

I did [play with neighborhood kids], but my daddy didn’t let us out there hall past what? Four thirty...We had to be in the hall...school got out at two-thirty. Do your homework, go outside, can’t the leave the front porch, can’t leave the back porch. And if it ain’t your Barbie dolls or your Tonka trucks, you can’t play with them. So me and these girls named J--- and S----, those were like my only friends for a very, very long time. We weren’t allowed to do too much.

For older respondents, this inclusive attitude encouraged not only playing but also fighting amongst the children. Older residents explained allowing/encouraging the children to fight toughened them up, but also taught the children how to rise above the dispute to come back later as stronger friends. Losing this over time, they argued is what has led to children getting guns to solve disputes, in an inability to fight and then resolve their issues. Donald lamented, “Now ‘cause children tote guns now, and don’t think POW they dead, every day, watch the news every day, somebody get killed every day.”

High inclusion differs however from high engagement, and handling youth issues is a key example. While those with high levels of inclusion would allow children into their home, and could exert social control over the children/youth within this zone of action, these respondents would not necessarily go out and engage with other youth in the neighborhood and would refrain from engaging with other parents or adults concerning youth actions and attitudes. The often repeated explanation accounting for low engagement with youth and unknown parents is engagement invited arguments, disrespect and possible violence, even death. When asked if she would ever reprimand neighborhood children one respondent, Frances, claimed, “No cause I don’t know how they parents react, you know, how parents react about their children. I just walk away and leave it because I aint gonna get involved in it. You know.”
Where inclusion involves allowing people into your situation, location, or personal space, engagement involves entering into the situations, locations, and personal spaces of other people. Low engagement was experienced by most respondents, with both low and high levels of inclusion. For many, engagement into another person’s situational dramas and personal spaces, even in common areas could invite unwanted interactions, such as dangerous drama, verbal or physical fighting, and even death. One respondent, Jocelyn, explained why she would not go into another woman’s house,

Uh-uh. I’m not a gossiper, first of all. Folks tell lies on me, I get angry. And if I start running houses, which I never have been a house runner. You know? Folk be saying, they over there gossiping because they know she’s a gossiper. So, they figure, well, if I’m over there, we’re gossiping. She went over here. Oh, numerous times. But I have yet to go across that screen. I have never – I have never stepped in front of her doorstep.

For nearly all, engagement into another non-relative adult’s private property seemed taboo, perhaps equated to, or worse than breaking into another’s house. Social engagement was most usually restricted to front porch, common rooms, or common areas outside of the house or apartment. Accounts for this abstaining from entering another adults property ranged from avoiding drama to avoiding evil spirits, demons, and ghosts. One respondent, with otherwise high engagement, claimed she would only enter another person’s house if they were very sick and needed her to pray with them. The only time this seemed to be allowed was on occasions when people were gathered in a social event to eat, but when possible the food would be taken back outside to the porch. Ruby explained,

Because they had put us our own porch out there. It was a big porch. We could sit out there and barbeque, eat. And I’d cook and tell them to come and eat. We just sit out there, sit out there all day, at night…Because I told them I’m an outdoor person. We can sit out there, but if there’s more than four people out there, it’s a gathering. You have to have them in the house. So I told them – this is new to me. When my friends come over, we are, sit outdoors. I said I’m not an indoors person, I’m an outdoors person. I like to sit out on the front.
High engagement therefore involved the willingness and ability to confront neighbors and community members in common spaces throughout the neighborhood, but outside of anyone’s property. Common statements about engagement included going into the neighborhood to round up/feed stray or abandoned children, confronting hostile and disrespectful youth, confronting neglectful parents (usually referenced as drug addicts or alcoholics), engaging with police maintenance, or management on behalf of themselves or other residents, providing surveillance and monitoring of halls/floors in buildings, and establishing or collaborating in providing services and goods for the community at large. According to Jocelyn,

We have a lot of mothers and things that took drugs and things, wasn’t feeding the kids like they supposed to feed them and stuff. And we fix sandwiches. And, you know, little kids. They know they hungry. Give them, the mothers don’t know we even gave them sandwiches and stuff. You know what I’m talking about. You know? We just hand stuff out to little kids is what we did for them. And none of – and I know a lot of ‘em with kids. Ain’t nobody to see about them now. ‘Cause they was like that out there in Bowen Homes.

Just prior to relocation, those with high engagement were the ones spreading information about AHA’s movements and intentions, and participated most in protesting relocation and preparing members of their communities for the inevitable move. According to Jocelyn, who had served as an advisory board member,

We had heard about they was, you know, we read about how they was moving folks in Chicago. And how the folks in Chicago were fighting about they, they, they public housing...So, that’s when we, you know, we start really getting out fighting. And now, H---- and I, we tried to tell the peoples what was going on ‘cause a lot of them families, they used to getting welfare checks, making it on, you know, McDonald’s jobs and things like that. And they, they wasn’t capable of coming out here into the world, paying these bills because they had got so used to a little money here and a little money there, pay the little rent or whatever. And then they had the other little monies to live on. And I heard a lot of them lost they, their vouchers.”
Many with a high level of engagement accounted for this disposition as a calling, or blessing/curse (jokingly) compelling them to take care of the desperate needs confronting them in their neighborhoods. However some claimed they engaged with others to “show their love and to be loved in return.” This overlap of engagement and inclusion was not universal, or even frequent. Many reporting a high level of engagement were those with low levels of inclusion. A common attitude was due to willingness to deal with the extreme need outside of their door, a sanctuary within was necessary where none entered, not even close friends and family. Again, accounts for keeping people out ranged from the desire to keep drama/danger out to the desire to keep the supernatural and demonic out. As Earl claimed “I will go out, I slay the dragon!...If you don’t invite the spirit in, it will stay out there. Evil spirits travel you know…”

For respondents in the middle of the spectrum of inclusion and engagement, not called to act by a higher being or sense of duty, inclusion and engagement were usually determined by three key factors: level of welcome and approachability, level of stigmatization, and presence of children. For many of the respondents, first impressions and encounters were very important to determining how they interacted with their neighbors.

For long term residents, first impressions of old neighbors might have been developed decades prior, or as infants or toddlers, and therefore approach to others is more often discussed as how they were raised. Most high inclusion was a result of being raised to treat everyone like family, but also to not ask for things from non-family. Family, kin, and fictive kin therefore can blur for these respondents and even non-relatives can be approached as ‘family’. According to Kiana,

We was raised to not ask nobody for nothing if it wasn’t family, so we don’t ask it. Like if we want to, you know how people ask for a cup of sugar, I be scared to ask people for stuff like that because I be scared they’ll judge us or something like that. But I don’t think nobody should be judged about nothing. If you need help
you just need help. That’s what neighbors are for. But my daddy just raised us like that you know, like a parent.

When dealing with new residents, or strangers, politeness and attitude are critical indicators of treatment status. This quick litmus test carries over into post-relocation, whereby first impressions are immediate and long-lasting. Neighbors need not make overt gestures or present gifts; they need only smile and wave. Respondents feel a smile and wave implies “you don’t think you are better than me.” If neighbors are slow to say hello, or look as if they are assessing them before they reply, respondents feel as if they are being looked down upon. This calls to attention Tach’s (2011) work on differing frameworks between types of neighbors where relocated residents view interaction within different frames causing mismatch and discouraging social interaction.

For short term residents and seniors (both long and short term) no sense of immediacy exists, but how they were treated or welcomed in upon arrival or first interaction did set the tone for how they handled interaction with neighbors. For those not raised in a public housing setting, entering into public housing as a last resort can be correlated with shame, anger, humiliation, disillusionment, self-imposed feelings of stigma, and external stigma from friends and family. These stigmatizing emotions are then coupled with traumatizing experiences. Some respondents’ first interactions with neighbors were negative or questionable, such as being burglarized, victimized, or having their children harassed or insulted. When asked what they had disliked about public housing one respondent, Nikia, said, “The dislikes? Wow…when I first got there, my apartment was broken into six times. I didn’t have nothing, nothing. They just kept coming in there, drinking, leaving bottles, uh, using the bathroom. It was crazy, I got tired of that.”

One respondent, Sandra, said her neighbor doused the entire front porch with bleach and detergent to keep her children from sitting out front, and when she confronted the neighbor, she
was told the bleaching kept the hoodlums and drug dealers (her children) away. Several respondents reported getting into fights with neighbors due to correcting disrespectful children. Others mentioned coming home or coming outside to find people using or selling drugs on their front or back porches. These first occurrences set the stage for social interaction in the years to follow, limiting respondents in terms of how comfortable they and their children felt about including others into their lives or engaging in the lives of others. Donald claimed, “Lots a times I can’t get to my steps in Bowen Homes, people on the back of the steps smoking dope. I can’t even get on my own steps.” Another respondent, Linda, similarly said,

[I] think one time I went to empty garbage and, uh, you know, you know, you can smell the aroma, [of marijuana] very loud. And it was just like, you want to like, you know, have them maybe close the door or keep it in the house, but they could just hang out right there and do it, you know. Like I said, I got three girls…and uh, you know, you don't want to make trouble… So what I do, you know, I just gather my girls and we just go to the park or something. Until all that's over with, something like that.

Meanwhile, other neighbors’ first interactions were positive and unexpected and encouraged them to allow people into their lives and drew them further into the social lives of others. One respondent, Michelle, reported she was introduced to her closest neighbors and they watched over each others’ apartments and children like a small family. “We would go outside and listen to music, we would sit down in the hall and we would barbecue. We would go to the park together, and we would invite people over. We would be out at night, just like that.” Similar stories existed for other short term family and senior respondents.

Different from family style public housing, many seniors entered into their housing community after having been in another living situation and usually due to injury, illness, another’s death or retirement. Therefore coming into the senior community can be a fragile transition. For seniors, welcome feelings emerged from being invited to group functions such as food or
church services taking place in the building. However, being ignored, isolated, or overly-bothered can be reason enough to ignore and avoid social interaction with neighbors, wherein they either isolate completely, interact with family only, or leave the building to interact elsewhere. Again, since inclusion and engagement were not necessarily correlated, some respondents in senior housing reported helping to prepare or facilitate services and goods for their neighbors, but declining to stay and take part. One respondent, Henry, claimed he felt comfortable preparing food in the kitchens, but come time to eat he would feel compelled to get on his bike and go elsewhere, hence low inclusion but higher engagement. “I help feed the hungry, I bring food to people…And the way I establish, and rebuild, I stay to myself. Get on my bike, I ride my bike everywhere.”

Beyond first impressions, approach to social interaction, and general feelings of welcome and inclusion, stigmatization has a resounding effect on interaction. This effect is most notable for short-term residents and seniors. For long-term residents many were raised in public housing and therefore view the people in public housing as the in-group, while non-public housing residents such as management, police, social workers, and strangers were all questionable out-group members, subject to suspicion prior to interaction. For many long-term respondents, issues possibly evoking stigma, such as drug use, alcoholism, gang membership, and prior record for crime were no reason to exclude someone so long as they acted polite or ‘right’ with the respondent. Several respondents claimed that otherwise “dangerous” youth would straighten up and speak respectfully when they interacted, and therefore gave them no reason to ignore or isolate them or look down upon them socially. One respondent, Sheila, claimed,

I had nice neighbors. Just nice neighbors and friends. We would laugh and talk. And even the drug boys gave me respect…Yeah, they always have respect me. They’ve had some around now, you can hear them and see them do anything, but when they see me, “I’m sorry. Miss Sheila. Excuse me, Miss Sheila.” They al-
ways gave me respect. I didn’t, you know, didn’t mess with them. But, uh, it was really good.

For these respondents, disrespect, especially of an elder, was what generated stigma and caused you to be avoided. From their perspective, this was due to the notion if you would disrespect an elder, you might be willing to harm an elder and are therefore considered dangerous and/or to be avoided.

For short-term residents in family/single units moving into public housing is generally preceded by events necessitating last-resort housing. Reasons mentioned by respondents was extreme poverty, divorce, losing a job, and alcoholism. Therefore, moving into a potentially dangerous area, with high rates of violent crime, drugs, and unemployment carries a level of stigmatization either self-inflicted and/or imposed by family, friends, and co-workers outside of public housing. Feeling stigmatized for being in public housing caused some respondents to reject interaction with their neighbors. One respondent, Tameka, commented she was happy to move from public housing so could invite friends and family to stay with her without fear of them judging her and without fear of them being harmed or scared by visiting. “Yeah, embarrassed. The shooting, the crime, everything. They’re probably scared to stay there, you know what I’m saying? Because my family is not used to all that.”

This stigma of being a public housing resident led to low inclusion, low engagement, non-memberships, low place attachment, and a zone of action only encompassing areas outside of the public housing communities. These respondents were also least likely to reference their time spent in public housing after moving, and made sure to distinguish themselves from ‘ghetto-dwellers’. When asked if neighbors knew she was receiving a voucher Tameka said, “I don't know? 'Cause I never told 'em, so.”
For seniors, fewer stigmas are involved in moving into seniors-only high-rise. As mentioned, these individuals also had to move in based on life-changing situations, but because a majority of residents are on some type of government assistance, and because the community on the whole is not perceived to be ‘as dangerous’ as family public housing, a large degree of respondents distance themselves from external stigma associated with the ‘ghetto’ or ‘projects’. However, with seniors a degree of stigma can still arise due to the presence of mental instability, or physical handicap. Where respondents felt insecure about the mental well-being of neighbors they tended to isolate from them. Some respondents also isolated themselves from physically handicapped residents, mentioning these individuals were actually trapped by the physical boundaries of the building and the surrounding neighborhood and this feeling of entrapment was oppressive. One respondent, Lenore, claimed “I got a little bit better because I was- I tell you, it was stressful looking at people. You know, you know, to see somebody in a wheelchair is stressful in a way.”

Others avoided interacting with mentally infirm, claiming to be afraid to ride elevators or answer the door for them for fear of bodily harm due to violent outburst. Also, the mentally infirm were feared because they might let strangers into the building. Several seniors (and handicapped respondents living in senior dwellings) commented on how drug dealers and addicts would victimize the mentally unstable, to steal their government pay, or to use their dwellings as a place to store and sell drugs. This made interaction with these individuals highly dangerous. One respondent, James, reported such a drug dealer had been cornered in the building and busted into his apartment to evade the police, locking himself into James’ bathroom until the police removed him.

The people from the office, they had noticed him come in there, and they followed him. Because he wasn’t – he had assaulted two of the security guards that
were there. And they came in, and he jumped up and he came in and locked the door. And I said, “why are you locking the door?” I said, “you’re not supposed to be in here.” So, after he came in, the policeman came and knocked on the door with security. He jumped up and ran through my bedroom, into the bathroom, locked himself in the bathroom. And they asked me if anybody came in, and I told them. I told them where he went. And they said [they were] taking him out of there.

Beyond stigma for being handicapped or mentally unstable, drug use and involvement with prostitutes also evoked isolating stigma from other residents. Respondents shunned such behavior because of opening the building up to dangerous people, and therefore the possibility of being harmed or victimized. Non-residents were avoided in senior housing unless they were family members of other residents or guests legitimately signed in at the front desk and authorized by security. Passing through security decreased immediate stigma for trespassing, but mostly residents would decline to interact with non-residents unless they had a specific reason to do so, such as the person coming in to provide services, goods, or maintenance (or perhaps interviewing a fellow resident).

The final variable reportedly affecting levels of inclusion and engagement was the presence of children. By presence of children this means either the respondent’s children, children in the neighborhood, or both. For long-term residents raised in public housing, the presence of other children had a large effect on how much they included others or engaged in social activities of others. As these respondents grew up and had children of their own, patterns of inclusion and engagement were passed down to the next generation, and “how I was raised” becomes “how I raised my kids.” As one respondent, Earl, said, “But, so that's the kind of person I was and here again, this is how I raised my sons.”

For short term residents, the presence of children diminishes the ability to avoid interaction with neighbors and community members because their children will go out and interact with
other children, causing parents to meet each other and begin interactions. According to one respondent, Tiffany,

It was, it was uncomfortable at first because I didn't know anyone and you know, I was just basically trying to just go to work and come home and eventually, by me having a small child, you know, she wanted to go out and play. And she started meeting different children and you know, the parents and I, you know, talked but not every day, you know, but any days that my daughter would play with their kids, you know, I had some kind of interaction with them.

Therefore, even those preferring low inclusion and low engagement and preferring to limit their zone of action to the house only or outside the community are eventually drawn into meeting and interacting with neighbors. While most short term respondents with children reported this was how they eventually met people and made a few friends, a few people reported negative outcomes due to children fighting or due to negative interactions with other parents when trying to discipline another’s child. This pattern of interaction carried over post-relocation and is best indicated by Vanessa’s statement “Oh, the kids will talk, yes they will…that’s how we meet.”

For those without children in their custody, the presence of children in the neighborhood can affect level of engagement if the residents feel obligated to help these children or feel inclined to avoid these children. Several respondents reported prior to moving they felt obligated to find the neglected children and feed them, take care of them, or keep them out of the street. Others reported they were critical of slightly older, disrespectful youth and this caused them to avoid the potentially dangerous children. Upon moving, some respondents were sad to leave the neighborhood children whom they had looked after as their own, while other respondents were grateful to be away from all non-adults. One respondent, Cathy, claimed,

It’s just that, well, I miss the kids in the neighborhood. That’s for the most part. And being able to buy them ice cream or popsicles or whatever they, whatever
their parents will allow me to buy for them. And that’s about it. That’s about the only thing actually.

Meanwhile another respondent, Irene, exclaimed she was through dealing with other people’s children,

Because these children there is not raised. They raising theyself because they ain’t got no respect. They don’t know how to talk to grown people. And then the mothers, they quick to take the child’s side when they trying to find what’s going on. So, I stopped. I stopped. Anyway, when I left Grady Homes, I was through with them…I was through with keeping children. I don’t keep nobodies children now. Because these children are too bad now. And practically raising they own self now. So, I’m through with them.

In terms of neighboring interaction post-relocation, key differences emerge for long term, short term, and senior residents depending on their prior levels of inclusion and engagement. For many long term residents the critical moment of engagement occurs in the first impression. Long term residents feeling as if they were treated as equals and were not immediately stigmatized or looked down upon, reported the same levels of inclusion and engagement as they had prior to moving; however, signs of disrespect towards themselves or their children were not tolerated and were committed to memory. For example, one woman, Nikia, referencing neighborhood children said, “they act like they are better than us, stuck up because their parents have money.” Another respondent, Kiana said, “I get along with all those people, they are nice, but this woman here is evil. She treated us wrong from the start, and that woman there, act like she’s too good for us.” Another respondent, Evelyn, said “[I felt unwelcome], but I know it’s not their job. It’s up to me, too, but when I feel the attitude coming on, I don’t mess with them because they like to keep up some stuff.”

Short term residents seemed less concerned about initially being “checked out” by neighbors, because they were reportedly doing the same thing. Those with stories of new neighbors welcoming them into the neighborhood with gifts seemed genuinely surprised and taken aback.
One respondent, Virginia explained, “They said ‘We’re neighbors, and neighbors borrow sugar and ketchup… If you need it we got it. If we need it, I hope y’all got it.” Meanwhile, those receiving no overtures of welcome did not seem surprised. Most reported entering into a more anonymous setting where nobody appeared to know their neighbors, and at most people waved as they came and went. One respondent, Michelle, claimed she didn’t feel welcomed or unwelcomed upon moving in. Instead she claimed, “No. They were just about the same when I moved into wherever.”

Seniors entering into new high-rise communities varied in level of engagement based on age and physical ability, but mostly seemed to carry forward the attitudes about interaction they had in their prior location. Most seniors were low on inclusion, fearful or mindful of allowing outsiders and non-relatives into their actual apartment. However, many residents feeling fit and able enough were happy to be able to engage in the commons areas. This was increased when friends from prior residence also lived in the building. Engagement remained high but inclusion was typically reserved for family and caretakers. One respondent from the high-rise apartments, Dorris, claimed,

I like it because the peoples are nice here. We have lots of activities here. They take us shoppin’ once a month, to Wal-Mart and Dollar Tree. We do so much….hold on one minute…This is my calendar. They gives you something to do… I work on [the second floor]. I work, I do the bulletin board down there. Put up different activities and when we gonna do things. And I’m the floor monitor up here. And I talk to a lot of the people and I always tell ‘em, “Do you need,” I ask ‘cause some of these peoples here are real old. I say, “Would you like me to go down to the laundry?” We have our own laundromat in the building. I would go down there and help them, I’m a little more able than they are. And I’ve gotten attached to real one, one real old lady. And she think she can’t move, “M---, will you come and help me do this?” “Yes ma’am, I’ll be right there Miss P---.

For seniors reportedly becoming more isolated, moving to apartments or houses further out of Atlanta, engagement was severely limited and in some cases diminished completely due to
being physically incapable of leaving by themselves, losing services such as MARTA bus or handicap services they once depended on to take them out in public, and due to friends and family moving too far away. For these individuals, low inclusion and low engagement might have been forced upon them. Like younger respondents they may have ended up in a complex or neighborhood where neighbors are less likely to engage with others. As one respondent, Irene, claims,

Got to get where… where I can have somebody help me with different things. And so, no, I ain’t gonna stay here. Now, I may stay a couple more years or so, like I said, for the time being, but I ain’t gonna make this my, my home… It’s too far away and here, too, I got have somebody help me in different things that I need to be done. So, I’m going back, back, back up the road. Because the children can get to me more, more better because, see, I’m so far out, them children can’t come to see me like they used to…No, no, no, not like when I was up through Herndon Homes or Grady Homes. So, I’m going, I’m going back up the road.

In terms of avoiding stigma post-relocation, many long term residents seemed unaffected by their prior residence and how people perceive public housing. In general, if people had negative thoughts about public housing these individuals would have noted the disrespect immediately and dismissed these neighbors in turn. When we asked if their neighbors knew they had lived in public housing they replied, “Yes, because we told them.” In terms of whether neighbors had negative thoughts about Section 8, one respondent, Henry, said,

Some of the people think that we are just, ya’ll just downcast… (laughs). I got the last laugh… (laughs) I do. I really do. They got their nose turned up at me and just tickles me all over…Because they feel like they have a right. They got a good job. They got a big car, big car note, insurance and all that they payin’. They end up dying, dying an early death. I know a lot of them got great big houses, and don’t even got a chance to enjoy them. Cause they are so busy trying to pay for it. Stress. Going to a doctor, paying the doctor. I don’t go through that. So why should I?

Short term respondents on the other hand varied as to whether or not they disclosed their prior residence was public housing or if their current residence was slated as Section 8 housing.
Those responding “no” reported their neighbors only knew if they happened to know the house itself was Section 8 property, perhaps through the landlord, or if possibly another neighbor from their prior residence also moved into the neighborhood. Others claimed they were unsure of whether their neighbors knew and typically responded by saying neighbors would only know you came from public housing if you “acted ghetto.” As one respondent, Cathy, said, “So, like I said, I just generally keep to myself. And you know, I guess if you come from the neighborhood, they don’t really see, if you don’t act like you came from the neighborhood, they won’t really see you as coming from there. And I try not to, if I can help it.”

While many short term residents also downplayed stigma from being in public housing, some respondents reported feeling fearful of management due to their status as Section-8. Though these respondents claimed to be less concerned about what neighbors thought, some felt management might report them to AHA if they had issues, causing them to lose their voucher. Though unspoken, this fear might also limit overall social interaction with neighbors to decrease the possibility of negative reports going to management and then to AHA. One respondent, Frances, explained,

I don’t know they just have so many stricter rules, you know, you be scared to do anything ‘cause you think somebody gonna run and tell them or they’ll call Housing and tell Housing you got a house full of people, you got this you got that. See they look for you to do something when you’re on Section 8 so they can call housing on you.

Further, while short term respondents claimed they did not care or worry about public housing stigma, stigma did bother them to some degree as noted by one respondent, Vanessa, overhearing people talking negatively about Section 8 while on her bus ride to work. She explained,

But people on the bus know…They go tell, ‘I heard they moving all these (?) with vouchers.’ Well as long as you take care of it, as long as you take care of your
place and treat it like you want it. So, you know, but you hear people on the bus, that was just one time. I was workin' then. I didn't say nothing, I was just sitting there listenin', they were just talkin' about it. I don't know know, but they talkin'. They ain't no different, they might be low-income, people just laugh, make them feel better, which they not, so. Yeah, so I was just sitting there listening.

Though the comment was not about her, she realized negative perceptions of the relocations could affect her, should the government decide to end Section 8 vouchers. This fear again could limit interaction to minimize negative perceptions at large.

Lastly, post-relocation those respondents with children claimed more interaction with neighbors, so long as other children were present in the neighborhood. Where no children were present, respondents’ children were reportedly bored or were taken outside of the neighborhood to interact with relatives or to attend institutions like The Boys and Girls Club. According to one respondent, Tiffany,

I mean, they don't have a playground, you know. They have parks in this area, but they don't have an immediate playground in the apartment complex. So the kids really don't have much to do other than argue, you know, ride their bike. And you know, it's kinda boring. But it's kinda good because by me being such a hard worker and you know, I really don't socialize with a lot of people, I think it's good for me because I kinda like the quietness, but sometimes I want it to be a little alive and it doesn't get like that over here.

Where residents without children and with low inclusion/low engagement prior to relocation moved to a neighborhood with children they claimed low place attachment and low engagement after moving. Where respondents moved to neighborhoods with no children they claimed high place attachments, but similar low engagements. One respondent, Sheila, said,

There ain’t hardly no children around here…The [neighbors are] all right. Like I said, when I seen my neighbors, they just spoke with a…. The lady next door there, she, uh, introduced us to her children. She’s an older lady. And, uh, I see her every now and then, you know. We’ll speak and ask, ‘how you doing?’ And, you know, she just go her way and I go my way.
CONCLUSION

From the open coding and axial coding, I summarize that the elements of place, community and neighboring actions working best to explain declines in neighborhood social interaction for relocated residents are zones of action, level of integration and need fulfillment, and levels of engagement and inclusion. Each of these variables is central to the explanation of why interaction appears to decline for relocated residents and each works in connection to the other variables. Central to the finding of open- and axial-coding analysis is the reality that the roles people play after relocation, the boundaries they assume, and the sense of community they develop depends heavily upon their experience in their neighborhoods prior to moving. This means that the impact of exogenous neighborhood characteristics experienced in public housing neighborhoods and communities is not immediately diminished when residents enter into their new surroundings.

Through these findings, the theoretical gap in neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage frameworks is bridged. Being low-income, with limited mobility, and surrounded by predominantly female-headed households does not determine whether or not you interact with neighbors, how far you are willing to travel in the neighborhood, or how much you take part in community affairs; instead, these exogenous neighborhood characteristics work to determine the formats interaction in the neighborhood will assume, the consequences of moving across certain zones, and the outcomes of being connected to the community. The result of these formats, consequences, and outcomes of neighborhood action and interaction are the overall levels of social organization experienced by neighborhood residents. After relocation, the expectations residents have acquired concerning how people act/react, where you can or cannot go, and what you can expect from the neighborhood does not instantly disappear for relocated residents. Residents’
experiences post-move will continue to mirror the rational structures they used to navigate life in public housing neighborhoods and communities until the scenes demand different role-play, boundary work, and attention to community affairs.

The capacity for assessing and adapting to different social interaction demands varies greatly between different resident groups. Residents are found to have more social interactions with their new neighbors if role, setting, and scene expectations align with their prior expectations. Where expectations of who to interact with and where interaction occurs do not align, those who are more willing and able to adapt to new forms of interaction will find more success in engaging in neighborhood social interactions compared to those who are not willing or able to adapt. What remains then is to develop an understanding of why resident groups might differ in their reactions to new forms of neighborhood social interaction.

In Chapter 7, I use selective coding methods to examine how five ideal types of residents address interpretive components of neighborhood interactions. The interpretive components of actor-, setting-, and scene-based interaction, under observation are appearance, manner, scripts, teamwork, role-play, boundaries, front stage/back stage, decorum, and stigma. I examine each of these components against residents’ narrative summaries of rational actions to develop a more thorough explanation of how social interaction is affected across relocation for different resident groups. Through this examination I am better able to answer why resident groups differ in their ability and willingness to adapt to new forms of role-play, venture into new settings, and become involved in community affairs.
CHAPTER 7: SELECTIVE CODING

INTRODUCTION

In the final coding section, selective coding, I examine how both rational structures and interpretive components are involved in determining residents’ levels of social interaction between new neighbors post-relocation. In the axial coding stages of Chapter 6, I find residents’ preferred zones of action, level of engagement and inclusion, and level of integration and need fulfillment provide the rational structures for their chosen level of neighborhood social interaction. However, these rational structures cannot account for all of the differences that persist in residents’ social interaction with neighbors. Using selective coding methods, I apply the analysis of interpretive strategies to elicit a narrative summary for why resident groups either do or do not interact with their new neighbors after relocation. I designate five ideal-type resident groups based on original housing type (senior vs. mixed use), post-move housing choice, and levels of engagement and inclusion. Based on the narrative summaries of the five ideal-type resident groups, I am able to make theoretical hypotheses regarding how key variables affect neighborhood social interaction post-relocation.

I conclude this chapter with a discussion of why the quantitative findings reveal a decrease in social interaction measures of giving and receiving help from neighbors, despite reported increases in social cohesion and community attachment after relocation. I argue that the findings from the combined qualitative components of this study suggest multiple patterns of social interaction are occurring, which the quantitative study cannot detect. Rather than social interaction declining for the whole sample, only certain groups are exhibiting a decline, while other groups maintain the same levels of social interaction, or even increase their levels of interacting in the neighborhood. Treating the public housing residents as a uniform group obscures key differ-
rences and therefore generates outcomes that appear contradictory. I also argue that low interaction is in part the outcome of a mismatch between the ideal type groups of residents and their ideal-type neighborhoods. I close by suggesting future studies do more to differentiate between ideal types of residents and extend this line of research using incorporating interactional-level data whereby the residents’ neighbors are also interviewed.

**SELECTIVE CODING**

As shown in Chapter 6, determining the rational structural narratives for relocated residents reveals the underlying variables affecting social interaction in new neighborhoods. Whether or not someone ever leaves the house, allows people inside their home, goes outside to take part in activities, or whether or not someone can access the people and resources necessary for need fulfillment all serve as rational explanations for limitations to social interaction in the neighborhood. By continuing to apply an interaction-based framework to these central narratives, interpretive factors of social interaction referenced in respondents’ interviews can also be examined. Interpretive frameworks help to explain less-tangible factors affecting residents’ choices of whether or not to interact with neighbors.

To provide a framework for reporting these distinctions in response categories, I present the analysis in this section around five ideal types of relocated residents: residents of senior housing moving to new high-rises, residents of senior housing moving to smaller senior facilities, residents of senior housing moving into single unit apartments and houses, residents of mix-use housing reporting high levels of engagement pre-move, and residents of mix-use housing reporting low-levels of engagement pre-move. Tester et al. (2011) found significant differences between residents of senior and mix-use housing in terms of community and place attachments to prior public housing neighborhoods. They found significant positive associations between social
support and attachments for residents in senior housing (Tester et al. 2011). For my study, the differences in housing categories are used to highlight the differences in residents’ experiences in relocation. The senior housing categories were developed to reflect social interaction outcomes for these residents were dependent mostly upon where seniors relocated to. Mix-use housing categories were developed to reflect social interaction outcomes for these residents were dependent mostly upon how these residents approached social interaction with neighbors prior to relocation. These ideal types are not exact categorical distinctions, but instead are developed out of groupings of residents’ similar responses to both the rational and interpretive components of neighborhood social interaction.

Senior Housing Groups

Looking first at the mass relocated seniors, a best-case scenario was reported by most. For these seniors, a sense of community was in part maintained as a result of moving with familiar friends, and in part was reconstructed by forward-thinking management of the new high-rises. These relocated seniors were very happy on the whole, feeling the relocation was scary and stressful at first, but overall AHA had treated them well and had even improved their lives. According to one respondent, Dorris,

It was good because once they start taking us around, let us look at different places, I said, ‘Okay, that’s mean I don’t have to get out on my own and go look unless I want to’… [and I did not feel stressed] ‘cause they would take so many in a group. And okay, like A---- is here, she’s coming from Roosevelt. E----- is here, he’s from the Roosevelt. M---- is here, she’s from the Roosevelt. You know, different ones all wanted to stay together.

For the mass-relocated group, social interaction in terms of level of engagement in commons areas and attending social events was high for those physically capable of attending and taking part. Further, the management of these residences reportedly took measures to ensure in-
Integration and need fulfillment was provided for, by providing common spaces for integration to occur and by establishing services such as weekly trips to the grocery store and general stores and organizing buses to transport residents to local church services. For this group of seniors, zones of action reportedly remained unchanged, levels of integration and need fulfillment were either unchanged or increased, and levels of engagement were either unchanged or increased. Across relocation, levels of inclusion were unchanged primarily due to a continued limited sense of security in allowing other non-relatives or non-caretakers into their apartments.

For seniors moved on their own to smaller senior facilities, zones of action were lower than the mass-relocated seniors due to fewer reports of scheduled outings. Reported levels of engagement were lower for these seniors than for the mass-relocated seniors due to fewer friends living in the facility. For the seniors in smaller facilities, the common rooms and front rooms served as their primary daily engagement and interaction, and visits from family and caretakers served as their only accounts of inclusion. While some were okay with their relocation, others felt dissatisfied and planned to move again in the near future. In these smaller senior facilities more instances of complaints against management and services occurred including an overall decreased sense of integration and need fulfillment as compared to prior residences. One respondent, Irene exclaimed, “They just sorry about doing they work. I called them down here [to fix something] and they still didn’t clean up good like they should have.”

For seniors relocated out to single unit apartments and houses, zones of action were generally reported as being limited to the apartment or home, especially if health or physical ability were limiting factors. Outings were limited to getting groceries, going to church, and visiting the doctor. Integration and need fulfillment was reportedly decreased as friends living in the neighborhood had diminished completely and kin living in the area was limited. Reported place at-
tachment for these individuals was mixed to low and sense of community was typically non-existent. With no interaction with neighbors, both inclusion and engagement were reportedly decreased. While a few residents reported desires to move again, these residents also reported difficulties in moving again due to lack of finances, assistance, and/or physical ability. One physically handicapped respondent, Sherry, explained,

No. Um, I thought I was gonna get a downstairs apartment because I had asked the lady, I said, y’all don’t have a downstairs apartment, but this was, when she showed me this apartment. I asked her, I said, “I thought y’all was gonna give me a downstairs because I have a wheelchair.” See, every once in a while, I have problems with my hip, and it makes it unbearable to walk…I called the rental office and asked them, “do you have a downstairs apartment?” She said, ‘yes, we do.’ I said, ‘is it possible I could move into a downstairs apartment?’ She said, “Well, that means, you would have to go through the same process as you did with this apartment.” And, you know, getting a voucher, I have to wait a year before I can get the voucher.

In terms of interpretive components of interaction, seniors in all settings were usually highly aware of the appearance and manners of others, especially within the setting of the building or apartment complex. If someone was not a resident, their appearance and manner were used to denote if they were employees (or somehow connected with the staff or building) or if they were a visitor. If deemed visitors, appearance and manner were used by residents to denote if people actually belonged in the building (such as visiting family or caretakers) or if they were trespassers, drug dealers, or prostitutes. According to one respondent, Dorris,

Several peoples have had prostitutes comin’ in and out. But they got out too. Management put them out too…Because you can see the same traffic comin’ in on the camera. In and out, in and out…They knew who the girls was. And they put a check on the apartment. And they see where they was going. They tells you the first time, the second time, you out. And that have really cleared up.

If someone was a resident of the building, respondents noted using general appearance and manner to determine if the person was mentally stable, needed to be avoided or in need of
assistance. In these ways appearance and manner of others dictated safe versus unsafe interaction in the building or complex.

Outside the building or within apartment complexes, appearance and manner were noted in terms of what types of people living in the residence, and also helped distinguish residents from non-residents and trespassers. For a few senior residents coming from family units pre-relocation, the appearance and manner of neighbors was reportedly changed, with fewer reports of youth and gang members and fewer reports of people appearing dangerous. In terms of their own appearance, few reported on this, but were typically males, and they claimed family members helped them with their appearance and would check on them to make sure they looked okay and were presentable for public. One respondent, Donald, explained about how his sister took care of him saying,

They move me out of there. Didn’t want me over there. Because I’d get in trouble, you know. Wasn’t doing what I was supposed to do, you know. If they said I let myself go down, looking wild looking. Wasn’t taking care of my health. Tell me that I’m over the hill, but they trying to show me they care about me. “Look at how old I am but I’m still your brother and your sister. You don’t need to look like that,” see what I’m saying? See, she over here now, care how I look, put grease on my arms, I be shined up all that kind of stuff. I find, you know, the other day too, that’s a sister for you too. Doesn’t want me to be ashy looking. Most sisters don’t care how you look, “Ain’t my brother, I don’t care.”

For seniors in high-rises, scripted interaction and teamwork would typically involve neighbors on the hall or floor, front desk workers, and people sitting out in front of the building. Daily and weekly routine was a large part of the reported interaction. For some residents this routine involved an actual printed calendar of scheduled events, such as dinners, sponsored classes, or dances, and trips to the store, churches, or field trip outings. For those living in apartments and houses, scripted interaction was limited to mangers, maintenance, and neighbors. Overall, these interactions were less routine and less formalized and might be as limited as saying hello or
good bye at certain times of the day or waving as individuals passed by. Teamwork for seniors was high for those moved with friends into high-rise buildings, but was diminished for most others. Those relocated with fewer friends either drew upon new staff and other residents to provide routine exchanges and interactions or they withdrew from teamwork-style interactions completely. One respondent from a senior living facility, Marilyn, commented, “No, I ain’t made a friend to go back and forth. No, I haven’t did that, but when we meet in the streets and things, we speak. Sometimes you need to ask a question, or something about something. But you just keep on going.”

Role-play for seniors in most senior facilities was based on stability and routine. Many younger seniors explained the older seniors needed the stability to provide a sense of security and to keep them from becoming afraid. This was reportedly most important for those with memory loss and mental instability. One respondent, Virginia, claimed,

And I, going to the daycare, I made beads, I make necklaces. And, uh, every week, I make a bunch. And I give ‘em to the lady in the back, that runs the back that people with memory loss. I give ‘em to her so she can give ‘em out to those back there that win bingo, you know. And boy, they love ‘em. They love ‘em, you know. And then those in the front, I make different ones and I just give ‘em to ‘em.

Role-play was focused on calm and cheerful interactions with staff and residents, and decreased interaction with non-residents within the building. Visitors to high-rises were asked to either remain in residents’ apartments or in designated areas of the building so as not to cause alarm or worry to any residents. One respondent, Gladys, explained how the areas were off limits to outsiders claiming,

Oh no,[that area is not for families and] the outsiders. They for people that, when people do – well, we don’t use that. We use the… auditorium. When there’s some, some people come in, bring their food. We use the auditorium. But we used to use the garden when people come in, bring up [food]. People always come in here and bring us food, feeding us.
Residents’ role-play with outsiders was limited by the extent of their zones of actions. Some senior residents reported large zones of action spanning the city, and in turn reported a greater variety in role-play interaction. For those seniors living in apartments or houses role-play was often determined by other (typically younger) residents in the complexes and neighborhoods and was possibly limited by management rules, for example rules regulating how many chairs a resident can have on the porch areas, or rules forbidding barbequing and social drinking in the complex. According to one respondent, Ruby,

[T]hey had passed out some papers, when I was talking about the gatherings, saying you can’t have but one chair on the porch. But I got two chairs out there because don’t nobody sit back there…And if you got four peoples on the porch, they say it’s a gathering. I said, a gathering? They don’t want you to have nobody on the porch? You can’t talk to nobody? You gotta take them – it’s too hot to sit up in the house. I don’t want to burn my air. They don’t pay my light bill. I want to sit outdoors… You can’t barbeque in the front, that’s a rule. You got to barbeque in the back…oh, you can’t have your door open. I said, who want to have their door open but no screen door? Sometimes I open my door, let the air breeze in, let the windows up. But when I see them coming, I close it.

The setting boundaries were key factors in determining the type and extent of interaction for seniors. Those in high-rises or smaller senior facilities often had security doors and front door attendants to keep out trespassers and prevent unwanted interactions with other unsanctioned guests, such as prostitutes and drug dealers. In apartment complexes, front gates, management, and maintenance workers serve as boundaries from strangers on foot or in cars. Though these barriers are not as foolproof as the security doors, they do serve as purposeful barriers to social interaction with non-neighbors. One respondent, Selena, refused to open the gates for others claiming,

If they come up to that gate – see, you can come to that gate and you can all me from that gate. And I can let you in from in here, you know. And if they don’t know the gate number, because they’ll try to – they’ll call me and ‘My such and such and somebody live in there.’ ‘Okay.’ One boy called me one night thinking
I’m stupid. He, ‘My old lady, I live in the B Building,’ he said. ‘I live in the B Building.’ And he said, ‘Uh my wife didn’t give me any, the gate number. She don’t know it. Will you let me in?’ I hung my phone up. I said you live up in here, you know how to get in that gate. I don’t…Because you don’t know what peoples coming up in here to do, you know. You let somebody come through that gate and they go up in here and shoot somebody or something. That’s on you. And see, I’m not going to do it. Uh-uh.

In terms of front-stage/backstage interactions, for seniors in high-rises and facilities, backstage is usually the entire apartment, but for some (with caretakers or visiting family) backstage is limited to their bedrooms. For many seniors in facilities, front stage begins when they step outside of their apartment door. However, for these individuals, maintenance and management have a large degree of admittance into apartments and rooms, often noted by residents. This reported concern with intrusion into backstage areas existed in pre-move residences as well. As one respondent, Henry, commented, “Cause I lost some of my -- the staff, some of the staff, some of the management had keys and the maintenance had keys, came in my place they got my albums - some of my albums. And my silver and my gold, stuff like that.”

For those living in apartments, maintenance and management do have access to dwelling spaces, but these residents reported few instances or fear of intrusion. Those living in houses reported no worry about landlords coming into their homes without permission, a change leading to increased backstage freedom post-move. For these individuals in houses and apartments, the entire unit had the potential to serve as backstage unless guests were expected, and then the bedrooms became the back stage, while living rooms and kitchens became front stage regions. In discussing the difference between front stage and backstage, one respondent, Donald, said, “I lock my door…I sleep fine. I just come in here [living room], eat good, then go get back in my bed, look at that TV, and then knocked out. Or come in here, get in that chair, and eat ice cream and cake, go to sleep you know. I ain’t got no problem.”
For these individuals, front stages primarily exists either outside the front door for apartment dwellers or in the front yard for those in houses. Those with houses seemed to have a better stage for engaging in neighborhood social interaction, while those in apartments only had parking lots or the management offices, not visited with great frequency. Having a designated front stage space also seemed critical in having new neighbors initiate social interaction with these seniors. According to one respondent, Sandra,

But you know, coming back up that hill doesn’t bother me. It feels good, you know. I can walk up hills before I get kinda tired, I have shortness of breath sometime. But uh, I haven’t got out to walk around, you know. I catch my neighbor, Sammy, next door, he tells me who’s who. Mostly, you know, some of the people’s he’s met. And then the man across, well the neighbors across over there, they wave ‘cause we sit out on the porch a lot. They wave, so.

Seniors backstage areas were most usually the only spaces where decorum was in their control, due to management or maintenance being in charge of front stage upkeep, decoration, and arrangement. Having been invited into the homes of nearly every resident in the sample on at least one occasion, I can say most seniors in the high-rises had a similar sense of decorum. While some had more material possessions than others, many seniors displayed their belongings on shelves and upon the walls, like trophies. Countertops might be overrun with mail and pill bottles and bric-a-brac but the sitting areas were typically well kept and arranged in an orderly fashion. One resident, Earl explained that while outside was beyond his control, inside, or backstage, was his sanctuary. “I'm not afraid to go outside the sanctuary. Believe me I do, I go outside every day. But… [I] want to be in spaces that are good spaces, clean. I can't always be there in that space, but for me, that's the way I focus in.”

Only in a few residences, where seniors lived in houses, did residents seem unconcerned with decorum. These residents were also more likely to have other relatives staying with them or visiting often, and were more likely to have smokers present in the house. Overall, while seniors
typically reported they did not invite others into their back stage areas, they seem well-prepared in case someone should inspect back stage, as if they were actually expecting company the whole time.

As a group, seniors were least affected by stigma of having lived in public housing or for receiving government assistance, due to normalizing belief most seniors receive some form of financial assistance. When asked if anyone would have negative thoughts about recipients of housing vouchers, one respondent, Dorris, claimed, “No, they won’t. You’re right about that. And I feel like everybody here is getting it. Or either they wouldn’t be there.” Seniors in apartments and houses reported being slightly worried about management or neighbors affecting their voucher status, and those reports were in connection to disruption caused by visiting family, such as noisy grandchildren. One respondent, Sherry, explained how her neighbor complained about her grandchild making too much noise and said,

And see, right now, at this point right now, I live above somebody. And I understand, you know, the noise and everything because I have to deal with them. I understand what she’s saying and everything because my grandson, he is, he has heavy feet, and he does have the tendency to run because he’s only three years old, and it’s hard to keep a three-year-old, to make him sit down and stay down ‘cause they’re gonna get up regardless of you telling them to sit down, they gone get up anyway. But it’s, it’s been kind of hard because this stuff, when, when, when he runs, the stuff comes down in her apartment… And she has complained…And then, and she done went to the rental office on me.

Seniors also reported less fear than residents of mixed-use housing of being forced to move again in the near future, though some voiced a desire to move on their own. One respondent, Virginia, claimed, “What I like about living here is having a roof over my head, and that is it. That is it. That, just not being outdoors and not having to live with my daughter. But having someplace that I can all home. [So I’m looking for a new place]. Yes, I really am. I really am.”
Seniors’ levels of reported social interaction were relatively stable across relocation due in part to the structural stability for those moving from one high-rise to another, keeping familiar friends and neighbors, and having integration and need fulfillment options made explicitly available to them. Further, the appearance, manners, scripts, and teamwork remained highly similar to their original residences in public housing. Likewise, seniors’ anticipated role play remained similar, and in some cases became less-chaotic, as the setting, boundaries, and front stage/backstage interactions were better enforced in new locations. One senior respondent, Dorris, claimed,

> Now we have cameras on the elevator, you have to sign in, you have to show ID to get in. You have to tell what floor and apartment you going to... Yes. So now I feel real good. The cameras are here and security are here. They’re not here during the day. They comes in at five in the afternoon and they’re here ‘till six in the morning. And they’re here 24 hours on weekends, Saturdays and Sundays.

However, not all seniors managed to make this best-case transition. Seniors reporting low zones of action and having lost friends, familiar settings, and access to need fulfillment in the move typically reported limiting social interaction in the new residences. Lack of set boundaries allowed for unknown and possibly unsafe actors to enter the scene, and lack of designated front stage areas and restrictions on role-play in the scene diminished the ability for residents to meet neighbors or for neighbors to initiate interaction with the senior residents. According to Virginia,

> And it’s only a few ‘round here that are in wheelchairs. And they can’t get up and walk. They can’t get up out of their chair and do what they want to do. I’m the only one here, no, it’s myself and a gentleman, that has his, just his foot amputated, you know. And um, myself with my leg, you know... The way they talk, they goin’ from apartment to apartment and I was raised in a home and I’ve lived in homes so many, so much to the point where I’m just, [I] don’t want apartment living but I got to be here. And my daughter is tryin’ to find a home that’s got a mother-in-law suite in the back.
Therefore despite low stigma, and high attention to appearance, manner, and decorum, senior residents moved into single unit dwellings have more rational and interpretive limitations on neighborhood social interaction compared to seniors living in high-rise units.

**Mixed-Use Housing Groups**

Residents from mix-use housing form two key groups for social interaction based on high or low levels of engagement and inclusion pre-move. Despite reports of increased place attachment and a sincere relief they had escaped the violence prevalent in their prior complexes, mix-use residents reporting being highly inclusive of neighbors, or highly engaged with neighbors and community members pre-move were negatively affected after moving in terms of social interaction. This group most commonly reported increased isolation, boredom, and a sense of loss with regards to prior community. Those reporting the largest zone of action prior to moving reported more frequently they missed friends and community activities, and reported larger decreases in social interaction than other respondents. Most often these individuals had been long term residents (or if technically short term at the time of the study, had actually lived in other public housing at some time prior), were typically younger than other respondents, and had children permitted to play in the public housing common areas. Post-relocation, the previously high engagement/high inclusion mix-use residents also reported decreased integration and need fulfillment from the neighborhood setting, both for themselves and their children, due to perceived lack of resources. A typical response follows what this respondent, Jaqueline, claimed with regards to the move and her children,

Well, got scared when people was shooting and everybody was running, trying to get home. You know, hoping no more stray bullets hit them. But otherwise, they played with everybody. They had a good time. They liked it. I think they liked Bowen Homes better than they like it over here...Because they had more stuff to do. You know, because the library was there… Library. Went to the library at
school. You know, right with the playground. No playground around here. Not a lot of kids around here.

Residents of mix-use housing reporting low engagement/low inclusion pre-move, were overall less affected in terms of changes to their zones of action in the neighborhood or amount of friends living in the neighborhood, and reported no overt sense of loss of community post-relocation. While post-move this group did not report increases in neighborhood social interaction, they also did not report decreases in social interaction. The majority of these respondents were short term residents in public housing, were typically older than other respondents, and either had adult children or no children living with them in public housing. Further, these individuals were more likely to continue with pre-move action patterns associated with low zones of neighborhood action and non-membership. For example, this group was more likely to seek integration and need fulfillment from sources outside of their neighborhoods and communities, such as at work, in church, or in external community centers. When asked if she knew anyone from her new neighborhood one respondent, Caroline, replied, “Uh-uh, uh-uh. I didn’t know nobody. ’Cause I don’t get out, I just go to work and I come. I just see people gettin' off the bus. It's a lot of new peoples, you know. People move in and move out.”

In terms of interpretive components of neighborhood social interaction, the two mix-use groups are distinct. The high engagement/high inclusion group of residents from mix-use housing was more likely to report the appearance and manner of new neighbors as being different from themselves and their children. For some in this group, the focus on appearance was instigated by their new neighbors, not themselves, and could be the cause for feeling isolated, left out, or looked down upon. Neighbors were reported as being stuck up and snobbish about their differences in appearance in some cases and as “just normal people” in other cases. Some younger respondents from this group did focus on their own appearance and claimed how one is
dressed sends a message of who they are and whether you can interact with them or not; this was reportedly carried over from pre-relocation where in some instances style and color of clothes, shoes, and apparel and tattoos could denote what area you were from and what groups you might belong to. One respondent, Nikia, explained,

> Like they could tell you on Section 8 or they could tell where you come from 'cause how you act, how you dress – loud talking, that music, how you keep traffic in and out your house, how you keep your house. That's how they can put a label on you, “Oh, she just moved from the projects. She’s on Section 8 now.” You know, they never put no label on me ‘cause I’m a very clean person. I have no traffic in and out my house, just my boys. I dress nice, you know. I don’t talk out loud. If I do talk out loud, it’s only for my son.

With regards to mannerisms, both younger and older residents in this group were overall highly sensitive to the mannerisms of new neighbors. A common theme in the pre-move setting was nobody had anything extra or more than anyone else and thus had no ability to look down on another person for material possessions. But post-move, the difference in resources is made apparent and those “without” report feeling put down by both adults and children in the new neighborhoods. Further, a sense of confusion exists concerning how their new neighbors act; a genuine lack of understanding of why their neighbors feel they have the right to judge them.

The low engagement/low inclusion group of residents from mix-use housing was more aware of how their neighbors appeared and acted, and if possible these residents attempted to either blend in with or avoid new neighbors. While clothing and automobile options may be limited for residents in this group, mannerisms such as patterns of speech and scripted dialogue and role-play could be duplicated. If neighbors were polite and wanted to interact outside, these residents complied. If neighbors simply waved and moved on, they did the same. According to one respondent, Tameka,

> I don't carry myself like that, you know what I'm saying? I'm very quiet, you know, I clean my yard. I make sure ain't no trash out there and stuff like that, so.
They probably do [know I’m on voucher], but I don’t carry myself like that, you know, to be like very, like, you know, loud, you know, when my brothers be over here, we be in the house or we be in the backyard, you know what I’m saying? I don't be loud, I don't let the dogs use it her lawn, so you know what I’m saying? I, they, probably do have opinions, but I have, you know what I’m saying, did my part to make them feel that way.

Fairly high levels of engagement could be reported, such as being asked to watch a neighbors’ house or checking on mail or alarm systems while they are away, but these interactions were most often initiated by the new neighbors. Teamwork for this group was limited as residents’ friends had always existed in other locations beyond the neighborhood, such as work, church or community centers elsewhere. Again Tameka claimed,

But here, you barely, you know, you barely even see the neighbors unless something's going on…If was, like, if I left for the weekend, I could trust my house all right here because they gonna watch out for my house. As well as I watch out for them when they gone. I, especially her, she never is really there. So, you know what I mean? If she had the alarm, the alarm comes to her phone? She call me, go walk around. My brother here, he’ll go walk around to make sure everything's all right, you know. She feelin’ safer that we here too because her house is all right.

Scripts for the high/engagement/high inclusion groups could be frustrating as they had become limited post-relocation to only speaking in the front yard or in passing. Where pre-move, scripts for this group might have been common place amongst all neighbors, now scripted interaction is mostly reserved for family and friends coming to visit, or for people knowing how to interact. But for most residents in this group, teamwork and scripts have been limited by the loss of friends living in the neighborhood. These residents cannot be themselves around many people in the neighborhood. This leads to confusion and conflict in role play. According to one respondent, Helen,

Um, my neighbors…they don’t even wave. I don’t know them because they’re not social at all…They’re older. Mhmm. They’re older, so I don’t know if they’re afraid and have been traumatized by the neighborhood or whatever, but in my mind I think that’s what’s going on, ‘cause they don’t even wave ‘hey’ or nothin’ like that, so now I don’t even bother. I just…nobody’s there.
Prior to moving, role-play or scene interaction for high engagement/high inclusion residents could have consisted of hanging out on a porch or on a nearby car, or walking around the neighborhood, but now such actions as hanging out on a car or walking the neighborhood could draw attention in negative ways. Further, if and when friends from the prior neighborhoods come to visit, these residents report feeling the need to restrain or redirect interaction inside in order to limit conflict between visitors and new neighbors or management. These reported conflicts were based on differences in role-play expectations and perceived mannerisms of new neighbors and management, whereby visitors received unwanted negative attention for hanging out or took offense to the mannerisms of the residents’ new neighbors. For example, one respondent, Kiana, shared a story where she worried that her cousin might assault her neighbor for being rude. She said,

That lady caused a problem with our driveway, you can tell it’s our driveway. She was like, “I was parking here before y’all moved here.” Okay, that was before we moved here, you gotta move your car now, it’s not our fault that you didn’t get a driveway. So like she was just doing it and my cousin, he don’t care, you know there’s certain people who don’t care what they say to people and what they do and he just don’t care. But he like, “since my auntie just moved here, I’m gonna just play it cool,” and “can you please just move your car?”

Role-play for low engagement/low inclusion residents was similar to role-play of the new neighbors and was usually limited to sitting on the porch quietly, saying hello or good-bye in passing, or simple small talk in the front yard. These individuals were less likely to have friends over and were less likely to have small children visit and disturb routine role-play in the neighborhood.

In terms of decorum the high engagement/high inclusion group was the least uniform overall. I have visited houses with very nice structures, kept very nice outside and inside by residents, but I have also visited similar nice structures kept very messy on the front porches and
outside areas and where the inside were strewn with trash, toys, and food and even some with holes literally punched in the walls. I have also visited homes where the structures were lacking or run-down overall, where the residents had cleaned them up and kept all personal items as orderly as possible, or had decorated the inside of their homes to the best of their abilities.

For this group, front stage and back stage areas were more aligned with how inclusive the residents were, due to a lack of formal boundaries like security doors. High engagement residents living in apartments perceived the front gates as boundaries, but were also more likely than low engagement residents to detail what existed beyond those gates. In terms of neighborhood boundaries most high engagement residents established boundaries where they might walk to but these distances were fairly limited compared to their boundaries in prior residences. Like Kiana said,

> It’s a nice neighborhood to stay in but I don’t like everything because it’s so far away, like walking. I don’t got a problem with walking but some of that stuff be too far. You don’t want to leave ‘cause you gotta walk back or something. Ain’t nothing but houses. That’s it. There ain’t nothing to do out here.

In terms of decorum, the low inclusion/low engagement group reported they kept their surroundings clean and neat, so as not to draw any unwanted attention from neighbors and landlords or management. Like one respondent, Rosalyn, said, “I kept my apartment like I kept this place. Nice and neat and clean. Didn’t have any problem. Management didn’t have any problems out of me.” This decorum was not reported as a desire to be tidy in case company dropped by. For most of these individuals, front stage interactions with neighbors occurred outside and were reported as occurring either in the driveway, front yard area, or in the street. One respondent, Ruby, said,

> I just see them … majority of the time, we see them on the weekend, when we sitting out there, and they sitting in their yard. I’ll go over there and sit with them. And we’ll discuss what we going to cook or what we going to do.
Back stage interactions occurred within the house, and transforming interior into front stage was reserved for family members and management/landlord or maintenance only when necessary. One respondent, Nikia, commented on how having a nice home had increased family dropping by for inside visits and functions. “In Bowen Homes, [grandma] came over there like three times. Now, she’s coming over here for the parties, for the cook-out. I’m like, ‘This is so weird.’ My uncle, my uncle, ain’t never came over my house, never. And he came over here, I’m like, ‘Uncle Johnny, what you doing here? In here?’”

Overall, the high engagement/high inclusion group from mix-use housing reported being less affected by prolonged stigma from having lived in public housing, but were the most affected by the initial judgments and responses of new neighbors or management. This group was reportedly more likely to tell neighbors about their former residence in public housing, and was least likely to feel ashamed for living in public housing. These residents also reported being more aware than other groups of whom else in their surrounding areas had also lived in public housing, or were currently receiving section 8 vouchers. Members of this group experienced stigma as being judged unfairly by neighbors. Nikia commented on this topic saying,

Yeah, there’s a lot of people out here from Bankhead, Bowen Homes and some more apartments… Um, I was -- when I found out, I was like, “God, everybody following me, why just I can’t be here by myself?” And then, at first I was like, “Well, you know, we all got to try to go somewhere that’s better.” So you know, I’m okay with it, I’m okay with it. But when I first got here and the lady was like, “Where you from?” And I’m like, “I just moved from Bowen Homes.” They was like (sighs), “Well, here we go.”

The stigma was thus seen as a problem related to the new neighbors and not to themselves. These group members and their own children managed this stigma by avoiding interaction with stigmatizing neighbors and these neighbors’ children. Nikia spoke about neighbors and their children saying, “And they kind of put other kids down. Like, ‘We ain’t got that.’ I tell my
son, ‘Don’t worry about that. We got money. We may not be rich, but we got it. You live good. You got some people out there that’s not even living good.’”

Once relocated into new neighborhoods, members of the low engagement/low inclusion group were less likely to reveal their former public housing status to strangers. This group was also more likely to decrease interaction in the neighborhood to avoid any negative confrontations with management or neighbors possibly jeopardizing their voucher status with AHA. Overall this group reported being affected by the stigma of having lived in public housing, but were less affected by the judgment of others. Members of this group seemed to share negative views of public housing residents and expected their neighbors had these same negative views. They reported they could avoid negative judgments by acting like their new neighbors and not like people from the “ghetto”. As one respondent, Gwen, claimed, “Because see it’s the way I go when I leave out of here. Now, they don’t know whether I’m from the projects, the ghetto, or what. Because the way you carry yourself… I could get out there, clowin’ when they barbeque, they’ll know where I’m from. So I just let ‘em think.”

THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

Through the coding stages, the concepts of zones of action, integration and need fulfillment, and engagement and inclusion emerged. I have dimensionalized these concepts into variables and have made them fit for arranging into theoretical statements regarding neighborhood social interaction. I have also provided a narrative summarization of how these key variables are connected to both the rational and interpretive components of neighborhood social interaction for five ideal type groupings of relocated residents. Through these narrative summarizations and ideal type groupings, I derive simplified statements of how these variables affect relocated residents in general.
First, a positive relationship exists between zones of action, engagement, and integration and need fulfillment. Both pre-move and post-move, as residents’ zones of action extend further into the neighborhood setting, the level of engagement with neighbors increase, increasing integration and need fulfillment in the neighborhood setting. Where early post-relocation place attachment is driven by decreased exposure to violent crime, level of social interaction with neighbors is driven by residents’ level of engagement pre-move and their perceptions of/reactions to new neighbors’ mannerisms upon first interaction. Level of engagement and extended zone of action are critical to increasing sense of community as they are structurally necessary to finding resources. However, resources promoting integration and need fulfillment must be present in the neighborhood or community setting in order for a new sense of community to develop for relocated residents.

Second, a positive relationship exists between level of inclusion and level of integration and need fulfillment for residents with limited zones of action. For residents with zones of action limited to the house and front porch/front room regions, as level of inclusion increases, level of integration and need fulfillment in the neighborhood setting increases. Those residents willing to accept in neighbors or children, (perhaps by letting the neighborhood children come in and play with their own children or by being willing to listen to others and give support) are not required to go out into the neighborhood to attain resources. Those willing to make their home or apartment the setting for front stage interaction can bring the community to them and can achieve membership status without having to go out and engage beyond the boundaries of their own property.

Third, the effects of stigma are connected to interpretive concepts of appearance and mannerisms and do negatively affect social interactions between relocated residents and new
neighbors. Though senior housing groups are less affected by perceived stigma, stigma from new neighbors limits the social interaction for some seniors and all mix-use housing groups. Whether residents avoid interaction with new neighbors to limit possible stigmatizing interactions or residents cease interactions after engaging in stigmatizing interactions, stigma remains a factor in social interaction outcomes. Stigma can decrease role-play with neighbors and lead to limiting zones of action, whereby relocated residents decline front stage interaction or adopt patterns of engaging with others outside of the neighborhood boundaries.

Fourth, I hypothesize first that the residents with high zones of action pre-move experiencing continual low integration and need fulfillment post-relocation, over time will experience decreases in zones of action eventually leading to decreases in levels of engagement in the neighborhood, decreasing neighborhood social interaction in general. If instead these residents experience increased levels of integration and need fulfillment, over time they will increase social interaction with neighbors, use higher levels of engagement to resolve stigmatizing issues, become members of the community, and become influential in shaping community endeavors.

Fifth, I hypothesize that for residents reporting limited zones of action pre-move, level of integration and need fulfillment will be the determining factor in whether or not these residents eventually increase in neighborhood social interaction. If residents only attain low integration and need fulfillment over time, low zones of action and low levels of engagement will continue, keeping neighborhood social interaction for relocated residents at a minimal level. If residents manage to attract resources despite initial low zones of action, over time these residents may be persuaded to extend both their zones of action and their levels of engagement further into the neighborhood setting, increasing sense of community and neighborhood social interaction.
CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to answer the question of why relocated public housing residents measures of social interaction decline while their reports of community attachment to neighborhoods and social cohesion increase. The testimonies provided here expose multiple answers for these outcomes. The first and most predominant explanation for increased community attachment for nearly all residents is that in most cases relocation provided a necessary distancing from daily life-threatening situations. The recurrent themes of gun violence and death that were presented by residents of mixed-use housing projects were astonishing. Even those residents who held high place attachment to their prior dwellings explained that the relocation of residents and the removal of public housing projects were necessary steps to ending the ongoing terror that plagued the lives of all who lived there. Those relocated residents who did not unanimously share this sentiment were for the most part residents relocated from the seniors’ facilities. But while these residents agreed that the relocations were beneficial to increased safety and to their general peace of mind, the residents were not a unified group in terms of their patterns of social interaction with neighbors.

Prior to relocation, residents of public housing differed from one another in a variety of ways with regards to social interaction with neighbors and these differences allowed for several variable outcomes in interaction with new neighbors throughout the early stages of the relocation process. The residents interviewed here revealed differences prior to moving regarding how far into the neighborhood they were willing to go, how willing they were to include neighbors into their lives, and how necessary they believed neighbors and neighborhoods were to the attainment of needed resources for survival. These different attributes carried over into relocation in variety of ways depending on the situation they found themselves in their new neighborhoods.
In best case scenarios, individuals and families longing for positive social interaction found their way into neighborhoods where new neighbors were both forthcoming and eager to accept new members, while those residents seeking isolation found their way into a quiet dwelling place free from the expectations and judgments of strangers. However, due to the seemingly random nature of the relocation process best case scenarios were not always met and reserved individuals found their way into bustling neighborhoods while outgoing residents landed in quiet and boring areas devoid of the contact and interaction they had come to expect in their daily routines. As a result, some residents, best suited to engaging in social interaction with new neighbors, have begun to limit their scope of interaction convinced that their new neighborhoods have nothing of value to offer them, and the isolationists stranded in a thriving urban areas have already planned their next move away from the potential connections to neighbors.

Taking these key factors into consideration provides a better understanding for quantitative facts which suggest contradictory trends in social interaction and community attachment. While the majority of residents were grateful to escape the extremely dangerous lives they led in the housing projects of Atlanta, where they escaped to was not always the best choice for promoting social interaction with neighbors. Residents vary in terms of general sociability, level of inclusivity, preferred level of engagement, level of neediness, and sensitivity and reactivity to new neighbors. Further, some residents were more affected by being separated from close friends and neighbors than were other residents. Therefore relocation into new and better neighborhoods results in varied interaction outcomes for residents determined by the different interpretive and rational strategies residents have learned to employ in the neighboring process.

Throughout this chapter, I establish these key similarities and differences in how early neighborhood social interaction emerge for relocated residents in order to develop ideal type res-
ident groups. By examining the rational and interpretive actions for these ideal type resident groups, I am able to form causal statements about variables and hypotheses regarding relocated residents’ neighborhood social interactions. I find that when residents are willing to enter into the neighborhood setting they are more likely to engage with new neighbors and find needed resources when resources exist. I also find that for residents who are unwilling or physically unable to enter into the neighborhood setting resource attainment and integration can occur if they are willing to open up their yards and homes to become areas where front stage interaction can take place and be maintained with new neighbors. Last, I find that several residents perceive themselves as being stigmatized by neighbors and landlords due to issues of appearance and manner; this stigma decreases neighborhood interaction by decreasing residents’ willingness to enter into the neighborhood and increasing the likelihood that they will choose to interact elsewhere or not at all.

From these findings, I derive two hypotheses regarding neighborhood social interaction for relocated residents. First, when residents accustomed to larger zones of action meet with outcomes of low integration and need fulfillment in their new neighborhoods they will eventually limit how far they enter into the neighborhood and will decrease their attempts at engagement with new neighbors; however, where residents with larger zones of action are able to attain resources and membership they will increase engagement with new neighbors and diminish perceived and actual stigma. Finally, I hypothesize that when residents with smaller zones of action encounter high levels of integration and need fulfillment through neighborhood interaction these residents will be encouraged to expand their zones of action, leading to increased levels of engagement with new neighbors in the neighborhood setting.
Based on the findings from this section of the study, I conclude that the decreased social interaction reported by residents in the quantitative section is in part due to a mismatch between resident types and neighborhood types. While public housing residents share many similarities, they do not constitute a homogenous group; likewise the factors amounting to a new and better neighborhood is not the same for every resident. Future studies and relocation processes involving public housing residents should therefore take into consideration how to provide a better fit between the relocating resident and the receiving neighborhood.

One goal of this research has been to bridge the theoretical tenants of neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage research camps with the lived outcomes of relocated residents, in order to provide a better understanding of what occurs in relocation from public housing and why social interaction between new neighbors either does or does not occur. I chose to focus my study on social interactions of residents in the earliest stages of relocation and was fortunate enough to have access to data spanning from six months pre-move to the first year post-move. This research details the situation of relocating from public housing as experienced by the relocated residents themselves, gained through both survey and in-depth interview implementation. Using both quantitative and qualitative components, I answer my research question by focusing on both the rational and interpretive strategies residents reported using prior to and after relocation. By employing both a dramaturgical framework and grounded theory methods, I was able to transform residents’ responses to questions about neighbors, neighborhoods, and communities into theoretical propositions and hypotheses to explain why residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors after moving out of public housing neighborhoods.

Overall, the findings of this study support earlier research which finds residents’ social interaction with neighbors decline after relocation (Hanratty et al. 2003; Katz et al. 2003). How-
ever, this study’s findings deviate from other studies by illuminating the fact that different ideal type groups of relocated residents exist and that for all residents social interaction did not decline; for some groups interaction with neighbors improved and for others still interaction simply remained the same. The relocation outcomes for these ideal type groups differed depending both on their relocation experiences and their pre-determined dispositions towards neighboring and neighborhoods. In general, these findings suggest that future relocation efforts would benefit by distinguishing the different ideal types of residents and attempting to match them to ideal setting choices prior to relocation. Further, the findings of the study suggest that future research in neighborhood social interaction for public housing relocation would benefit from interactional-level data that gathers input from receiving neighbors as well as gathering input from the relocated residents.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND NEW DIRECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of this dissertation has been to explain why neighborhood social interaction either does or does not occur between residents relocated from public housing and their new neighbors, despite possible opportunities and incentives to interact. The impetus for this research has been and continues to be the ongoing demolition and removal of the nation’s public housing stock, and the displacement of low income, predominantly African American, and female residents. Public housing relocation began as an early attempt at desegregation through the Gautreaux Program, but has continued under many fronts, most recently the dismantling of concentrated poverty (Goering 2003a). Under the conceptual heading of poverty deconcentration, key desegregation ideas still govern the project of relocating thousands of impoverished individuals. Chief amongst these ideas is the belief that relocation will promote better outcomes for residents (Goering 2003a). Theoretically, resident relocation has the potential to provide new and better housing and better lifestyle options to thousands of individuals and families in cities across the nation (Goering 2003a). These theorized ideal outcomes have not been manifested unanimously for all residents, however, and this fact remains the center of housing policy debate (Goering 2003b).

Polarized sentiments emerge between housing policy research camps causing the relocation of public housing residents to be cast either as the silver bullet solution to the housing problems of the nation or as the widespread destroyer of poor black communities and homes (Boston 2005; Joseph 2006; Sampson et al. 2002). Embedded in the schism, is the underlying argument of whether or not relocation provides residents with 1) safer neighborhoods, 2) economically advantaged neighbors and 3) connections with resources to benefit themselves and their families.
While no way unanimous, the majority of residents relocated from family or mixed-unit projects into voucher housing are undoubtedly safer having been removed from a locale where gun violence was prevalent; yet, the provision of safety has not necessarily manifested the other desired outcomes of beneficial neighborhood interaction, better jobs, better education, and access to resources in the community (Rosenbaum et al. 2003; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Goering 2003b).

This study’s aim has been to further the goal of establishing better outcomes for residents, by adding to decades of research geared towards understanding and guiding what happens to individuals relocated from public housing communities.

KEY FINDINGS

Using the survey data, I was able to determine that for the residents relocated from Atlanta’s public housing social interaction patterns did shift after relocation. Looking first at the key variables in question using means comparison, I examined that after relocation significant declines occurred in the mean scores for residents reporting giving help to neighbors and in the amount of friends from public housing living in the neighborhood; simultaneously significant increases occurred in the mean scores for residents’ reported social cohesion and community attachment. These findings raised the question, why would interaction decline if reported social cohesion and community attachment increase?

Completing the bivariate analyses provided a more detailed understanding about how particular groups of residents experienced changes in relocation. I examined categorical group differences in age, tenure, attainment of high school diploma or GED, presence of children, and place attachment to prior residence for the two dependent variables under observation: giving help to neighbors and receiving help from neighbors. Age, tenure, education, and place attachment revealed no significant differences between categories; I had expected residents in these
categories to have unique experiences in relocation, but this was not supported in the data. The variable presence of children did reveal significant differences between categories however. Presence of children revealed significant categorical differences for both of the dependent variables, where respondents with children reported giving and receiving help more as compared to respondents without children. The findings in the bivariate analyses aided directly in the interpretation of the regression results, which were completed as the final part in the quantitative study.

In terms of giving help to neighbors two variables held significant associations. The first finding from the regression analysis, which is supported in the bivariate analysis, is the presence of children has a significant association with both giving help to neighbors. Residents with children are more likely to report increases in giving help to neighbors after relocation compared to residents without children. Second, as I hypothesized, the change in amount of friends living in the neighborhood has a positive association with the dependent variable of giving help to neighbors. As the amount of friends in the neighborhood declines, reports of giving help to neighbors also declines. While I was correct in this hypothesis, I was incorrect in others. The amount of friends living in the neighborhood is not associated with receiving help from neighbors.

Looking at receiving help, three variables held significant associations. Again, as the bivariate analysis predicted, presence of children has a significant association with receiving help from neighbors. Residents with children are more likely to report increases in receiving help from neighbors after relocation compared to residents without children. As hypothesized, change in community attachment has a positive significant association with receiving help from neighbors however it bears no significant association with residents’ reports of giving help to neighbors. As reports of community attachment increase, reports of receiving help from neighbors also increase. In line with my hypothesis, but differing from the bivariate analysis, the age category
was significantly associated with receiving help from neighbors. Seniors were more likely to report receiving help from neighbors after relocation as compared to non-seniors.

Several of my hypotheses were not supported however. The individual-level characteristics of education had no association with the change in social support variables after relocation. Likewise, tenure and place attachment to prior residence held no associations with post-move reports of giving help to neighbors or receiving help from neighbors. Community-level variable change in social cohesion also had no significant association with residents’ reports of either giving help to or receiving help from neighbors. The change in amount of friends held no significant association with receiving help from neighbors, and the change in community attachment held no significant association with giving help to neighbors. As with the significant findings, these non-findings offer important information to the research question of why relocated public housing residents either do or do not interact with their new neighbors.

Another important finding with regards to the regression analyses is the amount of significant change the independent variables causes in the dependent variables. While my hypotheses were correct to assume that presence of children, the loss in amount of friends living in the neighborhood, age, and community attachment would be associated with changes in the social interactions of giving help to and receiving help from neighbors, these variables only account for approximately 5% of the changes occurring in the dependent variables. This finding suggests that some other variable or variables are significantly associated with the change in giving and receiving help to neighbors. Unfortunately, the survey instrument had limitations concerning factors affecting social interaction with neighbors, and returning to the pre-move period to add new questions is not possible. Despite these limitations, the findings provided through this quantitative analysis do provide valuable insight into the research question.
For the sample under observation, it can be stated that as amount of friends decrease after relocation, residents’ reports of giving help to neighbors significantly decline. As community attachment increases after relocation, residents’ reports of receiving help from neighbors significantly increase. Further, distinctions can be made based on certain categorical variables. Respondents with children report giving more help to neighbors compared to respondents without children. Also, in terms of receiving help from neighbors after relocation, seniors and respondents with children report receiving significantly more help after relocation compared to non-seniors and respondents without children. Therefore, when asking why residents either do or do not interact with new neighbors after relocation differences in amounts of friends, change in attachment to community, age category, and presence of children in the household must be taken into consideration. These findings support the idea that different ideal types of public housing residents exist and help to explain that these differences are based on combined factors of basic demographics, degree of attachments, and circumstances brought forth through the relocation process. These quantitative findings provide an excellent basis for the qualitative portion of the study which follows.

Where the quantitative portion of the study provides explicit descriptions of what happens to self-reported interactions with neighbors after relocation, the qualitative component explains the circumstances in relocation affecting these described outcomes. First, an explanation is needed of why social interaction declines while the means scores of community attachment and social cohesion increase. Second, a broader understanding of the processes supporting and deterring social interaction between the relocated residents and new neighbors is needed. Third, if different groups of residents exhibit different outcomes in terms of social interaction, a clearer depiction of these groups is also necessary. Qualitative examination of the residents’ lived experi-
ences provided explanation into these issues and worked to provide a theoretical premise for future testing.

The key findings in the qualitative section of this study are the elements of place attachment, friendship groups, and sense of community each have central elements working in connection with one another to explain residents’ levels of interaction with new neighbors. Relocation in general, not to mention forced mass-relocation, involves elements of staging, and re-staging, whereby setting, actors, and the resulting scenes are dramatically shifted for one set of actors. Regardless of how much residents liked or disliked living in public housing, those relocated individuals were forcibly removed from familiar places, people, and rules of engagement (or expected ways of interaction) and placed into new settings with new actors, wherein the scene expectations were pre-defined prior to their arrival. How these individuals coped with the re-staging primarily had to do with each individual’s relation to three central elements: zones of action, levels of engagement and inclusion, and level of integration and need fulfillment.

In the in-depth interviews, residents would reference how far they were willing to go within their own neighborhoods prior to relocation, and this distance denoted a zone of action ranging from never leaving the house to traversing the entire neighborhood without limits. This element of spatial boundary within public housing is positively associated with the resident’s willingness to routinely engage with neighbors and/or include neighbors into their own daily routines. Those unwilling to enter the setting for extended periods of time were less likely to engage with neighbors. As a result, these residents limited themselves from taking part in community resources. Conversely, residents reporting fewer limitations in setting boundaries were more likely to engage with and include other residents from the neighborhood into their daily routines.
and were significantly more likely to report being integrated into the community scene, whereby resources were made more available to them as needed.

This key finding, in connection with overwhelming reports of decrease in visible violence, helps to explain how some residents can report an increased sense of community attachment and social cohesion, but still maintain low interaction with neighbors. First, nearly all residents from the mix-use housing units expressed extreme relief in having relocated away from the overwhelming presence of crime and violence existing in their original public housing neighborhoods. Even the residents expressing high place attachment prior to moving reported a decrease in fear due to less violence and typically found their new neighborhoods to be an improvement on multiple levels. Seniors from mix-use housing units were especially likely to note they felt an increase in safety and an improvement in terms of fewer rude or dangerous youth.

This decreased open violence in the form of neighbors arguing and fighting increased residents’ perceptions that new neighbors “shared values” and “got along” with one another. However, with more probing, this perception appears possibly unfounded. When asked directly, most residents claimed they did not know much at all about their neighbors because they did not interact with them beyond saying hello or waving. Due to low interaction with new neighbors, it seems unlikely that these residents would know if their neighbors actually share values and get along. Instead, this report seems to be based on biased perceptions, drawn from comparisons to former neighborhood scenes. Despite not knowing or routinely interacting with neighbors, residents make judgments about those neighbors deeming them safe or unsafe, with safe neighbors generally being referred to as nice or polite.

Second, level of social interaction with neighbors is driven by residents’ perceptions of and reactions to new neighbors’ mannerisms upon first interaction. While most respondents deny
feeling openly stigmatized for having been public housing residents, further probing revealed the underlying effects of stigma did negatively affect social interactions between relocated residents and new neighbors. Stigma from new neighbors limits the social interaction for some residents of senior housing and all residents of mix-use housing, though senior housing groups were reportedly less affected by perceived stigma overall. Residents reporting low-levels of engagement and inclusion prior to relocation typically avoided interaction with new neighbors to limit any stigmatizing interaction threatening voucher status. Other residents, more outgoing and more likely to engage with neighbors prior to relocation, ceased interactions with new neighbors after engaging in stigmatizing interactions such as perceived rudeness or unfair judgment. However, important to note is this received stigma does not deter residents from the belief new neighbors are similar to each other in terms of values and getting along. Likewise, despite receiving stigma from new neighbors, relocated residents are less likely to report that new neighbors fight in public or engage in excessive violence that endangers the lives of others. Therefore residents can feel stigmatized by their new neighbors, causing a decrease in interaction, but still report higher levels of social cohesion compared to what they witnessed in their prior neighborhoods.

Third, many residents reporting larger zones of action prior to relocation also reported having nowhere to go after moving and no means of interacting with new neighbors. New neighborhoods could be either isolated or limited in what they had to offer in terms of public spaces. According to most interview respondents, commons areas where individuals were allowed and encouraged to sit, talk, play with children, or cook outside were not incorporated into the neighborhoods, apartment complexes, and senior facilities where residents relocated to. In some locales, congregating with friends and neighbors outside was prohibited. In other locales, residents reported that the resources promoting integration and need fulfillment simply were not present in
the neighborhood or community setting, limiting their ability to develop a new sense of community.

Finally, limitations on interaction occur for residents with limited zones of action even when they are willing to be inclusive with neighbors. Several residents reported that even when living in public housing, they were against going into other peoples’ homes, but were fine with allowing people into their own space. These residents were typically mix-use housing residents, and would espouse a need or urge to give support to members of the neighborhood in terms of childcare or preparing food. Residents willing to accept in neighbors or children, (perhaps by letting the neighborhood children come in and play with their own children or by being willing to listen to others and give emotional support) had the potential to bring the community to them while in public housing, but report having less opportunity to be inclusive in new neighborhoods. Where new neighbors feel comfortable and willing to enter into these residents’ limited zones of action, these residents can potentially achieve membership status without having to go out and engage beyond the boundaries of their own property. The few residents reporting a successful continuation of this style of inclusivity in the neighborhood, generally had more friends from prior public housing living in their new neighborhoods and possibly held some degree of neighborhood leadership status prior to moving, such as being a resident advisory board member.

THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

From these key findings, I explain why community attachment and social cohesion might increase while reported social interaction with new neighbors does not. Further, I derive two key hypotheses to explain why, on the whole, residents’ neighborhood social interaction declines significantly in relocation despite housing policy beliefs that incentive and opportunity to engage with new neighbors exists (Goering 2003a). These explanations involve how the three elements
of zones of action, levels of engagement and inclusion, and levels of integration and need fulfillment change for residents across relocation.

First, if residents with high zones of action experience continual low integration and need fulfillment in their new neighborhoods, over time they will experience decreases in zones of action, eventually leading to decreases in levels of engagement in the neighborhood and decreasing neighborhood social interaction in general. Several times in the interview process, residents explained to me they were bored and wanted to get outside and interact like they would in public housing, but the resources to do so were not available. Community centers, playgrounds, barbecue pits, or even nearby stores and marketplaces were simply not a part of the built environment of new neighborhoods. Further, many of these residents relied on public transportation which had become either inconvenient or too costly to utilize every time they wanted to go do something. In response to the lack of resources, many replied they just stayed indoors. Staying indoors limited their ability to meet neighbors and perpetuated a sense of anomie and hopelessness with regards to their boredom.

If however, residents experience increased levels of integration and need fulfillment instead of a decrease, over time they will increase social interaction with neighbors, using higher levels of engagement to resolve stigmatizing issues, become members of the community, and become influential in shaping community endeavors. This hypothesis was generated primarily from those seniors able to move into the newer facilities wherein the management had devised continual activities residents could take part in. These activities ranged from basic needs fulfillment activities such as shopping trips to stores and markets or providing food in the commons areas to integration activities such as games, dances, classroom settings, and exercise facilities. Providing such service is more difficult in neighborhood settings outside of senior facilities, but
not impossible. In fact, some residents from mix-use housing reported having as many or more community activities after moving as compared to living in public housing. Therefore, I hypothesize that having available resources benefits those whose zones of action extend beyond the house or apartment and increases the likelihood of engaging with neighbors and community members, thereby increasing neighborhood social interaction.

Second, for residents reporting limited zones of action prior to moving, level of inclusion and level of integration and need fulfillment are the determining factors in whether or not these residents eventually increase in neighborhood social interaction. Several residents living in family units of public housing reported never having to leave their house or front porch to be highly involved in the neighborhood. These individuals just waited for the neighborhood to come to them, and were rewarded regularly. Yet, once these individuals moved to new neighborhoods they were only incorporated to the degree fellow neighbors were willing to knock on their door. If residents are not approached by neighbors, neighbors will not know they can come over or depend on them (despite their not being seen outside the house) and neighborhood social interaction for relocated residents will remain at a minimal level or decrease permanently. However, if residents acquire more forward neighbors (the type to come over and introduce themselves or make greeting gestures) the residents may manage to attract resources despite initial low zones of action. Further in this scenario, over time these residents may be persuaded to extend their zones of action further into the neighborhood setting, increasing their level of engagement with neighbors and increasing sense of community and neighborhood social interaction.

These two hypotheses provide a testable theory for explaining neighborhood social interaction in future relocation studies. If these theories prove useful, ideal resident types might be better relocated into best-fit scenarios. For example, mix-use residents with large zones of action
prior to relocation should be relocated to areas where resource destinations are in walking distance, such as parks, community centers, libraries, playgrounds and churches and where neighbors are younger and more social. Also, programs could be incorporated to counsel receiving neighbors on the overall importance of greeting and integrating relocated residents, especially those whose zones of action are limited to indoors or front porch areas. For seniors, allow those senior with higher levels of engagement to receive the spaces in newer high rise facilities with more activities and outings, while placing those seniors reporting being less likely to engage with neighbors into facilities geared towards bringing the resources to their personal zone. Likewise, for residents with children, administrators can devise housing selection to help guide these residents towards neighborhoods with other children and resources like good schools, playgrounds, libraries and daycare facilities.

Indeed, after reviewing several of the in-depth interviews, it seemed as if residents would have been happier in relocating if only they could have swapped locations with one another. While a key component of voucher housing is freedom of choice, the freedom is in part an illusion. Most residents reported having to move under a deadline, perceiving limited options due to other residents already getting all the available places, having limited resources in terms transportation, lacking information on what housing was available and facing stigma from landlords and neighbors. As such, most residents took the first place they could get into. If this turned out to be a bad move, residents had to wait for at least one year until they were allowed to move again. Utilizing a system that takes residents’ perceptions of situation into account could possibly decrease dissatisfaction with the first move while increasing the likelihood residents will achieve the highest potentiality in terms of neighborhood social interaction.
DISCUSSION

Apart from the key factors outlined in the prior sections of this chapter, this study illuminates the importance of acknowledging the differences in groups of residents, not just based on housing type and age, but also based on a residents’ given zone of action and levels of engagement and inclusion with others. This report provides a summarized narrative highlighting how these group differences affect residents in terms of neighborhood social interaction across the relocation process. In providing these distinctions in the outcomes of restaging for different groups and in explaining the rational and interpretive frameworks of these residents as relates to social interaction, future policy may be adapted to account for these distinctions so best case scenarios can be constructed from relocations.

Foremost, this study found that while many people were sad to leave their homes in public housing, most were happy to be leaving behind the legacy of violent crime accompanying those homes. This finding was similar to findings from MTO (Goering 2003b). Regardless of how attached to their prior location, or how many friends they had, those living in family units were relieved to be escaping the constant harassment of gunshots, sirens, and helicopters dominating the social landscape. For residents previously confining their lives to their apartment or their porches, the world has opened up; for residents unafraid to roam freely in the neighborhood, they can now do so with little to no fear of being shot at or victimized. The only catch being, many residents now perceive that they have nowhere to go, no community to step outside and be a part of, and no people close by to go out and interact with.

Residents with good fortune enough to move with friends and residents declining interaction prior to moving experienced the loss of community to a smaller degree. Residents with children fortunate enough to move near other families with children have begun to establish new
ties, though some still report a lack of resources in the area needed to pull a community together: a community center, a park, a playground, and organizations of people to come take the children to the pool, to come hand out coats and food come winter, to come do bible study and church services, or just to come by to say hello and tell you how their day at work or school went.

For the other less-inclusive and less-engaged relocated residents of mix-use housing units, a blanket of anonymity exists in these quiet neighborhoods signaling no interaction is necessary. They continue to seek their help elsewhere, as they did while living in public housing. This is also similar to the findings of Hanratty et al. (2003) in the L.A. MTO study. Residents continue to make friends elsewhere, if they need them. For these relocated residents, home has finally become just the roof over their heads they had needed when they were first forced into living in public housing.

For some seniors, the forced relocation actually pushed them into a brand new, state of the art high-rise facility complete with community rooms, computer and knitting classes, recreation centers, exercise machines, and Friday night dances hosted by an in-house DJ. Here they were allowed to continue old relationships, proudly invite family members to visit, and take advantage of as many field trips, programs, and social events as they cared to partake in. For others, the choice of a quieter, less-interactive senior facility suited them more and they opted for the comfortable surroundings of a front desk and commons room, and a MARTA mobility van to take them to the store once a week to get needed items. They and their family members were happy they were no longer in a run-down facility, surrounded by real or perceived crime-filled housing downtown. Now the extent of these residents’ interactions is measured by the length of time they choose to sit with others downstairs near the lobby.
For others still, old age, infirmity, or poor circumstances meant being moved far beyond the boundaries of downtown Atlanta, into districts with no buses, no services, and no people nearby who care enough to check in on them, take them to the store, or see they have taken their medication or gotten to the doctor. For these unfortunate residents, they are required to wait a full year until they can request a transfer, and even then must undergo the moving process one more time, but without the original financial boost the AHA offered when they were first moved out of their homes. As Manzo et al. (2008) argue, these multiple moves can be both disorienting and disheartening, and can cause enormous financial setbacks.

Many residents from this study and from the larger population of residents have relocated a second or third time, while others have attempted to make a real go at living away from familiar friends, familiar places, and established scenes once known as Atlanta’s public housing. McMillan and Chavis (1989) argue that in time, as roots take hold, these individuals may arise to claim rightful membership in their new communities, establishing channels of influence, regulating the flow of integration and need fulfillment, and developing a new sense of community where they stand. As this occurs, residents’ social interaction in the neighborhood may increase to compliment the high levels of community attachment and social cohesion reported within the first year of their relocation. Residents may begin to engage themselves in the social lives of their neighbors, strengthening their bonds to each other, the neighborhood, and the community, and strengthening the city of Atlanta as a result. However, the notion of root shock may hold true and these relocated residents may never truly regain the sense of community they held while living in their original public housing neighborhoods (Tester et al. 2011; Fullilove 2004).

A central finding from this study then is the relocated residents were not a uniform group to begin with and will not have uniform outcomes either in the early or later stages of their relo-
cation from public housing. In this study different outcomes occurred for the residents of senior vs. mix use housing, short term residents vs. long term residents, residents who moved alone vs. residents who moved with groups of friends, residents with children vs. residents without, and for those either more or less connected to the communities they were forced to leave behind. These differences in attributes and circumstances manifest themselves uniquely as relocated residents find their way in their new neighborhoods and communities, and therefore the study of these groups must be done on smaller scales, using methodologies taking these differences into account (Curley 2010; Tach 2009; Ladd and Ludwig 2003; Ellen and Turner 2003).

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This report is subject to a narrowing of focus and in no way claims to capture every variant of residents’ experiences. I have attempted to broaden the scope of public housing research to present residents and their experiences from more than one angle. First, this report addresses prior research observing limited change in social interaction and suggests what is occurring is the experiences of different groups of residents are in a sense cancelling each other out (Hanratty et al. 2003; Katz et al. 2003; Rosenbaum 2003; Goering 2003b; Ladd and Ludwig 2003). In this study the independent variables chosen to explain giving help to and receiving help from neighbors were significant but only explained a limited amount of the actual variation in social interaction. I controlled for multiple factors, but was not able to control for zones of action, levels of engagement and inclusion, or levels of needs integration. If I had been able to sort residents controlling for these variables, I might have been able to account for much more variation in the dependent variables. While going back and gathering more data from residents at the pre-move stage is impossible in relocation studies, this research may prove beneficial for studies of future relocation demonstrations where gathering pre-move data is a possibility.
Second, this report furthers the study of residents’ experiences by introducing a new way of analyzing residents across relocation. For the purposes of this study, I applied a dramaturgy framework to grounded theory methods of data analysis (Goffman 1959; LaRossa 2005). Because the central focus of this study rests on change in interaction across locations, a literal re-staging of interactions, I felt the use of a dramaturgical framework would help to highlight the processes occurring for different groups of resident actors across relocation. Using grounded theory methods in conjunction with the dramaturgical frame offered me the ability to contend with the multiple factors confronting residents in the process of relocation (Goffman 1959; LaRossa 2005). At the beginning of the study and analytic process, I relied heavily on Goffman’s (1959) theoretical concepts as a guide. Overall, I believe the dramaturgical components worked well to show how residents’ interpretive processes connected with rational structures to produce social interaction outcomes in the neighborhood setting. Further, I believe the use of dramaturgical frame was beneficial in suggesting steps towards establishing better interaction outcomes for the different groups of individuals relocated from public housing.

The dramaturgical framework was also a necessary component for bridging the theoretical gaps in neighborhood effects and concentrated disadvantage literature (Sampson et al. 2002; Wilson 1987). Both of these models argue that exogenous neighborhood characteristics, such as low-income, lack of resources, household make-up, and more, predict community-level outcomes of social organization (Sampson et al 2002; Wilson 1987). While both models understood efficacious neighborhood social interaction to be the catalyst for beneficial outcomes, neither model explained why social interaction did or did not occur for the neighborhood residents (Sampson et al. 2002; Wilson 1987; Ellen and Turner 2003; Mayer and Jencks 1989). This study positions the dramaturgical framework between the exogenous neighborhood characteristics and
the social organization outcomes to explain how components of interaction such as role-play patterns, setting boundaries, and sense of community can translate neighborhood characteristics into community-level outcomes. Using this framework, the argument for why neighborhoods matter is made clearer (Ellen and Turner 1997; 2003).

Beyond extending the scope of neighborhood social interaction research to include how and why social interaction originates between neighbors, this study has furthered the argument that future studies must move beyond the individual-level and examine the interactional-level in order to truly understand what is occurring between relocated residents and new neighbors (Tach 2009). The study of interaction completed at the interactional-level would reveal the similarities as well as the discrepancies and inconsistencies in the accounts of both relocated residents and new neighbors, and would allow for more specific programming to evolve for the promotion of neighborhood social interaction (Tach 2009). Due to time restraints and availability of access to neighbors, this study was not capable of approaching the interactional-level; however, my hope is this study will form the foundation for a future study incorporating new neighbors’ experiences.

The study of relocated residents and their receiving neighbors need to incorporate both groups’ interpretive and rational perspectives in order to gain a clearer understanding of what takes place in the relocation process. The underlying goal of research in this vein should be to work towards the promotion of neighborhood social interaction in relocation demonstrations. As existing research has shown, neighborhood and community structures are important to the safety of residents and the attainment and guardianship of needed resources (Sampson et al. 2002; McMillan and Chavis 1989). However, if residents and neighbors remain unaware of how their social interaction matters, no reason exists to assume they will purposefully come together in or-
order to protect themselves or to manifest and retain resources. The key to promoting more beneficial social interaction post-relocation is to provide 1) a common space where these individuals can get together in a non-threatening way and 2) education for both residents and new neighbors concerning the known benefits of neighborhood social interaction.

In closing, this study suggests relocated residents and their new neighbors would benefit more from increased guidance throughout the relocation process and exposure to relevant research than they would from being left alone to make their own relocation choices without assistance from housing authorities. Evidence from the Gautreaux Program suggests the greatest outcomes are attained when the government takes an active role in seeing residents are well-integrated into their receiving neighborhoods (Rosenbaum and Kaufman 1991; Rosenbaum 1995; Goering 1986; 2003a; 2003b). While residents should certainly have the final say in where they move and how they move, housing authorities should have a more defined role in assisting residents in housing choices, including having ample partnerships with willing landlords in multiple pre-inspected venues prior to relocation. From these pre-determined housing sites, individuals should be guided into best fit options unless they have specific plans already arranged for their relocations.

Attempting to match public housing residents into best-fit neighborhoods however will require housing authorities treat residents as ideal types rather than as one uniform group. As this study has shown, the needs and desires of relocating residents are varied, but in truth those variations can be isolated and contended for. Some residents want neighborhoods to explore and neighbors to connect with, others want solitude and perhaps nothing more than the knowledge members of the community are keeping an eye out for each other. Some residents want safe neighborhoods with amenities for their children and themselves, others want a place with only
seniors and no presence of youth culture. To learn the desires of relocated residents would take no more than a brief survey, and matching them up with possible options should not be beyond the powers of the housing authorities.

CONCLUSION

As prior studies have shown, having good neighborhoods and good neighbors is an important step towards the promotion and continuation of a safe, healthy, and connected life (Sampson et al. 2002; Ellen and Turner 2003; McMillan and Chavis 1989). Neighborhoods, when connected and organized, offer the potential benefits of protection, group membership, resource attainment, and even collective bargaining power at the institutional-level of society (McMillan and Chavis 1989; Sampson et al. 2002). However, equal access to good neighborhoods and good neighbors is not a lived reality for many people (Massey and Denton 1993). At the national-level, the Housing and Urban Development’s overarching goal of providing fair housing choices for all Americans has resulted in multiple programs and policies geared towards the removal of disorganized and impoverished neighborhoods in favor of healthy, self-sustaining neighborhoods (Goering 2003a). The mass-relocation of residents from public housing neighborhoods using a voucher system is one method being employed by housing authorities to meet these goals (Goering 2003a).

When Atlanta, Georgia revealed that it would be demolishing all public housing in favor of utilizing a voucher system, there was a mixed response from public housing residents and community members alike (Oakley, Ruel and Wilson 2008; Tester et al. 2011). Emotions ranged from fear, sadness, and outrage to elation and disbelief. As time passed and the relocations transformed from possibility to actuality and into history, the city of Atlanta and its residents were transformed (Tester et al. 2011). Bowen Homes, Herndon Homes, Hollywood Courts, the Roo-
sevelt, Bankhead Courts, and the Palmer House no longer exist; their residents have been relocated throughout the city, the state, and even into other states (Oakley, Reid, and Sims 2010). However, the stories and the memories of those places have not yet been forgotten and the lessons that can be learned from the existence of public housing have not disappeared. This study serves as one attempt to translate the experiences of relocating from public housing into knowledge that will benefit future relocation efforts and the affected public housing populations.

This research has shown that several factors in the relocation process can affect outcomes in social interaction between relocated public housing residents and their new neighbors. Amounts of friends living in the neighborhood, community attachments, presence of children, age, predispositions of residents towards engagement and inclusion, zones of action, availability of resources, and perceived and actual stigmatization of relocated residents are all determining factors in whether or not residents will seek to take part in new neighborhoods and communities after relocating from public housing. Taking these points into consideration prior to relocation, housing authorities can help to provide relocated residents with best-fit scenarios, increasing overall compatibility with neighborhoods and neighbors and increasing the likelihood of residents being connected with beneficial networks and resources in the future.
REFERENCES


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Oakley, Deirdre, Erin Ruel, Lesley Reid, and Christina Sims. 2010. “Public Housing Relocation and Residential Segregation in Atlanta: Where are Families Going?” Paper read at the State of Black Atlanta Conference, Clark Atlanta University, February, Atlanta, GA.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Place Attachment</th>
<th>Level of Place Attachment</th>
<th>High Place Attachment</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I didn’t like it there,”</td>
<td>“I liked everything about it. Wasn’t anything I didn’t like. They just moved us out,”</td>
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<td>“I called it the nut house…So when I left, I was one of the first people to leave the building. I didn't even wait for the, them to say, ‘X you're scheduled to leave on this day.’ I, I paid the rent here, everything, moved. You know?”</td>
<td>“I miss it. It was a nice neighborhood. Even though all the crimes happened. It was a nice neighborhood. I miss it so much,”</td>
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<td>“I’m tired of seeing people walking the property. I’m tired of the noise...And so… I realize this is not what I need...I told them, I said, “things don’t work out, I’m leaving.””</td>
<td>“Well, I mean, the neighborhood is great, I love it. I mean, it’s totally different from the way I was raised and the neighborhood I just came from. And it’s because the people here are a lot friendlier,”</td>
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<td>“I dislike, um, ‘cause where the sign out there, it lies, where you first come in. It says ‘[resources]’ None of that is out here. None of that… It’s like…they lying, you know. I hate that they lying. Someday I’m gonna go out there and cross that out, like, they don’t have this, they don’t have that.”</td>
<td>“It’s good, it’s a good neighborhood. I love it, I love it. ‘Cause when I, I said, it kinda reminded me of home,”</td>
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**Zones of Action**

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<tr>
<th>Zone 1: Indoors</th>
<th>Zone 2: Patio/Front Porch</th>
<th>Zone 3: Neighborhood Limited</th>
<th>Zone 4: Neighborhood Unlimited</th>
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<td>“You mean just going around in the neighborhood? Uh-uh, I don’t even go around in this neighborhood. When I go out, I go where I’m going, and I come right back to this house. I don’t even walk around the neighborhood... The main thing I do, I just go outside that door, walk to that corner, get my mail, I walk back in this house. I don’t even walk around the neighborhood.”</td>
<td>“Then we had... it was more like a gatherin’ place where you go down there, sit down and eat. But they called it, community room, that’s what they called it... Yeah, and then out there we had a patio. Go out there, pretty day like they go out there and play cards, barbeque and all that.”</td>
<td>“And I walk around, you might have people speak, but I have like a couple people from Bankhead community stay out here. There’s a couple there. Also my mom too, so.”</td>
<td>“If you go back some streets, you got the houses. You hit Ralph David Abernathy, you got the store, the Dunkin’ Donuts all that. You got a lot of stuff around the area it’s just so far... Then you got to walk all the way up about three or four blocks to get to the library which is on People’s Street, that’s real far. Then you got to walk back. I mean, everything could have been closer or they could make a bus route somewhere. It’s a nice neighborhood to stay in but I don’t like everything because it’s so far away, like walking.”</td>
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<td>“Yup, um-hm. ‘Cause you hardly don’t see no one unless they goin’ somewhere. They be – they stay in all the time. I think ‘cause everybody got a fan everything inside they house, they don’t hardly sit out too much.”</td>
<td>“No. I went to the, uh, we have our monthly, uh, meeting. And like when they (inaudible) or something, but... like, going out on bus trips and I’m playing Bingo. I didn’t participate. I didn’t take no bus trips... I took one once, but I, um, I just don’t like going outside taking trip, which I used to. But that’s another thing with me. I’m getting old. My nerves is bad.”</td>
<td>“I didn’t know too much about the outside neighborhood because I didn’t visit nobody in the neighborhood. But so for everybody that I see in the neighborhood, seems like they were good peoples.”</td>
<td>“Roosevelt was very -- well, it was close and -- to all the transportation I needed. Highways went everywhere. North, they went north and south. And downtown, access to downtown was very good. Basically the same thing here... I liked everything about it. Roosevelt was alright, you know. I stayed to myself, you know, mostly. In and out, I’d go back and forth to the center. Its called QLS, quality of living. I go there every day. Well., three times a week, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, as I do now. From 8:30, get back here at 2 o’clock. It’s the same thing there.”</td>
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<td>Low Inclusivity</td>
<td>Degree of Inclusivity</td>
<td>High Inclusivity</td>
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<td>“I don't need to have people in my home. Matter of fact, I choose not to have a lot of people in my home because they're generally considered the ones who come in and bring evil spirits with them. You see, I, I'm a spirit person too, so. I sense a spirit that's not right, I don't want that spirit in my house. My mother was spiritual and still is. And she just said, &quot;Hey, just don't let 'em in the door.&quot; So if you don't invite the spirit in, you know, it'll stay out there.”</td>
<td>“And so many childrens came to my daughter’s house ‘cause I was there and I would, you know, throw little parties and do different things to make them feel that they were okay, you know. And we fed a lot of children. Um, you know, just to have them to have a safe haven to come to, you know.”</td>
<td>“Yeah, because you know, some of the folks who worked in the office used to be resident. And who wasn’t resident, you know, we got to know each other. You know what I’m talking about because a lot of the maintenance peoples, when they, by the time they get around to my house, shoot, they, they slip in them. I gave ‘em beer. I gave ‘em liquor. (laughs) I’m serious. I let them in because soon, you know, I drank when I want to…You know, how you try to just keep wine and stuff in your house, but. We said, they come in, and you’re hot and everything.”</td>
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<td>“I said, ‘keep that to yourself or keep that between you and your other friends. You know, I just, you know, you’re a good friend to talk to and everything, but I don’t want to hear nothing about what happened with you in your past life. You know, keep that to yourself. I said, because I have a slippery tongue, and I don’t want to blurt out something that I know you don’t want nobody else to know.’ So, I just say this all the time whenever I made friends. ‘Whatever you don’t want nobody else to know, don’t tell me.’ And that’s all there is to it because I – I try to be honest. I don’t want to, you know?”</td>
<td>“So, they came out, check everybody’s house. And my inspection passed. It was just like this. You know, just family here. And it was like when I went to the meeting, the man told him. When I went to Miss. Robin’s house, wasn’t nobody in her house but family and it was clean and whatnot.”</td>
<td>“No, well can you borrow the phone or can you spend the night sometimes they can’t get into the apartment and its cold you understand? Yeah, I’m gonna put the gas on for them, you know, something like that. You got something to eat? Yeah I’ll give you something to eat, you know what I’m saying, I got a lot of food everywhere, you’re welcome to it, you know, help like that.”</td>
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<td>Level of Engagement</td>
<td>Low Engagement</td>
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<td>“I don’t…interfere. I don’t like to get too friendly with people because, you know, I don’t really know them. I seen them, and I speak to them, but that’s about it.”</td>
<td>“I know my sister-in-law, she teaches school, she busing balls and bats over there and kids got to playin’ and the grown folks got out there, start playing like kids. They come knock on your door, “Y’all gonna play ball today?” I’m like, “(scoff)”. I couldn’t play of course, but I could watch ‘em…</td>
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<td>“I don’t know. We don’t talk. I don’t talk to people ‘cause you know some people might don’t want you to talk to them, they attitude might be -- like our neighbor in the back of us, something wrong with her. I really think something’s wrong with her.”</td>
<td>“…Sometime I go over and talk to them, in the office. And we had a little uh, tried to get something productive out of the whole place, you know. They participated sometimes, the people did, and sometimes they didn’t. Most of the time they didn’t.”</td>
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<td>“I ask, and I don’t know anything, nobody else ain’t around here like that. But see, I go to church. We all come, hang in the church, that I can get involved with when I want to.”</td>
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<td>Absence of Children</td>
<td>Presence of Children</td>
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<td>“They’re quiet. Aint no children in this building period. So it’s real quiet. This building here is real quiet.”</td>
<td>“And some of the kids in the neighborhood weren’t all bad. I mean, there were great kids. Some of them, some of the kids in the neighborhood would just come up on my porch and start talking to me, asking me questions about certain things that they wouldn’t normally ask their parents, but you know, kids these days don’t even communicate, you know, with their parents like they, like we used to. So, for the most part, I’ve always had children come up on my porch and talk and I’d play sports with kids sometimes. Yeah.”</td>
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<td>“Nothing, they ain’t got no…Activities and like ain’t no place to go shoot no basketball, ain’t got no pool, they ain’t got no children to shoot marbles, and stuff, hopscotch, ain’t play no horseshoes. In Bowen Homes, sit on your front door, we shoot horseshoes all night, you know, in front of the door.”</td>
<td>“Just like Bowen. Most of the children come to our house. Saturday, we have my little grandson a birthday party. Little get-together. Wasn’t much, but we had ice cream and cake and hot dogs and hamburgers and chips and what have you. And they came, they just had fun. They had fun, you know.”</td>
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<td>“And uh, this guy, he didn’t seem prejudiced, you know. Uh-uh. No, he nice he come out and sit out there…”</td>
<td>“She gave me the inside trip, dirt, what's going on, what's happening. And I was able to stay abreast and above all of that, so, because I had relationships with people who were willing to support me. And deal with me on a one-to-one. Not look at me as a number. Because you're stigmatized by being in the system as well, you see?”</td>
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<td>[I: So nobody is aware of anybody getting it, because sometimes people have opinions about public housing …] “No, they won’t… And I feel like everybody here is getting it. Or either they wouldn’t be there.”</td>
<td>“They go tell, ‘I heard they moving all these folks with vouchers.’ Well as long as you take care of it, as long as you take care of your place and treat it like you want it. So, you know, but you hear people on the bus, that was just one time. I was workin' then. I didn't say nothing, I was just sitting there listenin', they were just talkin' about it. I don't know know, but they talkin'. They ain't no different, they might be low-income, people just laugh, make them feel better, which they not, so. Yeah, so I was just sitting there listening.”</td>
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<td>Low Level of Welcome</td>
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<td>I:[ Did you feel particularly unwelcomed?] “No. They were just about the same when I moved into wherever...No, nobody pays any attention when you are moving into a neighborhood,”</td>
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<td>“But when I came out the next day, you know, they were all like, ‘welcome to the neighborhood, neighborhood’ and all this. I mean, they put out a good impression for me. You know what I’m saying? And then as I got to – see how, how the people is – like I say. It’s not the apartment, it’s just the people that’s living in the apartment,”</td>
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<td>“When we first moved here...That lady caused a problem with our driveway, you can tell it’s our driveway. She was like, ‘I was parking here before y’all moved here.’ Okay, that was before we moved here, you gotta move your car now, ... It came to the point where we had to call the police, which it is obvious that it’s our driveway ‘cause its on our side, so now they just use our driveway to go park on their grass. Crazy for no reason.”</td>
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<td>“Um, well okay. There’s a lady who lived across the street. She’s moved now, and um, she brought me some tomatoes and peppers, and I thought that was so nice, and I felt that was a “welcome to the neighborhood” gesture...And she gave me her phone number. (Side conversation) So yeah, that was a great gesture. She moved, she moved maybe about two months now, and she said the reason that she moved is because it cost too much to live there,”</td>
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<td>“Cause the neighbor, they out, you’ll see somebody out and you’ll speak. And there’s another neighbor, I met her, she real sweet. She took me and my daughter to the water park and we had a very exciting time. She was real sweet.”</td>
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<td>Low Level of Feeling Safe</td>
<td>High Level of Feeling Safe</td>
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<td>“… when I first got there, my apartment was broken into six times. I didn’t have nothin…They just kept coming in there, drinking, leaving bottles, uh, using the bathroom. It was crazy, I got tired of that,”</td>
<td>“We had our own porch, our own patio. And, uh, you didn’t meet no strangers. We had to watch out – you know if I leave, I let somebody know I’m gone…I told them when I’m coming back, how long I’ll be gone. So they would watch my apartment,”</td>
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<td>“You got to make sure your doors are locked. There was a lot of violence going on there. A lot of arguing, shooting, murder. I seen a lot of dead people. My kids have seen dead people. My kids have seen people die, take their last breaths, looking at ‘em,”</td>
<td>“I heard about crime, you know, but I didn’t really see it,”</td>
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<td>“But the complex around my complex have…[l]ike a lot of drug dealers hanging out and shooting. Like Saturday, I was asleep, I was awakened at 4 am by shots. But it wasn’t in my complex, it was the ones next to it...And I jumped up and I shut the window and you know, down on the floor because I was like, ‘My god, I can't believe this is happening. I thought I moved away from that,’”</td>
<td>“Ain’t nothing happened, no shootings, no killings that I have heard of, nobody being snatched. I mean, mostly I guess it’s a good neighborhood to stay in, aint don’t nothing too much happen here...So it’s all no shooting. No rapes.”</td>
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<td>“You know, they out, they shoot every day. It wasn’t safe, you couldn't let children outside to play because you'll never know what happen. It was just always something going on every day. Something different, somebody dyin' or they fightin’,”</td>
<td>“…when some of the people had told me that they were watching out for my apartment, well, that kind of surprised me… I had three elderly people that watched my apartment…even when I went on vacation, you know, like went home for a whole week, I had somebody watching my apartment.”</td>
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<td>&quot;But the complex around my complex have…[l]ike a lot of drug dealers hanging out and shooting. Like Saturday, I was asleep, I was awakened at 4 am by shots. But it wasn’t in my complex, it was the ones next to it...And I jumped up and I shut the window and you know, down on the floor because I was like, ‘My god, I can't believe this is happening. I thought I moved away from that,’”</td>
<td>“I can leave my door unlocked and go to the grocery store. And be like, “Oh!” But when I get here, stuff still be here… But here, I feel safe. Yeah, everywhere you go is going to be problems, you know, shooting and whatever. But I feel safe here.”</td>
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<td>Level of Feeling</td>
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<td>“[Afraid of] just being here by myself. Sometimes my kids would come over here and spend the day or two with me. Cause I told them my moving, that I was kind of scared. Them woods back there. Ain’t no telling what might come out them woods.”</td>
<td>“It’s like as I said. It’s really peaceful and quiet. At night I go sit out the porch or sit up on the balcony up there…you can just think. You don’t have to worry about dodging no bullets….”</td>
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<td>“The newest thing a couple months ago, the little girl was missing coming home from school, didn’t make it home from school… The little girl [was found] in [the dump], dead… No, I let [my daughter] go outside, you know, I’ll walk out there with her. But… she going in pairs.”</td>
<td>“And they got police right here. If you ain’t supposed to be here and they know it, they’ll lock your ass up. Excuse my cussing. You supposed to be on the lease to be out here or you come to trespassing,”</td>
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<td>“Well, we done had two murders since we been over here…they found that man in the car… My daughter… She said, ‘Mama, see there’s a corpse in there at the park,”</td>
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<td>“just being so far out because… the buses run like every 15 minutes in a certain time of the day and at night, they run every hour on the hour. And it was kind of hard to catch the bus sometimes. Whenever you miss one bus, you had to wait a little while for another one,”</td>
<td>“And so many children came to my daughter’s house ‘cause I was there and I would, you know, throw little parties and do different things to make them feel that they were okay, you know. And we fed a lot of children. Um, you know, just to have them to have a safe haven to come to, you know,”</td>
<td>“Right, and so logistically it fit, everything. And it was close to the hospital, walking distance. So, small cab, I mean, you could get there. Public transportation to the hospital,”</td>
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<td>“I mean, they don't have a playground, you know. They have parks in this area, but they don't have an immediate playground in the apartment complex. So the kids really don't have much to do other than argue, you know, ride their bike. And you know, it's kinda boring.”</td>
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<td>“The rooms are bigger, you know. It's real space, you know, we ain't touching each other. They can be back there, I can be up here and you know, it's a backyard that's fenced in. And you know, the front yard, it's not that much yard, but we can sit on the porch and they can -- you know what I'm mean? There's just stuff they can do.”</td>
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<td>Negative Attitudes Towards People</td>
<td>Attitudes Towards People in Place</td>
<td>Positive Attitudes Towards People</td>
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<td>“Well...they wanted to borrow a dollar or two so they could buy some more crack. Uh, you know, which sometimes I used to feed people. And you don't have to be, how do you say, uh, some people just, instead of being dead, they lay down like they're dead. And all they need to be is somebody to pump some life into them. And they can stand up. And no one was doing that. No one wanted to enlighten these people, to bring them to life...And that wasn't being done. And so my spirit was always down, you know. I always felt a cloud of negativity.”</td>
<td>“The people are friendly, like I know everybody. It’s just, it's my neighborhood. I miss it. I've been there since I was a little girl....But I just miss it, my friends, their family, people, I don’t know.”</td>
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<td>“[Neighbors were], loud. (laughter) Loud...Arguing, drinking, you know, stuff like that...you know, you would go empty the garbage, I think one time I went to empty garbage and, uh, you know, you know, you can smell the aroma, [of marijuana] very loud. And it was just like, you want to like, you know, have them maybe close the door or keep it in the house, but they could just hang out right there and do it, you know. Like I said, I got three girls and... uh, you know, you don't want to make trouble, ... So what I do, you know, I just gather my girls and we just go to the park or something. Until all that's over with, something like that.”</td>
<td>“Yeah, everyone was just like family. You could go to sleep at night and be sitting out on your patio, take your tv outside and you could sleep outside in the patio back then. Yeah, Bowen Homes was real nice. It just wasn’t Bowen Homes, it was the people who lived out there. Bowen Homes, it was a good place to live.”</td>
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<td>“Well, they didn’t, they didn’t like me too much. …So the older peoples, they said I didn’t like children. …But I had to like children to have all them. But I just didn’t want to be bothered with all of them children, you can’t tell ‘em nothing you know, and they turn around and you know, say bad, things to you,”</td>
<td>“I was the captain on my floor for the fire drills and everything. …like we had a firedrill, I have to go and knock on everybody door on my floor and say, “Come out.” And when they come out, I’ll tell ‘em, “Go straight to the hall. Right there where there’s a exit. Do not get on the elevator.” … I knew everybody name and everything, yes I did.”</td>
<td>“Well, some of the neighbors I was very social with and some of them I was really, really friendly with. And especially some of the older women there. ‘Cause it kind of reminded me of when I was a kid growing up in the neighborhood, there was this one woman who reminded me of a lady who always baked cookies for some of the kids in the neighborhood, when they get out of school. And she would just ask them to come over and you know, have a chat with her, you know, talk with her. And you know, she was a lonely woman and everything. She just loves children, period. I kind of got that kind of feeling from her when I was growing up. And then I met another, I met a woman there in the neighborhood who was just like her. But she just wanted somebody to talk to. She has family here in Georgia, but they live out of the city, they don’t stay in the city. See me, I don’t have family here period…Yeah, I kind of made family when I came here.”</td>
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<td>“Okay, okay.” And it’s like, I used to stand there I’m like, “Wow, nobody be outside?” You know, I’m also used to seeing everybody outside. I like, “Nobody outside.” And then when I moved over here, I wasn’t working, so everybody used to go to work. I was like, “Hm.” That’s how I feel like, I don’t belong over here.”</td>
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<td>“And uh, I tried to get a book club out there, get people to read books and change books. Tried to get a library out there, we never did get the library.”</td>
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<td>“And I said, …’Oh yeah. Well, I tell you what. We going to do such and such thing. I’m gonna put it down. And we gonna work – ‘ and then, when you tell these people you gonna work with them, you got to look them straight in the eye. … Say, ‘Hey, look. This is the problem that’s going. We need help. These people need help. It’s a lot of them out there right now, they need help. Serious help.’”</td>
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<td>“How can they when you have a corrupt management office? Management office don't see these things, they just worried about getting their job, doing their job and getting their paycheck and going home to where they live. You see, some care and some don’t. And that became the, the situation. And when I started to voice these things in some of the meetings (makes noise of disbelief), see 'cause some of these people are illiterate and they don't have a high school education. And they're poverty-stricken and, and they're disabled. And people take advantage of that. And this is what I saw Atlanta Housing Authority doing. For the time that I've been there. This whole relocation was a, was a [ruse] You know, I know it and they know it. And so when you try to, you know, I suddenly try to bring it to their attention, like, you know, what you're doing is wrong. You're taking advantage of people, giving, offering them better housing when they can't even take care of themselves. And then you got medically disabled and then you got mentally disabled. So when I left, I was one of the first people to leave the building. I didn't even wait for the, them to say, ‘A----- you're scheduled to leave on this day.’ I, I paid the rent here, everything, moved.”</td>
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<td>“Sometimes I didn’t like the drug traffic, you know. Normally you know, ‘cause people get they checks, they were getting their checks first of the month and you know, and sometime, I didn’t like it for my kids. They were out there, or they weren’t tryin’ to be, they was just so open with it, you know. So I tried to keep my kids busy. Sometimes, but. I got to know them too and told them what to do and where to do it at. Not around my front door, so.”</td>
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<td>“Yeah, and they had a big old field down there you could go down there and play ball, got a basketball court, then had tennis, another park on top of the hill you go up there, and then had another school behind, behind there, Williams, another school, another park was there….And we had our own special day, they used to have Bowen Homes day. See at Bowen Homes it was a unity where everybody was there together, where you want help, I’ll go.”</td>
<td>“They would take little trips with the kids, they would take them different places. ….Like they would take them to the YMCA … Recreation Center, they would take them swimming, they would take them to the aquarium, they would go to movies…So yeah. Like I said, I think it was something for the kids to do during the summer. They would have barbecues for the kids, parties, all types of things like that.”</td>
<td>“And every holiday, I would cook and feed the whole neighborhood. …And um, my church, this room was filled with food. Canned goods and non-perishable items and they brought me so much stuff here for Christmas and Thankgiving. And people in the building saw them bringing me all this stuff and they wanted to know, how in the world did you get all of that, you know? And I shared until I gave it all away, you know. I gave it all away to different peoples in the building.”</td>
<td>“Yeah, I can go down there to the summer camp and sit with the kids or help watch the kids. Um, go to church with my son and, like, me, I’ve been going to bible study ever since I was 12. So after I had pregnant when I was 15, the lady, she was still coming out there, helping other teenagers who got pregnant…. So I used to help her and I used to go with her, with other teenagers. I was the oldest one with her, everybody else was like 17, 18, you know, on down. And she helped me a lot when I was pregnant, so I used to go to church, go to bible study with her.”</td>
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<td>&quot;They like the place, they like the place. We was actually talking about having something, like a cookout or something here, so. You know, having a housewarming, see the house I think they’d like it.”</td>
<td>&quot;They come and get the kids and they go down to the park and they feed ‘em and uh, they do like little events, paint they face and stuff like that. I can't remember but it was some kind of church, I can't remember. But I walked down there and stuff like that.”</td>
<td>&quot;Then like the Shorty Low, he used to give everybody hair cuts and pool party…T-shirts,”</td>
<td>“… the kids could go to the community center and be able to associate with some of the adults, and talk with some of the adults that could help them out with problems if they didn’t have anybody they could talk to”</td>
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<td>Low Level of Shared Emotional Connection</td>
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<td>“Especially on the weekend. You know, it being a, you know, project area or a low-income area, you got people who sit outside on the porch, have cookouts and stuff and then they have their little parties outside. And then there was loud music and everything. But for the most part, whenever that happens, I always leave the neighborhood and just go somewhere else. You know, like I said, I grew up in something like that, but you know, as I got older, you know, you do tend to want your peace and quiet.”</td>
<td>“I was made like I was crying…” ‘They tearing down Hollywood Court, we ain’t going to see them no more.’ But I told them we was going to go over there and get us a brick. I want to get my apartment number off of there,”</td>
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<td>“[At old place] Uh-uh. Uh-uh. Didn't nobody too much come around too much. No more than like Thanksgiving, give people baskets and stuff, … No, none of that. They used to have it, but they used to be with the people that had kids. You know how they take ’em out there in the park and give ’em lunches and stuff? But I didn't have nothing too much to -- um-mm… [and here] I don't know. ’Cause when I come in, when I get home, it be like 6:30 or 7 o'clock when I get home. And when come in, I just come straight in. I don't know nobody here. You know, when people wave and speak to you when you walkin’ by, other than that, uh-uh. I don't know nobody out here. “</td>
<td>“Some things that I liked about there is for me personally, I could have both my doors open and nobody runnin’ through my house, or you know, hold me at gun point or nothing like that. The neighbors, they were so protective over my kids and their kids, like we could sit out there and the kids could play. I just liked it when one person come outside, everybody come outside. And it was okay, it was never a dull day in Bowen Homes.”</td>
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<td>“[ So let me ask you did you keep a piece of Bowen?] Oh yes, I sure did! … I got me piece of the rock…Been there since 1963. Baby that’s a long time…Knew everybody.”</td>
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APPENDIX B

Axial Coding: Zones of Action

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<td>Proximity to Crime/Murder</td>
<td>Place as People/Place as Resource</td>
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<td>Presence of Children</td>
<td>Level of Perceived Stigma</td>
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<td>Senior/Family Mix-Use</td>
<td>Amount of Friends</td>
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<td>Access to Community/Resources</td>
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<td>Sense of Safety</td>
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<td>Level of Integration and Need Fulfillment</td>
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# Axial Coding: Level of Engagement/Level of Inclusion

**Context**
- Relocating From Public Housing 2008-2010

**Contingencies/Conditions**
- Reason for Entering Housing
  - Presence of Children
  - Long Term/Short Term
- Level of Mismatch
- Level of Education
- Amount of Friends in Neighborhood

**Degree of Welcome** ➔ **Level of Engagement/Level of Inclusion** ➔ **Level of Neighboring**

**Covariance**
- Zones of Action
- Level of Integration and Need Fulfillment
Axial Coding: Level of Integration and Need Fulfillment

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