The Other Side of Hope: Squandering Social Capital in Louisville's HOPE VI

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This qualitative study followed 40 households displaced in Louisville's HOPE VI redevelopment of Clarksdale public housing. The authors argue that though the goals to alleviate distressed housing and deconcentrate poverty were laudable, Louisville's housing authority gave insufficient consideration to the effects of policy on poor people in their communities. The processes and results in Louisville disrupted communities, perpetuated disempowerment, and favored deconcentration of poverty over poverty reduction. Through the lens of a preferential option for the poor, the authors argue that HOPE VI would be more likely to achieve its stated goals if built upon existing foundations of social capital.

KEYWORDS   housing, social justice, HOPE VI, social capital

In 1992, Congress responded to the "severely distressed" conditions of the nation's public housing stock by creating Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere programs. One of these was the Urban Revitalization Demonstration (URD) program, or HOPE VI. HOPE VI was designed to (a) improve the physical shape of public housing, (b) revitalize surrounding neighborhoods, (c) reduce concentrations of poverty, and (d) build sustainable communities.[1] HOPE VI sought to improve residents' quality of life through the opportunity to return to revitalized communities or relocate to better neighborhoods, and to move toward self-sufficiency (Buron, Popkin, Levy, Harris, & Khadduri, 2002). We examine the HOPE VI demolition of

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Louisville's Clarksdale Housing Project and replacement with a new mixed-income neighborhood called Liberty Green to determine its effects on social capital available to the relocated residents.

Although the goals to alleviate distressed housing and deconcentrate poverty were laudable, we demonstrate that Louisville's HOPE VI redevelopment of Clarksdale Housing Project gave insufficient consideration to the effects of public policy on poor people in their communities. The rhetoric, processes, and results in Louisville disrupted communities, perpetuated disempowerment, and favored deconcentration of poverty over poverty reduction. In particular, we focus on the disruption of community and social capital. Social capital consists of formal and informal social networks, horizontal social relations, and habits of trust, cooperation, civic participation, and personal investment in the community. Social capital must be factored in as an essential element of social policy. Persons in community are the best resources for identifying problems and addressing solutions. HOPE VI would be more likely to achieve its stated goals if built upon existing foundations of social capital.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND—THE HOPE VI REDEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC HOUSING

In response to the perceived failures of public housing policy, Congress passed The Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989. The legislation established a National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing (the Commission) to identify the most "severely distressed" public housing; to assess strategies for addressing problems in physical structure, management and social services; and to develop plans for improvements (The Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989).

The Commission's 1992 *Final Report* identified 6% of the nation's 1.4 million public housing units as "severely distressed" and proposed a National Action Plan for addressing the problems (National Commission on Severely Distressed Housing [NCSDH], 1992). As a result, Congress created HOPE VI in 1992 (The Housing and Community Development Act of 1992). The program was a partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), local public housing authorities like Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA),[2] and private investment leveraged through low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC). HOPE VI resulted in an historic migration, invisible to most Americans, the relocation of tens of thousands of the nation's public housing residents as complexes were demolished to make room for mixed-income developments.

HOPE VI in Louisville

FROM COTTER/LANG TO PARK DuVALLE

Louisville's first HOPE VI program was a $20 million grant in 1996 to revitalize Cotter and Lang homes. The resulting $237 million, 1,100-unit Park DuValle development was hailed as a model mixed-income neighborhood. Although still isolated and racially segregated, the attractive development includes an improved education center, a health clinic, and a renovated community center. By 2008, the project had not attracted expected levels of new business investment, shopping, and services. More broadly, according to LMHA Executive Director Tim Barry, the project resulted in a net loss of subsidized housing (T. Barry, personal communication, July 29, 2008). Further, by putting displaced HOPE VI families at the top of Section 8 waiting lists, the program disadvantaged thousands of families whose lengthy wait times for subsidized housing were extended. Only 7% of former Cotter and Lang residents returned to Park DuValle and the city "didn't do a good job of tracking where people went" (J. Abramson, former mayor, personal communication, July 11, 2008).

FROM CLARKSDALE TO LIBERTY GREEN

With lessons learned from Park DuValle, the city resolved to improve its record on its second HOPE VI project. Clarksdale, the city's oldest housing project, was diagnosed as severely distressed and slated for destruction. The Housing Authority began conversations with business partners and residents that culminated in two HOPE VI grants of $20 million each to demolish Clarksdale and develop the Liberty Green neighborhood in its place, a revitalization costing $250 million in Louisville's gentrifying east downtown area. Beginning in 1999, the Housing Authority conducted public meetings to engage Clarksdale residents in planning a revitalization strategy. A 2001 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Housing Authority and resident groups guaranteed that most residents (73%) would be relocated in Liberty Green or the east downtown area (Housing Authority of Louisville, Citizens of Louisville Organized and United together, et al. [HAL & Citizens of Louisville], 2001). The first phase of resident relocations began in 2004.

LITERATURE REVIEW

HOPE VI arose from the proposition that deconcentration of poverty will result in improved outcomes for poor people. An influential body of literature suggests that social isolation and weak support networks in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty prevent the urban "underclass" from

improving their lives (e.g., Wilson, 1987). According to this perspective, a lack of connections to positive role models, quality social services, or contacts outside poor neighborhoods breeds a cycle of self-perpetuating poverty (Coulton & Pandey, 1990; Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Rankin & Quane, 2000). Neighborhood matters, but evidence about causal mechanisms by which neighborhood affects individual outcomes is inconclusive (Ellen & Turner, 1997).

William Julius Wilson (1996) argued that neighborhoods characterized by high poverty and high unemployment eventually suffer from disintegration of social organization and the consequent manifestation of negative "ghetto-related behaviors" such as criminal behavior, gang involvement, illicit sources of income, and dysfunctional family structures. Further, without assistance, families are likely to stay in isolated high-poverty neighborhoods (Bembry & Norris, 2005). Hence, public housing policy now aims to combat concentrated poverty and social disorganization through dispersal of residents (Khadduri, 2001).

Although not denying the problems of racially and economically concentrated neighborhoods, other housing advocates and scholars suggest that social networks of the poor are not inferior and that social capital is an undervalued resource in poor communities, including public housing. Greenbaum, Hathaway, Rodriguez, Spalding, and Ward (2008) reviewed recent ethnographies that demonstrate that:

> The social ties of the poor are not qualitatively deficient, and actually may be more numerous and valuable than those connecting middle class neighbors. . . . [T]he social environment in public housing is multilayered, not nearly as dysfunctional as standard media portrayals. As in other neighborhoods, most residents are law-abiding, and one finds many social arrangements that aid in survival and self-improvement. (p. 203)

Social capital theorist James Coleman (1988) emphasized that like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, and makes the achievement of certain ends possible that would not be attainable in its absence. Social capital consists of two measurable components: objective associations between individuals and a subjective tie, which must be reciprocal, trusting, and involving positive emotions (Paxton, 1999). In fact, without bridging social capital, communities do not have what is needed to get ahead (Guenther & Falk, 1999; Woolcock, 1998). Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) added that social capital grows from a particular historical context, shared norms and values, external interactions, reciprocity, and trust. Friendships, social networks, and shared traditions are undervalued assets that provide much needed infrastructure in poor neighborhoods.

Relocation often results in increased social isolation and increased vulnerability from the loss of coping strategies derived from place-based social capital (Clampet-Lunquist, 2010; Curley, 2009). Further, low levels

of integration with new neighbors after relocation may lessen positive behavioral outcomes (Brophy & Smith, 1997). Moreover, because social support and social cohesion are also key determinants of health (Ellen, Mijanovich, & Dillman, 2001), policies that increase social isolation are likely to have negative health effects (Stansfield, 2006). Hence, though deconcentration may have benefits, these must be weighed against deterioration of those forms of social capital that have been a primary resource for residents. Social capital is difficult to rebuild after it is depleted by relocation.

Initial experiments tested the benefits of deconcentration by following families relocated in assisted mobility programs. The Gautreaux desegregation program engineered mobility for Chicago public housing residents by subsidizing residency in higher income suburban neighborhoods. Children relocated to predominantly White suburbs were more likely to finish school, go to college, and find a job than those who remained in higher poverty urban neighborhoods (Kaufman & Rosenbaum, 1992; Rosenbaum, 1995). However, social networks in public housing were disrupted for those who moved and for those left behind, leaving some residents more socially isolated than before (Boyd, 2008; Boyd, Edin, Clampet-Lundquist, & Duncan, 2010).

In 1994, HUD launched a multicity demonstration project called Moving to Opportunity (MTO). Outcomes for an experimental group moved to low-poverty Section 8 neighborhoods were compared with those who received regular vouchers and those who stayed in public housing. Results indicate increased satisfaction with housing, safety, and neighborhood; reduced psychological distress; and some health and behavioral benefits for girls. However, educational and income improvements have not been demonstrated (Goering & Feins, 2003; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Orr et al., 2003; Popkin, Harris, & Cunningham, 2001).

Like Gautreaux and MTO, HOPE VI intends to correct or prevent the ills said to be associated with concentrated poverty (Zhang & Weismann, 2006). Numerous multicity or single-site studies examined whether HOPE VI relocations improved the lives of the former public housing residents (see Popkin, Katz, et al., 2004; Popkin, Levy, et al., 2004). For example, Urban Institute's HOPE VI Resident Tracking Study of eight sites revealed postrelocation benefits of better housing and safer neighborhoods but showed that many new neighborhoods were still characterized by poverty, racial segregation, drugs, and crime. Relocated respondents reported low levels of social interaction with their new neighbors and continuing barriers to income self-sufficiency (Buron et al., 2002).

COMMUNITY SETTING

Louisville/Jefferson County Kentucky is a city of 741,000 people in a metro area of 1.3 million people (2010) with a poverty rate of 17.5%

(2007–2011 average) (U.S. Census Bureau: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/21/2148006.html). The city's housing patterns are historically segregated. Housing projects were originally built for Whites or Blacks only. Pockets of concentrated poverty have existed in the city's west end and public housing projects. For example, in 1994, just before relocations, average annual income for Cotter/Lang residents was $5,000 (Gilderbloom, Brazley, & Pan, 2005). In 1999, median income in Clarksdale's census tract was $9,367, compared with $39,457 in Jefferson County. In Clarksdale, 72.5% of residents surveyed at baseline were not working and only 12.3% of its working-age residents were employed. Sixty percent had no earned income, and 88.3% were below the federal poverty level (Stone, Dailey, Barbee, & Patrick, 2011).

Like other urban centers, Louisville has also been plagued by a lack of affordable housing. In 2002 and 2003, just before the Clarksdale relocations, one third of all renting households in Louisville spent more than 30% of their income on housing. The waiting list for subsidized housing totaled 9,400 families, and this total had ballooned to 14,934 families by 2010 (Metropolitan Housing Coalition [MHC], 2003; Vick, Poe, Sharia, Norton, & Brooks, 2010). In Louisville, 37% of wage earners don't make enough to afford fair market rate for a two-bedroom apartment (Vick & Norton, 2008).

Clarksdale Study Site

Clarksdale Housing Project mirrors the history of public housing in America. Built in 1938 for Whites only, Clarksdale exemplified policies in the Housing Act of 1937 that resulted in massive blocks of subsidized housing. With 728 apartments in a six-block area of east downtown Louisville, the wide sidewalks, interior courtyards, and central park facilitated neighborliness. Low-income working White families lived at Clarksdale until the mid-1960s. After Kentucky's 1966 Civil Rights Statute and the nation's 1968 Fair Housing Act, African Americans moved into Clarksdale and Whites fled to other areas of the city. Clarksdale became a vibrant Black neighborhood, but many businesses closed and some churches joined the flight to the suburbs. Clarksdale became a complex that concentrated poverty, low education levels, and racial minorities into an area avoided by middle-class society and ignored by investors and employers. Clarksdale served as the residence for as many as 695 family units. At the time of relocation, 97% of Clarksdale's residents were African American, 3.8% were age 65 or older, and one half were children younger than age 18 (Stone et al., 2011). The complex remained physically unchanged except for minor renovations in 1984 (Housing Authority of Louisville [HAL], 2001, Exhibit A, 2).

The city's assessment of this study site was captured in its applications for HUD funding for HOPE VI redevelopment. Clarksdale's buildings needed substantial investment to bring aging units up to code. The Housing Authority highlighted deteriorating conditions that posed health and safety threats.

Further, the high-density concentration of low-income families led to high truancy and dropout rates and criminal activities that made the area unsafe. In Clarksdale "violent crime is an alarming four times the rate of the over-all city" (HAL, 2001, Exhibits A, 2 and C, 1). Police considered Clarksdale's park a magnet for "illegal and disruptive behavior" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit C, 1). Phoenix Hill, the larger area in which Clarksdale was located, had experienced economic difficulties as businesses moved out and property values dropped. In fact, the neighborhood's 7% homeownership rate was the lowest in the city (C. Brown-Kinloch & D. Magee, Phoenix Hill Neighborhood Association, personal communication, June 18, 2008).

METHOD AND APPROACH

Our methodology was shaped by our conviction that researchers listen respectfully to the voices of the often-studied poor and follow their lead in analysis and evaluation of social policies that affect them. We ask how Louisville's HOPE VI transition affected residents of Clarksdale who are some of society's most vulnerable individuals. Our qualitative approach differs from purely quantitative longitudinal studies, which though valuable as tracking methodologies, can present aggregate results in ways that neglect the unheard voices of real participants.[3] Statistics tell us much. Stories may tell us much more.

Participant Sample Profile

Our principal data source consisted of 90-minute ethnographic interviews with 40 relocated residents from Clarksdale. Interviewees were selected by two methods. First, we used purposive nonprobability sampling with an official list of Clarksdale residents' names and addresses before their relocation. We looked for current contact information and phoned to set up interviews at their new residences. Second, snowball sampling of informal social networks identified additional respondents. We asked each interviewee for other contacts and solicited names from community organizations. Snowball sampling was especially useful because residents had been relocated throughout Louisville.

Of the 40 relocated interviewees, 35 were African American. Sixteen were age 60 years or older. Six had been homeless and 24 had lived in Clarksdale for a decade or more. Three fourths had lived in other publically subsidized housing. Sixteen were employed and 24 were not working, either because they were unable to find work, elderly, or unwilling to work for a variety of reasons. Sixteen had criminal records and 15 had addiction problems in their histories. None was a college graduate and 12 had not graduated

from high school. More than one fourth had annual incomes below $9,000. Fifteen were insured through Medicaid and seven were uninsured.

Data Collection and Analysis

Our research team of two professors and four undergraduate students gathered data over a 2-year period in the summers of 2008 and 2009. Before we began resident interviews, we collected background information by reviewing research on HOPE VI nationally and locally, and by meeting with stakeholders like the mayor, Legal Aid attorneys, resident advocacy groups, Metro Louisville Housing Authority, journalists, ministers, and the Metropolitan Housing Coalition. The first data source consisted of field notes from interviews with these stakeholders. In addition, we drew on data from the Baseline Study and Final Report on Clarksdale, commissioned by LMHA.

Finally, two researchers interviewed one or more adults from each relocated household. Each interviewee signed a consent form and confidentiality agreement. Questions covered three topics: the Clarksdale neighborhood, HOPE VI relocation, and new housing and neighborhood. Of the 26 questions, 16 were open ended and 10 were closed ended (see Appendix). After these questions, the note taker stopped the recorder and the interviewer asked sociodemographic questions. The note taker identified each tape with the interviewer's initials, interviewee number and date. One member of the research team transcribed the taped interview.

After all the interviews were transcribed, an open-ended first-level coding process (Tutty, Rothery, & Grinnell, 1996) involved reading transcripts to discover meaning units inductively. On first reading, three broad categories emerged: (a) loyalty to the Clarksdale neighborhood, (b) a sense of resignation about relocation, and (c) mixed satisfaction with new housing and new neighborhoods. We assigned codes to the three categories and their subcategories, then linked excerpts to these codes (Padgett, 1998). From second-level coding one primary theme rose to the surface: the value of social networks in Clarksdale and the loss of social capital in the relocation process. This insight informs the analysis in our findings and discussion.

Conceptual Framework—A Preferential Option for the Poor

We proceed from a preferential option for the poor that evaluates public policy from the perspective of its effects on the vulnerable. A need-based, poverty-focused analysis resonates with the rhetoric of HOPE VI itself, which purports to prioritize the needs of residents who live in poverty. As professors of religious ethics addressing public policy in a pluralist society, we ground this evaluative framework in the languages of reason, experience, and faith. The language of reason affirms those rights that are due to every person by virtue of the fact that they are human, reflecting an overlapping

consensus about the conditions necessary for the fulfillment of human dignity. Consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948), we affirm the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for human dignity (Article 22), including rights to work with just remuneration (Article 23) and the right to a standard of living adequate for human health and well-being, including housing (Article 25).

The language of faith is also important to our analysis because the original request to conduct this research came from a church-based community organizing coalition, Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together (CLOUT). Most of the community organizing around the HOPE VI process in Louisville originated in faith-based organizations committed to a "preferential option for the poor." The "option for the poor" is a central affirmation of Catholic Social Teaching. Karen Lebacqz (1986) summarized the tradition's key affirmations as (a) the inherent dignity of the human person created in "the image of God," (b) the social nature of human beings, who find their fulfillment in community, and (c) "the belief that the abundance of nature and of social living is given for all people" (p. 67).

These affirmations lead to principles such as participation, common good, and distributive justice with economic and social rights as well as civil and political rights (e.g., National Conference of Catholic Bishops [NCCB], 1986). Consistent throughout the tradition is a focus on the poor. The poor deserve special concern because of their vulnerability, a vulnerability that (a) threatens full realization of their dignity, (b) thwarts their ability to participate (economically, politically, socially) in the community, and (c) deprives them of the abundance of nature that was intended for all, but is distributed inequitably.

The option for the poor calls for solidarity with those who suffer. The obligation to provide justice for all means that "the poor have the single most urgent economic claim upon the conscience of the nation" (NCCB, 1986, p. 47). Hence, for the Bishops, "distributive justice requires that the allocation of income, wealth, and power in society be evaluated in light of its effects on persons whose basic material needs are unmet" (NCCB, 1986, p. 42). Justice enables all persons to contribute to the common good. This contributive understanding of justice "implies that persons have an obligation to be active and productive participants in the life of society and that society has a duty to enable them to participate in this way" (NCCB, 1986, p. 42).

Participation, contributive justice, and the common good are fundamental to the principle of community. The rich notion of community, consistent with a preferential option for the poor, combines respect for the individual and full participatory responsibility for the common good. Hence, it affirms the crucial importance of social capital as a resource to be developed, protected and invested.

A notion of justice that takes seriously the social nature of the human person "demands that social institutions be ordered in a way that guarantees

all persons the ability to participate actively in the economic, political and cultural life of society" (NCCB, 1986, p. 44). This empowering and participatory notion includes the element of praxis in which conscientized individuals, acting in supportive communities, become subjects of their own history rather than objects of the history created by the powerful and the privileged.

Prior to the religious language of Catholic social teaching or the rational public discourse of human rights is the narrative of human experience, which may be the most powerful. After all, human rights discourse originates in a sense of deprivation and violation. When we hear such narratives we understand their meaning through the universal capacity for empathy. For this reason, our qualitative analysis focuses on the narratives of individuals as a window into the effects of HOPE VI. Were those affected empowered to participate economically, socially, and politically in the life of the community in ways that enhanced their own well-being while also advancing the common good?

FINDINGS: PERSPECTIVES ON THE CLARKSDALE COMMUNITY

In the analysis of our interviews, one theme emerged above all others. Clarksdale was a community in which social networks provided resources that enhanced resident well-being. As our literature review demonstrated, social capital is a valuable resource in poor communities, although it may be unrecognized by outsiders. HOPE VI documents used the rhetoric of community, but our findings suggest that the Housing Authority did not adequately account for existing social capital before relocation. Furthermore, they did not preserve this resource in the neighborhoods where former Clarksdale residents were relocated.

Social Capital

Residents valued the community that developed in Clarksdale, recalling how children played in the park, teenagers rode bicycles to school, parents struggled to make ends meet, and neighbors invested in each others' lives. One mother asserted:

> A lot of people misunderstand the word "project" and just turn it into everything bad; it's not like that. It's not where you live, it's how you live and that makes a big difference. The neighbors I had there were all nice. I loved it because the kids had something to do. . . . Clarksdale used to be one of the best projects there was. (JH4, July 24, 2008)

A remarkable 34 of our 40 interviewees said that neighbors, friendships, and sense of community were among their favorite things about Clarksdale. In the

application for the HOPE VI grant, the city acknowledged that Clarksdale was known for its sense of community. "This sense of neighborhood is not an illusion but a very real phenomenon, neighbors want to remain neighbors" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit A, 2).

Residents displaced by HOPE VI, some of whom lived in Clarksdale as children, spoke wistfully of the community pride they experienced there. One resident said, "It was a real community . . . ; they are all like relatives where everyone helps each other" (JG4, July 22, 2008). A 33-year-old mother commented:

> The neighborhood was like a small community, everybody worked with everybody. . . . The neighbors interacted with the kids, to do sports and stuff like that. Say something bad would go on in the community, they would have like a community outreach, everybody pitched in and helped, like a death in the family, people you didn't even know would walk up and say I'm sorry, and make food. (R1, July 16, 2008)

An older woman saw Clarksdale as her "second family" and lamented "being broken up" (JH9, July 1, 2009). Asked what she disliked about Clarksdale, one resident simply replied, "They put us out" (JH5, July 25, 2008).

How did this community function? One resident described community as knowing neighbors enough to borrow a cup of sugar, an egg, or cornbread mix. Another resident spoke of Clarksdale as a helping place, especially with senior adults and children (M2, July 21, 2008). When older residents had needs, neighbors offered rides and delivered groceries. In return, older residents took care of children for working mothers and served as the eyes and ears of Clarksdale. Mothers volunteered at the public school and St. Boniface's afterschool program, whereas others organized a "walking school bus." Each day, two parents collected children at their doors, lined them up two by two, and walked them to school to ensure their safety (F. Royster, Lincoln Elementary School, personal communication, July 15, 2008).

Clarksdale's social network functioned as a neighborhood watch long before the concept was popularized. Many residents told us that neighbors knew how to read the social dynamics and warned each other when trouble was brewing. One told us:

> it's gonna sound crazy, but once I moved and then got me a house, I felt more safe out there (Clarksdale), than I did on my own somewhere else. Ain't that weird? Because everybody knows who you are . . . and if anything would ever happen, they'd know. (JH7, July 30, 2008)

Another resident agreed, "Everybody looked out for each other's kids, and it was like one big family sometimes. If you see somebody's kid doing something or somebody's messing with somebody's kid, you tell them, 'Hey

look!'" (JH11, July 29, 2009). When a group of boys attacked the son of one
newcomer to Clarksdale, her new Clarkdale neighbors stopped the fight.
"They showed me that people did like me" (R5, July 1, 2009).

Many residents appreciated the memories that made Clarksdale special.
The annual summer celebration of Clarksdale Day brought the community
together in the central park. Residents of all ages came out for music, food,
games, face painting, and socializing. Residents mentioned police field trips,
cookouts, softball leagues, fireworks, and block parties as important ele-
ments of their quality of life. Residents also valued Clarksdale's location near
downtown because they could buy groceries nearby, attend neighborhood
churches, and see doctors at Louisville Medical Center Clinic. Five years after
relocation, interviewees still mourned the loss of the neighborhood that out-
siders disparaged and feared. HOPE VI transitions clearly disrupted valued
social networks and stability.

Although they acknowledged Clarksdale's problems, interviewees dis-
agreed about the seriousness and sources. Fourteen cited violence, nine
mentioned drugs, and eight noted crime as aspects they disliked. One men-
tioned a "drug house" across the alley from her apartment and described a
mugging and a shootout (JG7, July 30, 2008). Others mentioned shootings or
murders in the complex. These were serious problems in Clarksdale, espe-
cially on inner courts. Location in inner courts made all the difference in how
residents evaluated the crime problem. Surprisingly, more than one half of
our survey participants (22) said that safety was one of the things they liked
about living there. One resident told us, "We could leave our doors unlocked,
we could trust one another over there, we had no problems" (JH5, July 25,
2008). Although the stress of living with drug activity and violence should
not be minimized, our interviews revealed that the capacity of strong social
networks to mitigate the insecurity is often undervalued.

Residents perceived that some of the worst problems resulted from the
relocation of residents from Cotter and Lang in Louisville's first HOPE VI
program. Fr. Tim Hogan, pastor emeritus of the adjacent St. Boniface Catholic
Church, insists that this worsened crime in Clarksdale after 1995 (T. Hogan,
personal communication, August 30, 2011). Another resident complained,
"It started getting worser when they started doing relocations from Cotter
Homes and Southwick, you know, that's when the crime started getting in"
(M2, July 21, 2008). Residents told us that problems with drugs or crime were
caused by outsiders who did not live in Clarksdale.

Civic Participation

Civic participation is essential to building social capital. Because the HOPE VI
application asserts that Louisville's process will be resident-driven with
"unprecedented sensitivity to resident concerns" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit A, 1) the
extent of meaningful participation bears examination. Our interviews suggest

that residents did not feel like real partners in the planning. An elderly resident commented, "They was gonna do it anyway, so you could say what you want, they really don't care, they had their mind made up. It was over" (JH2, July 18, 2008). A young mom agreed, "There's a lot of people upset; they talked in them meetings, but it didn't do nothing; they tore us on down" (JH5, July 25, 2008). One elderly resident was suspicious about LMHA's openness to input when officials showed up at a meeting with "blueprints about how it was gonna look! They already had their minds set on what they were gonna do" (JH6, July 28, 2008). Although surveyed at the application stage, most did not make decisions or consult with decision makers.

Some vocal residents formed Concerned Citizens of Clarksdale United (CCCU) and enlisted the help of the area's church-based community organizing coalition, CLOUT. After the Clarksdale Residents Council (CRC) split over whether to support demolition or renovation, CLOUT conducted a listening process to determine resident concerns (R. Owens, lead organizer, personal communication, June 11, 2008). CLOUT and CCCU joined with other community partners to negotiate a MOU with the city (HAL & Citizens of Louisville, et al., 2001). The Housing Authority did not follow through on all its pledges in the MOU.[4] Hence, the MOU remains a source of dismay for those who spent hundreds of hours developing the agreement.

Did the process enhance or squander social capital? CCCU activists report that research and participation sharpened their organizational abilities, communication skills, and critical consciousness. One resident felt empowered as she advocated for residents, read housing reports, learned terminology, and networked with community activists at other HOPE VI sites (G2, June 18, 2008). Another CCCU member said, "We had rallies, we went to the mayor's office, and we were up there holding our signs up and chanting our songs. . . . We fought it till the end, but we just didn't win" (JH11, July 29, 2009). For another resident the fight left scars because the city was untrustworthy. The empowerment that came with community organizing collapsed when the city broke its promises related to relocation processes and options, social services, employment, and participatory decision making. Now he has lost touch with many friends from Clarksdale. He reports that he now has better housing but something important has been lost. "Clarksdale was like a family; a whole community was there" (G1, June 11, 2008). Engaged residents were community assets, but the value of their civic investment was squandered by the city's broken promises.

New Housing and New Neighborhood

Once moved to new locations throughout the city, Clarksdale residents began adjusting to new housing in a new neighborhood: unpacking boxes, meeting neighbors, developing a social network, and finding shops, schools, churches, and health care providers. For some, the promise of scattered

site and Section 8 housing brought new opportunities and incremental steps toward their dreams of home ownership. However, the majority of Clarksdale's relocated residents were shuttled from project to project. For too many, even with the relocation stipends and available social services, the changes represented a loss of security and fear for the future.

More people reported feeling unsafe in their new neighborhood than in Clarksdale. Several of these cited murders, drug deals, and crime where they were relocated. One mother relocated to another public housing project said, "At first I thought it was quiet where I moved and then a little boy got shot. They were selling drugs down there" (JG6, July 25, 2008). One new Section 8 resident complained:

> Crime rate ain't actually bad in the projects because as we done lived down here it's been two killings around the corner right here. It's been a killing down the street. It's been a killing around the corner. It's just crazy. So how can you say the ratings is worse in the projects? (JG4, July 22, 2008)

This resident could no longer count on the previous neighborhood networks in Clarksdale that had provided resources to cope with trouble.

Residents we interviewed were mixed in their reactions to Sheppard Square and Beecher Terrace, the two high-density public housing projects where many moved. One elderly resident liked her new neighborhood, "Down here [Beecher] I have a peace of mind and I have a granddaughter that lives right across the street. I'm well content. And I got friends down here too" (A1, July 17, 2008). She had been content at Clarksdale and was equally content at Beecher Terrace.

Other residents mourned the loss of social safety nets in the new neighborhood. One widow in Beecher complained that several friends had died or moved too far away to keep track of. Vandals broke her window with a beer bottle, and nothing had been done about it despite repeated reports. The young people here keep her nervous. "Most of the time you can't even sit outside. I don't know nothin' about none hardly of these people." She said her life is "worse off" here than in Clarksdale (JH12, July 29, 2009).

Residents moved to Sheppard Square were more negative about their new neighborhood. A mother with four children found Sheppard Square more dangerous, and reported that:

> it had gotten to the point where Sheppard Square didn't want Clarksdale to be over in there. They decided to beat up the Clarksdale kids, so you know we had a little problem there, and now Sheppard Square is starting to get more crime. (M2, July 21, 2008)

One couple with children told us they didn't want another public complex because of the rivalries and fights that occur when children are transferred

into another "territory," but they were relocated to Sheppard Square anyway (E1, July 22, 2008). One teenager affirmed, "Not too many people want to go down there. Especially cause we knew we wasn't wanted in Sheppard Square. We wasn't wanted in Beecher Terrace. You couldn't go to new projects after you was from another project" (JG4, July 22, 2008).[5]

Moves to Section 8 housing did not necessarily have better outcomes than moves to public housing projects. One working mother of three moved to Section 8 housing, then lost her job, lost her housing, and went through a divorce. She told us:

> I'd like to tell them that you're not tearing down a building; you're tearing apart homes and families. Cause my family, we were doing good back then, because that's what I could afford. They made me move out; it's just wrecked my whole life, outrageous rent and stuff like this. Yeah, y'all made it pretty. But you made some of our lives hell. I have been working for years, and I didn't have to pay all these bills, but I lived in Clarksdale 13 years, come on! Obviously it was working for me, now look, I've been out of Clarksdale four years and I'm homeless. You do the math, what worked? Clarksdale or HOPE VI? HOPE VI ain't shit! HOPE VI brought my world down. (JH11, July 29, 2009)

For this mother, the unintended consequence of relocation was homelessness.

Gang pressures were worse in some Section 8 neighborhoods than in Clarksdale, and without the resources of previous social networks, youth encountered greater risk. A single mother of two told us how much her youngest son had loved playing ball at the park with friends in Clarksdale. Now in her third residence in 4 years, she laments the bad influences at their first relocation in a Section 8 apartment building. Although she found a second Section 8 to get her son "away from all these people," she tells us with lowered voice, "he's incarcerated right now." Fighting back tears, she attributes his problems to their first relocation, adding, "if you could go forward and think how things would be, you know, but you can't so, if I could have changed it, I would have" (JH8, June 26, 2009). In their case, deconcentration hardly meant improvement.

Elderly residents moved to Dosker Manor, a publicly subsidized high rise near Clarksdale, were especially unhappy. A 73-year-old resident complained about uncontrolled pets, loud music at all hours, overcrowded apartments, and 12 apartments on one floor. "I wouldn't choose Dosker again," she said, indicating that she'd prefer moving to a nursing home (M1, July 20, 2008). Another resident put her relocation in perspective:

> Well the only thing I do like is that I am in an apartment of my own. Some people out here are walking day and night and don't have nowhere to go. So I look at that as being fortunate. (A2, June 16, 2008)

Of the 6% of Clarksdale residents who returned to Liberty Green (Stone et al., 2011, pp. 42–43), many found the lack of community disappointing. One resident who lived at Liberty Green would not return again because it was "like you was locked up. I mean you couldn't barbecue, couldn't play your music like you wanted to, couldn't have company like you wanted to. . . . It's like a jail over there. I'd advise anybody, don't go" (JH5, July 25, 2008). Every Liberty Green resident we interviewed complained about this. One elderly woman said the lack of things to do led to fighting and vandalism (E4, August 4, 2008).

Residents' isolation and vulnerability in the new settings was a stark contrast with the community they valued in Clarksdale. A mother of three now in Beecher Terrace said:

> We don't know nobody through here, so I don't know how to trust anyone yet. I ain't been over here long enough. Like I said, I had been in Clarksdale all my life, so, you kinda knew everybody over there; over here I don't know half the people. (JH5, July 25, 2008)

An elderly woman in Liberty Green felt the same way. "I had a couple of friends, but they passed away. . . . I don't see nobody here that I knew in Clarksdale. . . . I don't get to go nowhere. I can't go by myself" (JG1, July 17, 2008).

Isolation was exacerbated by a diminished sense of safety in the new location. Recalling how her children enjoyed playing outside with friends in Clarksdale, a mother of three lamented the effects of gunfire at Sheppard Square: "First year, I couldn't get them to go outside" (JG3, July 21, 2008). An elderly resident in Beecher said she has no one to talk to and stays in her apartment. She does not feel safe. "You don't never know where the bullets gonna hit" (JH2, July 18, 2008). Another elderly resident in Beecher reported that five people were shot in one week after she arrived. For a while, she and her friends would not venture out of their new apartments (R2, July 22, 2008). Deprived of the social knowledge and relational networks that had provided safety, security, trust, and coping, the effects of relocation on these residents were severely alienating.

DISCUSSION

From the perspective of a preferential option for the poor, assessment must proceed from an affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of every human as a person in community and the value of communities themselves. At a minimum, this requires access to resources that meet basic physical needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Because we are social creatures,

human needs also include empowering participation in the life of a community. Social capital was the most important resource Clarksdale residents lost in the HOPE VI process.

Poverty Deconcentration rather than Poverty Reduction

Former Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson called HOPE VI "the best thing in America in two decades." He affirmed the goal of poverty deconcentration noting that concentrated poverty is "like a warehouse where bad traits feed on each other." The mayor was convinced of the positive effect of "living with those who get up every morning to go to work," arguing that HOPE VI can advance "the opportunity to live in the mainstream and absorb the culture of what people do as responsible neighbors." (J. Abramson, personal communication, July 11, 2008). This is why the program replaces public housing with mixed-income neighborhoods.

Similarly, Gilderbloom et al.'s study (2005) of Louisville's HOPE VI transformation of Cotter and Lang Homes into Park DuValle presents largely positive conclusions about deconcentration. They praise the results based on comparison of the former public housing project to the new mixed-income development that replaced it, rather than on what happened to displaced residents and their community. However, aggregate figures that compare public housing with a new mixed-income neighborhood on the same tract cannot demonstrate anything other than that poverty is less concentrated or that property values and household income increased. Refocusing the lens from the perspective of the poor leads us to ask, "What happened to the former residents?" As our findings demonstrate, these residents lost something crucial, the social capital they had drawn upon in Clarksdale. This loss represents a deterioration of resident well-being.

Community Networks and Well-Being

The Baseline Study and Final Report on Clarksdale commissioned by the LMHA claimed successful outcomes in housing and neighborhood satisfaction, quality of life, education, and employment (Stone, Barbee, & Patrick, 2008; Stone et al., 2011). The Final Report concludes that LMHA's Clarksdale redevelopment and accompanying supportive services exemplify "a functional and productive community partnership that works toward advancing the quality of life and wellbeing of our most vulnerable citizens, children, elderly and their families" (Stone et al., 2011, p. 83).

As demonstrated, residents had mixed reactions to the relocation process and the effects of HOPE VI on their well-being. One half of our interviewees did not want to move and half simply ended up in other public housing projects. Even though the Final Report found that 76.5% of those

interviewed were satisfied with their housing and 44.2% considered it better than Clarksdale, 52.9% considered it the same or worse (Stone et al., 2011, pp. 47–48).

In our interviews, 85% had experienced Clarksdale as a valued community, but their relocations increased social isolation and disconnectedness, resulting in deterioration of mental health. Only 15 of 40 (37.5%) felt they were better off than before relocation. Although interviewees had many positive assessments of their new surroundings, more of our interviewees reported feeling unsafe in their new neighborhoods than the number who felt this way before relocation. Others were discouraged and disempowered by a process that revealed the city and Housing Authority to be untrustworthy in some respects.

The stories we heard raise important questions about the well-being of those affected by relocation. In particular, the HOPE VI focus on deconcentration of poverty over poverty reduction discounted the value of social capital.

HOPE VI seriously underrates the resource of previous social networks. Although mixed-income neighborhoods deconcentrate poverty, relocated former residents lose something too often undervalued by the rhetoric of deconcentration, the social networks they have cultivated over many years. The loss of connectedness in churches, informal neighborhood watches, and neighbors who provide rides or child care is insufficiently factored into calculations of costs and benefits.

HOPE VI resulted in a loss of community for those who valued the relationships in their neighborhood. The demolition of Clarksdale was the destruction of a valued community, resulting in dislocation, uprootedness, fear, and isolation for many, especially elderly residents. Prescriptions for change must account for the often tragic consequences of the loss of social support networks so often undervalued by those looking at poor neighborhoods from a distance.

Process and Participation

Housing officials recognized that the residents of Clarksdale lacked economic capital, but they did not acknowledge the residents' rich resource of social capital. The executive summary of the first grant application begins with the intention to focus on people, "beginning with those who today call Clarksdale home" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit A, 1). Residents differ in their experience of how the process focused on people. Further, the HOPE VI priority on poverty deconcentration implies an individualistic approach of relocating each poor family instead of recognizing how embedded the family was in the community and how social networks benefitted family and community.

In addition to the results, the HOPE VI processes diminished social capital in several ways.

First, it was disingenuous to involve participants in envisioning a community of which they would almost certainly not be a part. Rhetoric led residents to believe promises of better lives in a revitalized community, but new housing configurations on the site precluded return for most, new application criteria excluded many, and relocation processes left residents disconnected from prior relational networks. Everyone knew that if Liberty Green was going to be a mixed-income neighborhood, most former residents would not return to Liberty Green. Therefore, engaging residents in planning a neighborhood to which they had little hope of relocating seemed cruel. That only 6% returned was especially cruel.

Second, HOPE VI perpetuated a sense of powerlessness instead of empowering participation in the community. Most residents that we interviewed believed they could not influence the decisions that affected them. Ideally, social policy results in individuals who act together as subjects of their own history rather than objects of decisions made by those who have the power and resources to exercise control over social systems. Authentic asset-based development recognizes the importance of existing social networks and leverages this capital to enhance well-being, community, and empowerment.

The processes did not take seriously the social nature of humans and therefore did not create the conditions that foster participation in the economic system, the community, and political engagement. A preferential option for the poor emphasizes meaningful participation. Future redevelopment programs must respect, strengthen and work within existing communal relationships. Empowering participation requires that residents or their elected community representatives have a place at the table in planning, visioning, and decision making about relocation processes, services available in new neighborhoods, and criteria for housing in the new development. Priority must be given to the shape and composition of social capital and the recognition of the ways that it enhances community development and well-being. Further, processes must ensure autonomous freedom for representative resident bodies, and points of disagreement should be resolved through negotiation or mediation. At a minimum, the city must abide by all agreements with residents. In fact, in future projects, no demolition should take place until these envisioning, clarifying, and negotiating processes are nearly complete. It has taken a long time to get to the present moment; sufficient time will be required to build new patterns.

Economic Development for Whom?

Given the distortions and losses experienced by relocated residents, it is worth examining the city's broader agenda underlying the revitalization of

Clarksdale. Although everyone recognized the problems, many residents felt that Clarksdale was not Louisville's most severely distressed housing project and questioned why Clarksdale was chosen because other housing projects were in worse shape (M1, July 20, 2008). It is important to put the choice of Clarksdale into economic and geographic context (HAL, 2001, Attachment 15 and Exhibit J, 1). The land that Clarksdale occupied was ripe for developers. The Housing Authority believed that "Clarksdale stands on the precipice of transformation, literally surrounded by economic opportunity" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit A, 3). Encircled by the University of Louisville Medical Center, Jewish Hospital, Louisville Slugger Field, Waterfront Park, and the East Market business corridor, Clarksdale's continued existence would endanger further economic potential of the area. The city's Downtown Development Plan envisioned the site as a "mixed income, diverse neighborhood" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit J, 1). The application for HUD funding stated that the revitalization will result in "dramatic change for public housing residents" and will "spur new economic development" (HAL, 2001, Exhibit J, 1). However, these realities suggest that perhaps the rhetoric of deconcentration and development in Louisville was a fraud. Poor people were pawns in a policy that benefitted developers and investors.

CONCLUSION

Resident descriptions of social networks in public housing lead to questions about the premises upon which HOPE VI policy is founded. HOPE VI promises to correct or prevent the ills associated with disintegration of social organization in high-unemployment and high-poverty neighborhoods. But recent studies reviewed above demonstrate a need for greater attention to theoretical and practical complexities and greater appreciation for the social capital accumulated in poor neighborhoods (Greenbaum et al., 2008). Examining the tight community networks in public housing projects and the sense of isolation resulting from relocation, researcher Ed Goetz asked, "Have we underestimated the role of support networks and overestimated the role of place?" (as quoted in Rosin, 2008, p. 52). Poverty deconcentration may have benefits, but these must be weighed against deterioration of those forms of social capital that have been a primary resource for residents.

HOPE VI promotes goals that all stakeholders affirm: deconcentration of poverty, crime reduction, and the creation of vital mixed-income neighborhoods. This study has shown another side of HOPE. Communities must imagine a better way, an alternative system that builds on a foundation of respect for the individual, community, and empowering participation. As cities move forward, future housing programs must value and build upon social capital in ways that are participatory and empowering.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTES

1. These goals come from The Quality Housing and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1998 which authorized and codified HOPE VI. P.L. 105-276, Tit.V. 535a (Oct.21, 1998) at 42 U.S.C. § 1437v(a).

2. The Housing Authority of Louisville (HAL) became LMHA after the city/county merger of 2002.

3. Our commitment to persons in poverty values individual narratives whether or not they are statistically representative.

4. From the city's perspective, building schedules and HUD deadlines prevented LMHA from keeping parts of the MOU (T. Barry, personal communication, June 24, 2008).

5. In another renewal project, Sheppard Square has since been demolished. All residents relocated to Sheppard Square have been moved again.

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APPENDIX
HOPE VI EVALUATION PROJECT

Interview Number ——————   Interview Date ——————
Interview Location ——————   Interviewer ———————

The following questions will contribute to a study of HOPE VI in Louisville conducted by Rick Axtell of Centre College and Michelle Tooley of Berea College. This interview is voluntary and your participation is appreciated. The interview is confidential. No names will be used. If the interviewer asks a question you do not want to answer, please say so and the interviewer will go to the next question. Before we start, we'll read over the attached consent form. If you consent to participate, please sign both copies. The interviewer will keep one copy and the other is for you. With your permission, we would like to tape the interview.

I. THE CLARKSDALE NEIGHBORHOOD

1. How long did you live in Clarksdale?
2. Please describe what life was like in Clarksdale [Open-ended narrative].
3. What did you LIKE about living in Clarksdale? [Prompts: rent; my apartment (size/space, cleanliness, appearance); neighbors/community/social network; safety; parking; social services; reputation; area of town; proximity to work, family, friends, bus line, schools, recreation, shopping, worship, and/or medical services . . .]

4. What did you DISLIKE about living in Clarksdale? [Prompts: rent; my apartment (size/space, cleanliness/ pests, appearance); neighbors/community/social network; safety (crime, police, drugs, gangs, violence); parking; social services; reputation; area of town; proximity to work, family, friends, bus line, school, recreation, shopping, worship, and/or medical services . . .]

5. Would you have stayed in Clarksdale? How long?

II. HOPE VI AND RELOCATION

1. WHEN and HOW did you find out that Clarksdale would be demolished and that you would have to move? [Prompts: word of mouth, meeting, letter, flyer, public notices, newspaper or TV . . .]

2. Did you attend any PUBLIC MEETINGS or charettes? How many?
      A. What did you think of the meetings?
         [Helpful/unhelpful, informative/confusing, truthful/untruthful, unifying/divisive, convenient/
         inconvenient, fair/unfair, frightening/reassuring . . .]
      B. Did you go by yourself or were you a part of a group?
         [If so, did that group have a specific view of HOPE VI?]
      C. What other groups were involved? What did you think of them?

3. What were your initial REACTIONS when you found out you would have to move?
   [Follow-up: Were there any residents who disagreed with relocation? If so, why? Was anyone able to express those disagreements? How were resident questions dealt with?]

4. Please tell us the story of your RELOCATION [Open-ended narrative].
   [Prompts or follow-ups: Did the Housing Authority help you with your housing search and relocation? How?
   Did the city/housing authority do everything it said it would do?
   What relocation OPTIONS were you given? [PH (which?), SS, S8, HO, CD, LG] [All?]
   Were you offered a "Third party ADVOCATE"? If yes, who did you choose and why?
   [If you did not have an advocate, why not? Were you aware you could request it?]
   What was GOOD about the process? What was BAD about the process?
   Did you feel that you were treated fairly? Did you feel that you had a voice?
   Were you fairly represented by any groups? [CRC, LMHA, LTA, LAS, CLOUT, MHC . . .]

5. What were your greatest challenges in locating new housing?

III. NEW HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD

1. When facing relocation, what did you look for in a new neighborhood?
2. Did you think about coming back to Liberty Green? Why or why not?
   Follow up: Are there barriers to coming back to Liberty Green for you?
   If so, what? [lease criteria, waiting list, cost, income, debt/credit, past record, new adjustment, school . . .]
3. Were you interested in coming back to the east downtown area? [Were there barriers to finding housing there?]
4. What is life like in your new neighborhood? [Open-ended narrative]
5. Would you describe your new housing? [Type, # of bedrooms (then and now), etc.]
6. What do you like/not like about your new housing and neighborhood? [Prompts: rent; my apartment (size/space, cleanliness, appearance); neighbors/community/social network; safety/crime; parking; social services; reputation; area of town; proximity to work, family, friends, bus line, school, recreation, shopping, worship, medical services . . .] [Compared to Clarksdale, better or worse?]
7. How do the cost of rent and utilities in new housing/neighborhood compare with these costs in Clarksdale?
8. Do you have transportation? How convenient is it for you to get to work? Doctors? Shopping? Church?
9. Knowing what you know now, would you make the same choice of housing/neighborhood? Why/why not?
10. How long do you think you'll stay in this housing/neighborhood?
11. Comment on the connections you value in this new neighborhood [Prompts: old/new friends, social services, groups/organizations/institutions, family, worship . . .]
12. Have you kept in touch with friends and neighbors from your old Clarksdale neighborhood? [Comment]
13. Overall, do you think you are better off now than when you lived in Clarksdale? Why/why not?
    [What's most important for you in answering that question?]
14. Have you or anyone from Clarksdale become homeless since leaving Clarksdale?
15. What are your hopes/dreams/goals/plans for housing in the future? [Can you talk more about these?]
16. What advice would you give for the next HOPE VI project?

IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

We will **stop the tape** and ask some background information useful for our study.

Age: Gender: Nationality:

Race/ethnicity: 1) White; 2) Black; 3) Latino/Hispanic 4) Asian/Pacific Islander 5) American Indian; 6) Other

Do you have children?   If so, how many?   How many of them live with you?

Marital status: 1) Married; 2) Divorced; 3) Separated; 4) Widow/widower; 5) Never married

Were you employed when you lived in Clarksdale?
Are you currently employed?   If so, now many jobs?   Where?
Hours/week?   Your current salary?   Annual household income? (all workers in household)

Please indicate which of the following public programs used:

*AFDC/TANF/K-TAP	1) Then;	2) Now	*Medicaid/CHIP [which?]	1) Then;	2) Now
*Social Security	1) Then;	2) Now	*Medicare	1) Then;	2) Now
*Food Stamps	1) Then;	2) Now	*SSI [Indicate disability]	1) Then;	2) Now
*WIC	1) Then;	2) Now	*Housing subsidies [PH, S8]	1) Then;	2) Now

Do you have health insurance (private, employer-provided, Medicaid, or Medicare)?

Education: 1) Some high school, 2) High school graduate, 3) GED, 4) Vocational or technical training, 5) Some college, 6) College graduate, 7) Education beyond college (please indicate); 8) Currently taking classes?

Have you lived in any other publicly subsidized housing (PH, SS, S8)? How many? Where? When? How long?
Have you ever been homeless (shelter or out)? If so, when, where, and for how long?
Do you or anyone in your family (sharing housing) have a criminal record?
Have you or anyone in your family (housing) ever been addicted to drugs or alcohol? [When and for how long?]