

Chapter 5

The Regulation of Housing Desire: Restricting Regent Residents, the Response of the Media, and the Remaking of a Slum, 1960-2000

To rescue the great body of people who are low income or are relief recipients would require a vast expenditure of money. Many of them are shiftless and improvident and will do little to help themselves. As Jesus said: 'The poor always ye have with you,' and there must be provision for them and *supervision* of them.

Judge Robert Forsyth, inquiring into fraud by Toronto housing officials, 1965 ¹

Albert Rose, other reform-minded intellectuals and the state officialdom believed that public housing could reform slum dwellers into good citizens and slums into modern communities. Yet their concept of citizenship was unequivocally narrow, which would become increasingly evident by the 1960s. In addition to increasing economic deprivation, tenants continued to confront favouritism in tenant selection, unusually tight legal restrictions concerning behaviour and domestic regimes and, in the 1970s to the 1990s, unduly castigatory surveillance and intervention from the police that aimed to regulate movement and conduct within the project. In sum, full social, economic and political citizenship rights were never enjoyed by public housing residents.

Moral regulation within Regent Park (RP) overlapped with the growing territorial stigmatization of the project. By the late 1960s, RP would be reconstituted in public discourse as a full-fledged, state-created "slum." The first half of this chapter examines the continuation of internal policies in the 1960s that aimed to restrict resident behaviour on a variety of social, economic and cultural levels. The second half analyzes the stigmatizing discourses of the media and social workers. As in the first half of the

century, the unruliness of the new “slum” area and its immorality, crime and cultural “inbreeding” featured prominently in the narratives of commentators on the social disorganization and danger of RP especially among the media and state officials.

“Community Relations” and Moral Regulation in Public Housing in the 1960s

Frank Dearlove’s successor as Executive Secretary and manager of Regent Park North (RPN) in 1963 was Robert Bradley. Also a local Conservative, he continued Dearlove’s paternalistic approach but, in the context of an expanding welfare state, the rebellious anti-authoritarian climate of the decade, and his own more liberal attitudes, he seemed less punitive and more concerned with the social welfare of tenants. Some of the harsher project regulations such as unit inspections were discontinued under his auspices and, reflecting shifting ideas within the social work profession, he adopted a more tenant-friendly approach with an accent on reform and community. This management style is partially reflected in the personalized friendships he cultivated with some tenants and area social clubs – contacts he used practically when campaigning for the Tories in the 1968 Federal Election. Tenants sent gifts of chicken soup to help him with the flu and cards and gifts on the birth of his children.² He was regularly invited to meetings and events of social clubs organized by Regent tenants.³

A firm believer in the reform potential of public housing and the importance of selling a positive image of public housing, Bradley developed a curriculum of study in the “philosophy of public housing” – including films, favourable academic studies of RP, and

other promotional materials – used in Home Economics classes in 35 Metro-area high schools and the University of Toronto. In 1967, he gave a 10-week course on “Urban Renewal and Public Housing,” to adult education students in North York.⁴ He also organized numerous visits to the project by social workers, nurses and doctors, university and high-school students and politicians that sometimes included personal interviews with tenants in their homes.⁵ He was interviewed regularly by the local media, speaking to newspapers and radio programs about the virtues of public housing.⁶ Attempting to valiantly counter the negative image of RP, Bradley nevertheless treated tenants in the project as passive recipients of social engineering from above. A questionnaire given to visiting students directed them to “What to look for: When travelling to the RP area notice the character of the community – its buildings, streets, people. Compare the surrounding district with the Regent Park development.”⁷ Visitors could be forgiven for thinking that they were visiting a zoo.

Rigid viewpoints on “proper” tenant behaviour were tempered somewhat in the 1960s by a concern for “open community” building in both sections of RP.⁸ While building “communities” was a long-standing element of public housing reform, housing authorities had generally invested few direct resources in such social work programmes until the 1960s. By the latter years of the decade, however, RPN and RPS had Community Relations Workers (CRW) who worked with non-political Tenants’ Associations to encourage sports, recreation, leisure and project beautification projects.⁹ CRW’s were responsible for providing “a program of tenant referral involving community organizations and social agencies. To assist new families in settling into the community.

To enlist co-operation in the upkeep of their dwelling. Also to encourage participation and adjust/or adapt into the general community.”¹⁰ After assuming the Directorship of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) for two years after RPN was amalgamated into the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC), Bradley was rehired as Director of a new Community Relations Branch in 1970 whose function was to coordinate OHC’s social and recreation programs and manage the team of CRW’s. Dubbed the “People Branch,” Bradley believed that community relations would lead to “a satisfied tenant [that] provides the strongest assurance of public acceptance and the continued success and growth of public housing.”¹¹ CRW’s, however, focused mostly on the individual problems of tenants and purely social event organizing. They followed the rules of the OHC tenant handbook, which recognized only garden clubs and the like and then would inappropriately use this paternalistic “club” attitude towards serious political tenants’ organizations.¹² As Chapter 6 details, they were largely ignored by the tenant political organization, the Regent Park Community Improvement Association (RPCIA), as paternalistic and ineffective.

OHC attempted to continue what Dennis and Fish called in a hard-hitting 1972 exposé of the failings of state housing policy, the “charity philosophy” of management.¹³ Many OHC officials had real estate and business backgrounds; they saw their chief purpose as maintaining the value of their physical assets and controlling operating costs.¹⁴ In fact, paternalistic attitudes by OHC officials and attempts to morally regulate residents had not significantly changed from the norms of 1940s and 1950s housing management.

Notwithstanding the tenant management schemes launched in the 1970s, which were

partially intended to offload management responsibilities onto tenants, state-housing managers in this period saw their “clients” as helpless, disorganized, dependent and largely unable to transcend their miserable position in society. This behavioural outlook frustrated housing officials such as Robert Bradley: “Our first tenants in the ‘50s were working parents who left dilapidated rattraps on Parliament Street to live in the Regent Park development. It served thousands of people who would not otherwise have had a home.” Single mothers and welfare families, however, had led to a loss of family and social responsibility: “I get frustrated when I don’t see them responding. Some of them become more demanding and think society owes them a living. [But] you can [only] spoon feed them for so long.”¹⁵ Bradley also distrusted independent tenant political initiatives, attempting to “nip in the bud,” for instance, a tenant petition demanding better painting services. “I would strongly urge you,” he wrote to a subordinate, “to follow up these rumours set out in this letter and try and establish a liason with these people so that even if we say ‘No,’ they would get an answer.”¹⁶ Bradley and company were particularly concerned that tenants accept the largesse and guidance of the state and not be proactive in any way.

There is considerable evidence in the HAT records, moreover, that outright favouritism in tenant selection continued into the term of Robert Bradley. Under Bradley, preferential treatment worked like this: a local or federal politician would write him, describing the dire housing situation of a constituent or acquaintance and requesting that he find a place in the housing development for them. Sometimes, they would explicitly cite the political affiliations of the constituent. In 1968, for instance, Alderwoman Helen Johnston

successfully wrote in favour of one of her constituents, arguing that “she is a sweet thing, a member of the Conservative Association and is a widow...”¹⁷ Certainly not all requested favours were granted, but it is reasonable to conclude that the tenant selection process was still far from objective and open to the personal, political and moral whims of a select few housing officials.

Moral considerations in tenant selection were evident at the appeals level in the 1960s as well. The MTHA Board which made the final decisions in extraordinary applications and families who were reapplying after being initially rejected, took decisions informed by explicitly moral and social factors such as housekeeping standards, criminal records among family members and those with “social” and “psychological” difficulties. The four examples below, of families whose applications were accepted by the Board in 1964,¹⁸ demonstrate what were considered acceptable tenant families:

The present tenant, a separated woman, had requested that her friend, be allowed to move in as the head of the household and that the lease be put in his name.

Family consists of husband, wife, two sons and two daughters. The parents are living in Nigeria and will be returning to live in Toronto for one year...Both parents are medical doctors.

This family consists of husband, wife, daughter and two sons. Income is derived from Welfare. The husband is now residing at Harbour Light. Housekeeping standard is considered satisfactory.

Family consists of husband, wife, two sons and one daughter. The husband is presently residing at Harbour Light and is to be included in the family composition when discharged.

In the first two cases, the applications were from stable or soon to be stable nuclear families with neither “abnormal” social troubles nor housekeeping defects. The latter two situations were distinguished by the promise of “reformed families.” Harbour Light was a substance abuse clinic and residence run by the Salvation Army. The families in these

cases offered evidence of present or future moral and social steadiness and were thus considered suitable to live in public housing.

The cases below, all of which were rejected, present a stark contrast:

Family consists of widow and two sons aged forty and thirty-eight. Their income is derived from Veteran's and Disability Pension. One son is disabled and at home, the other is serving four years at Kingston for armed robbery.

An application had been received from a sixty-year old married woman who is at present time living with husband and sixteen-year old daughter. This woman is anxious to find accommodation for herself and daughter so that she can leave her husband.

Family consists of husband, wife and three daughters. The husband has just recently been discharged from the Ontario Hospital [psychiatric care] and has very little prospects for employment. This family is constantly moving. It is impossible for them to find accommodation where their housekeeping standards and general behaviour are acceptable. The Authority agreed that, until the family's housekeeping and social problems improved, their application should be rejected.

Family consists of a forty-five year old woman, who is separated from her common-law partner. She has one son and two daughters. Income is derived from Mother's Allowance...Common-law partner is, at present, serving a 10-year prison term for indecent assault on his oldest daughter.

Among single parents, widows generally ranked highest on the "hierarchy of deservedness;" however, those with the taint of crime were deemed unacceptable risks. Perhaps criminal habits were thought to be contagious, threatening to infect other family members, or Board members were concerned that when the prisoners had served their time they would return to the project. Families with "behavioural" and housekeeping problems, as the third case illustrated, posed an equally menacing risk to the well-kept apartment ideal.¹⁹ Single women with children abandoned by their partners or wishing to leave their husband were rejected, as in the fourth case, since their family situations deviated from the norm, i.e. a stable unit with both parents and children. The "correct" family model constructed by the MTHA, as in other social agencies of the period,²⁰

favoured a traditional gendered framework in which husbands were the sole breadwinners and women were entrusted with managing a competent household and raising their children in a proper moral environment. Social workers worked to preserve this ideal even in cases of domestic abuse, sometimes favouring family “unity” over the health of women and children.

Until the 1970s, there were continuing charges that tenant selection for the few vacancies available in public housing was biased. OHC never divulged explanations for acceptance, refusal or continuance on the waiting list to applicants, thus making it susceptible to charges of favouritism.²¹ Toronto Alderman Dan Heap charged in 1973 that, “Many tenants get in by using pull. Every public figure is regularly asked to help this or that person get into OHC.”²² We also know that certain racial considerations would be taken in the 1970s with respect to Afro-Caribbean female immigrants. It was usual for some single mothers to immigrate to Toronto from the West Indies in search of work and then send for their children, usually living with relatives in their home countries, when the time was appropriate. Those desiring to do this who already lived in OHC projects were denied the right to have their names put on the internal transfer list for larger accommodation, evicted and then put on the bottom of the waiting list. From 1975 onwards, it became standard practice at OHC to ask applicants if they had children living elsewhere; if they said yes they would be denied public housing and would have to wait to reapply when the children arrived. Only after a concerted protest by a group of public housing residents, Mothers Against Discrimination, was this practice abolished in 1979.²³

By the late 1960s, restrictions on families on social assistance were relaxed and, as Chapter 4 demonstrated, RP and public housing across Toronto became home to an increasingly poor population of welfare recipients and/or single mothers. The 1970s and 1990s witnessed an expansion of those eligible for public housing, but in the larger context of waiting lists of more than 50,000 families, these rights meant little in practice. In addition, relaxation of the “borders” of public housing did not mean that regulatory concerns had been completely dropped in favour of an inclusive social citizenship. A new “hierarchy of deservedness” and new methods to ascertain “worthy” and “unworthy” within the larger sphere of welfare regulations, which a majority of RP residents were receiving, were also imposed.²⁴ Some welfare recipients in RP, organized in the Just Society Movement, began to publicly raise concerns about humiliating treatment by local level welfare department officials and housing officers in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a charge made with increasing frequency across the province as James Struthers details.²⁵ A 1975 Ontario Provincial Task Force concluded that “attitudes to welfare are reflected in an administration that is mean, arbitrary, combative, grudging, and destructive of dignity.”²⁶ Other restrictions for welfare recipients obtained within RP itself. In 1968, for example, a means test was imposed on parents whose children attended the meagre day care facilities available in the project. Intended for single and working mothers and those with special needs children, the South Regent Park Nursery and Day Care Centre was funded by the City of Toronto and provided spaces for about 60 children. The daily fee was determined by the financial circumstances of the parents; 10 cents per day was the minimum and parents had to pay a week in advance.²⁷ In 1968, however, new financial regulations required parents to fill out a form itemizing their sources of income. A sliding

scale was then implemented ranging from \$29-59 per month, an onerous amount for those on the paltry incomes of state assistance.²⁸ Another condition was that mothers were expected to show up for a half day a week to learn “mothering skills” from trained professionals. In more than one realm of life, then, state assistance was premised on the acceptance of intrusive regulatory policies aimed at moulding proper mothers.

There is little doubt that the rent-to-income scale also assisted many families to cope with the pressing difficulties of housing affordability. Still, there were built-in problems and harsh restrictions that began to be publicly raised in the 1960s. Any extra income earned through overtime, part-time work by one spouse or child, or year-end bonuses was always formally subject to a rental increase. Most contentious among tenants was the levy on overtime and the income of wives, extra income that tenants felt they deserved. If a tenant was sick for under a period of one month or unemployed and therefore received no salary, they were nevertheless charged the same rent.²⁹ Take this example from 1962. A tenant in RPS found work after two years on social assistance. His rent skyrocketed from \$65 to \$158 a month. This man had three children and his wife was pregnant. No account of debts accumulated during the stint of unemployment nor his general situation were considered. His wife appealed to the Authority to no avail after the husband abandoned the family due to stress.³⁰ The rental scale thus made it incredibly difficult to save money to move into better accommodations, to buy a house or other things, effectively locking tenants into a vicious circle of dependency.

For those on fixed incomes such as pensions even minor rent increases could be prejudicial. In the early 1960s, complaints arose from politicians and HAT officials that minimum rents were too low. A HAT review of the rent policy led to various rental increases in 1963 and 1965 which were justified on the basis of increases in labour, maintenance, materials and taxes.³¹ In 1963, service charges were also upped by \$5 a month. A widow on a Veterans Affairs Pension said she would have to give up her TV: “her only luxury except going on walks.” Mrs. Tilly Jodrell, whose husband left her with a pension of \$89 a month when he died, said, “Five dollars a month more, I don’t like it but I don’t know what I can do about it.” A father of three thought any substantial increase in rent might cost him his job because he had to drive to work and might not be able to afford to keep the car. The widow of a city fireman ended up with only \$53 a month after rent was deducted.³² HAT officials were aware of the consequences and feelings about rental increases and made considerable back-room efforts to massage notices of increases in order to “take the sting out...” Bradley, for example, personally intervened to remove a paragraph threatening eviction for those who disagreed with the increases in the draft letter informing tenants of the increases.³³ Reaction to the 1960s rent increases in RP was confined to verbal discontent, but alarm over rising rents throughout the decade would eventually culminate in organized political resistance focused precisely on these punitive economic policies.

Throughout the period, government urged keeping rent losses to a minimum, emphasized disciplinary measures against tenants if arrears were a constant problem or intersected with other problem behaviours and made evictions on economic grounds. If public

housing residents failed to properly report their incomes, they could and often were evicted for “misrepresentation.” In 1961, for example, three families in RPS were evicted for failing to report income earned by wives. The three women had picked up casual work during the Christmas season. In one family, a pregnant mother of 7 was working a night job cleaning offices since her husband had been laid off from his job as a truck driver. The other two families had 6 and 3 children respectively.³⁴ The MTHA felt they were doing a favour for the families by not evicting them until after the Christmas season, showing how paternalistic concerns intersected with disciplinary measures. Unfortunately, we do not have consistent statistics on eviction rates, but the limited evidence available suggests that evictions were resorted to regularly. In 1968, 34 tenants were evicted for economic and behavioural problems including one for poor housekeeping.³⁵ In the 1970s, the tenant political association claimed that the threat of eviction always loomed large for tenants with financial difficulties.³⁶

Tenant resistance to the housing authorities’ attempt to control every aspect of their lives most often appeared as “fraud.” This issue was raised publicly in 1960 when local councillors voiced concerns that RP tenants could afford to pay more.³⁷ Later in the decade the question of fraud was again brought to public attention when the local representative on city council for Cabbagetown, June Marks, attempted to whip up a campaign against “cheats.” She claimed, sensationally and with little evidence, that “hundreds” of public housing residents were “getting away with murder” by not declaring their full incomes. She unsuccessfully demanded that all heads of families make a sworn statement – a means test – stating their incomes were within the requirements.³⁸ In the

austerity regime of the mid-1970s, OHC also made furtive attempts to evict out of work adult children from their family homes and single women whose children had left, but negative publicity and tenant complaints seem to have ended the practice.³⁹ In another case, a man on welfare for medical reasons, whose family abandoned him, was evicted rather than put on the transfer list for appropriate accommodation.⁴⁰ While moral and personal scrutiny of residents was common and accepted, the political space for direct public attacks on social assistance recipients was still narrow in this period.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the mesh of castigatory rules surrounding rent policies was felt hard by tenants and would constitute one of the key axes of resistance by tenant political groups.

No Pets and No Messy Apartments: Regulating Internal Space in RP

In addition to restrictive rental policies, tenants in RP also faced intrusive and moralistic policies regulating internal space. These were codified in legal documents as well as developed through more informal practices. In RPN, besides the standard legal clauses, a 37-paragraph *Rules and Regulations* schedule was appended to the lease and was supplemented by a comprehensive *Tenants' Handbook* that detailed tenant responsibilities and explained internal procedures on rent collection, upkeep of the units and requisite behaviour within the project. Project officers were responsible for elaborating a similar set of rules in RPS when tenants signed the lease, when they first moved in and after one month of tenancy just to make sure that they were aware of the responsibilities of living in public housing. They too were given a handbook of rules and regulations.⁴² Distinguished by its absence in formal documents was any substantive

discussion of the responsibilities of the public landlord. In fact, a clause was included which exempted the Authority from present or future provincial rental statutes which abolished or limited the landlord's "right of distress," the right of landlords to seize the property of tenants to pay overdue rent. In addition, tenants were saddled with eight lengthy clauses elucidating their responsibilities, while the obligations of HAT were limited to three basic clauses: tenant entitlement to "quiet enjoyment" of the dwelling space, "repairs and janitorial services" and the ability to freely enter and leave the premises. Even these were hedged in with legal conditions such as the Authority's lack of responsibility for damages caused in the event of broken-down facilities – whether they were caused by the tenants or not.⁴³ It was clear from the beginning that tenants were encouraged to consider public housing a privilege and not a right and were therefore expected to abide by extraordinary regulations.

The most conspicuous condition that stood out in the landlord-tenant relationship in both sections of Regent was the right of housing staff to inspect units on a yearly basis or whenever they felt it necessary – a practice only discontinued in the early 1970s. It was not by accident that this constituted the first regulation in the RPN "Rules and Regulations." In 1961 and 1962, Dearlove himself inspected 1,300 units "to determine the present condition of each one and ascertain the housekeeping standards of the tenants." The great majority were deemed "excellent," but 30 families, mostly those living in the row houses and receiving public welfare, "do not measure up to the Authority's standards, and if no improvement is shown after three visits, he intends to give the family notice to vacate."⁴⁴ In RPS, even "the well-adjusted family [was] visited on an annual

basis,”⁴⁵ although the MTHA claimed “the manager seldom has to interfere directly in a family’s affairs, though he will do so if the activities of the family are damaging to its neighbours.” This was considered to happen in only 3-5 per cent of cases.⁴⁶

Housing officials never specified exactly what constituted “poor housekeeping.” On the positive side, which constituted the great majority of cases in one group of RPN resident case files in 1961-1962, inspection reports included comments such as “neat and tidy,”⁴⁷ “excellent,”⁴⁸ “housekeeping pretty good”⁴⁹ and “improved since last inspection.”⁵⁰

Conversely, ostensibly ill-maintained units were described in the following way: “Living quarters in good condition except bed not made at 10 a.m.”⁵¹ Margaret Pope, a Home Economist for the CBC, who inspected some apartments in RPS in 1961, was grateful for the hospitality of the tenants. Yet she complained to a meeting of housing officials that in the four units she visited, she only saw one towel in the bathroom and all of them had empty soap dishes.⁵² Inspections were, moreover, one means of verification of illegal lodgers in a unit⁵³ and, according to Robert Bradley, although tenants were rarely evicted for bad housekeeping alone, it could be a factor along with rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.⁵⁴

The use of the dwelling space and the amenities of the project were thus subject to astonishingly rigid rules presumably based on a desire to foster orderly household efficiency. They also suggest a desire on the part of the Authority to control minute aspects of life, especially of the women who carried out most of the household work. The illustrations in the RPN *Handbook* show a housewife suitably outfitted with dress and

apron diligently undertaking her cleaning duties. “It is **Good Housekeeping**,” it resounded, “to keep your sink, laundry tubs, toilet, basin and bath, clean and bright.” It laid down explicit instructions on use of the apartment, appliances and project facilities, from washing the floors to avoiding clogged drains and circulating fresh air in the apartment. In RPN, tenants were not allowed to paint their own apartments, drill holes in the wall nor keep pets.⁵⁵ Defrosting of fridges, exclaimed a management memo in the mid-1950s, was to “take place regularly **once a week** and you will be advised of the day.” Each tenant family was also allocated a specific day and time for use of the laundry room.⁵⁶ Frank Challoner, manager of MTHA’s Lawrence Heights project, suggested that decals be affixed on each appliance with instructions on how to use them.⁵⁷ As part of a community outreach effort and as a way to cut costs for the MTHA, tenants in RPS were encouraged to paint their own apartments with the assistance of a painting foreman.⁵⁸ The Metropolitan Toronto Department of Public Welfare also had “teaching homemakers” on staff to “improve home standards” and such experts were used among “problem” families on social assistance in both public and private market housing.⁵⁹ All in all, project policies and functionaries adopted a paternalistic posture that assumed apartment occupants would need detailed and consistent instruction on managing a modern household. (See Figure 5.2)

Attempts were also made to regulate certain forms of movement and behaviour within the housing development. Based on the assumption that tenants were not aware of how to treat their neighbours, one late 1950s version of the RPN *Tenants’ Handbook* recommended that, “‘Hi, neighbour!’ can be the beginning of many a pleasant friendship.

There's a lot of give and take in neighbourly living." And to women: "Perhaps you could bake a fresh, light cake for the busy mother nearby."⁶⁰ Considerable effort was also made to keep children from loitering and dirtying public passages such as hallways, stairwells, lobbies, sidewalks and the elevators. Both the *RPN Rules and Regulations* (the third clause) and the *Tenant Handbook* of the early decades prohibited loitering in these areas. Children running amok was a constant complaint of some tenants, project officials, social workers and a common stigmatizing image in the media.⁶¹ Yet in the absence of recreation programmes and adequate play space, it was no surprise that youngsters in Regent, like children everywhere, would play where they could: in the halls, elevators, basements and lobbies.

<p>REFRIGERATORS</p> <p>Defrosting will take place regularly once a week and you will be advised of the day.</p> <p>Empty the water from the tray and wash it in lukewarm water—never hot—and dry thoroughly before replacing.</p> <p>After defrosting, wash the inside of the refrigerator with warm water and baking soda.</p> <p>Never use sharp pointed tools to loosen ice-cube trays.</p> <p>Do your part and the refrigerator will keep food sweet and wholesome and save you work and money.</p>		<p>CABINET WORK TABLE</p> <p>Use a bread board for cutting or chopping food, not the table top.</p> <p>A marred table top spoils the appearance of your kitchen.</p> <p>ALL NECESSARY REPAIRS</p> <p>The Housing Manager will arrange for repairs to refrigerator, gas range, plumbing or other fixtures—never attempt to make them yourself. Report any trouble to him immediately.</p> <p>There will be no charge unless you are responsible—we pay for reasonable wear and tear—you pay for carelessness or abuse.</p>	
<p>GAS RANGES</p> <p>Save gas—Use flat-bottomed pots and pans that fit the burner.</p> <p>Wash the burners and oven regularly, when cool, using a mild soap.</p> <p>Do not use the oven door as a shelf.</p>		<p>BE FIRE CONSCIOUS!</p> <p>Keep matches in a safe place.</p> <p>Papers, wrappings and rags become a Fire Hazard if allowed to accumulate.</p> <p>Be careful when using the gas stove or electrical appliances. Frayed or broken appliance cords are dangerous—Amateur wiring is illegal.</p> <p>If fire should occur, turn in an alarm immediately—you will be informed of location of nearest box—then notify the office.</p>	
<p>PLUMBING FIXTURES AND DRAINS</p> <p>It is Good Housekeeping to keep your sink, laundry tubs, toilet, basin and bath, clean and bright.</p> <p>It is Good Common Sense to prevent clogged drains, as you are responsible for any damage.</p> <p>Grease clogs the drains, so do tea leaves and coffee grounds—Wrap them well in paper and put them in the garbage.</p> <p>Never use lye in cleaning—it really plugs the drains.</p> <p>THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF TORONTO</p>		<p>THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF TORONTO</p>	

Figure 5.1 – Page from the RPN Tenant Handbook, 1958

Didactic concerns about tenant behaviour can also be observed in the policies of the HAT's Family Residences. Two such residences opened in 1967 and 1968 and were intended to temporarily house single mothers and children who were displaced from their homes through eviction, fire or domestic abuse. Residents stayed on average 13 days and were referred to social agencies and assisted with relocation to private market lodgings and public housing projects. In the first year of the Dundas Street West residence, over 400 mothers and 1,300 children used the facilities.⁶² Despite serving a worthy purpose for families in need, the Residences had stringent, hospital-like routines that went beyond the acknowledged need for security. There were strict visiting hours (2-4 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.) and an 11 p.m. curfew after which doors were locked and no admittance was allowed. Meals were served at 7:30 a.m., noon and 5 p.m. on the dot. After hearing complaints from residents, however, Bradley advised the manager that two daily coffee breaks should be established and the curfew should be relaxed, allowing the lights to stay on after 11 p.m.: "Our rules are not made to restrict or confine the people living in the residence but to protect the majority and I feel from our conversations with the families that these are two areas we could relax on."⁶³

A glimpse of Bradley's gendered social work approach can be gleaned from the self-improvement course he instituted for women in the hostels. He contended that those without a dwelling would benefit most from improving their personal image and potential employment skills and viewed the hostel residents as a captive audience to test his ideas.⁶⁴ He wrote to one interested observer that:

we feel that a self-improvement clinic set up in the building would do much to improve the morale of mothers who become quite depressed during their stay with us. It has been felt that the greatest morale booster for these women would be a hair-do, or maybe some instruction on grooming. I am sure that you appreciate that when a mother is depressed and she loses her self-respect this reflects drastically on the children who have to share these frustrations with the mother. We feel that the program which will be all volunteer will do a great deal to lift the spirit of the mother and give here a skill, even if it is just the knowledge of how to write a letter, while she is in residence.⁶⁵

Volunteers were engaged to give classes on sewing, cooking, legal advice and a one-day lecture on hair dressing and grooming from Marvel Beauty School. The latter course involved the following topics: Skin Care, Cosmetics for Face, Hands and Hair, Visual Poise, Social Grace, Wardrobe Planning, Personality, Success on the Job and Talk, Speech, Appearance and Behaviour.⁶⁶ Disregarding barriers in the job market to single women working and reflecting a fundamentally paternalistic attitude, Bradley maintained that:

The significance of our program goes much farther than a person receiving a free hair-do. In fact, this hair-do might be the spark that will lift that woman out of her destitute position and take her children into a better standard of living. The psychological aspect of this clinic, we feel, will have far-reaching effects and because of this I think those that contribute will be able to take great satisfaction out of the fact that they were part of possibly giving a family a better look at life. It may seem to you that I am preaching a social philosophy but when you have worked with such families for many years you do draw great satisfaction out of assisting those who are at the *bottom of the barrel*.⁶⁷

Despite the crass, paternalistic mind-set of officials like Bradley, it would be wrong to assume that women hostel residents always resented such self-improvement courses. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we may speculate that some may well have appreciated the chance to learn some new skills (if they did not already have them) and take advantage of free services. Still, Bradley's emphasis on improving personal grooming seems astonishingly distant from the hard material realities of single-mother led

families. It was remarkably telling that when a newspaper reporter asked these women what they most wanted, they replied “almost in chorus...babysitters” so they could find work. “I like to work,” one mother lamented, “How can I watch the kids and apply for jobs?”⁶⁸

Reconstituting a Slum: The State, the Media and Social Workers

A long-haired boy from North of Bloor Street is a non-conformist; a long-haired composer is an artist; a long-haired Regent Parker is considered a bum.

Ruth Zimmerman, RP Tenant, 1969⁶⁹

From the mid-1960s onwards, RP residents would suffer from an intensely negative public image of their neighbourhood as solely a site of destitution, crime and socio-cultural pathologies. The majority of this morally indicting external representation was generated by the media in sensationalist stories about project cleanliness, tenant rowdiness, social disorganization, disproportionate numbers of single mothers and families on welfare and by social workers and housing officials who developed condemnatory analyses of “deserving” and “undeserving” poor tenants. All in all, the media, the state and social service agencies separated RP out as a “troubled” neighbourhood that needed to be strictly controlled. The discourse had shifted from the enhanced possibilities of effective state intervention to reform families in the 1940s to the mid-1960s to one strictly concerned with regulation and effective abandonment in the following decades.

RP's reputation as an ideal solution to the social and moral problems of the post-war family clearly ended by the late 1960s, but there were earlier hints by observers that public housing was on its way to becoming a new "slum." From the early to mid-1960s, state housing officials, social workers and the media began to express worries about the large size of both sections of RP and how this encouraged isolation and stigmatization. P.E.H. Brady, Executive Director of the MTHA, argued in 1962 that the large size and concentration of projects like RP cut them off from the rest of the city and prevented the residents from integrating "into the mainstream of community living."⁷⁰ In one of the first manifestations of NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard), John Christie of the East York Planning Board, described RPN as a "blot" on the community that was destined to become a "slum" area, something that Toronto's suburbs were keen to avoid.⁷¹ The 1966 Metropolitan Toronto Urban Renewal Study noted that "an entire section of the city" was identified as a "public housing project area."⁷² In a 1965 *Maclean's* article, Hal Tennant remarked that despite its successes, RP had an "institutional character" and a "stigma" as a low-income area.⁷³ In the early to mid-1960s, a few, small physical confrontations between teenagers in the Riverdale section of the city and Toronto Island, which involved some teenage boys from RP, garnered much negative media attention surrounding the "delinquent" tendencies of public housing tenants.⁷⁴

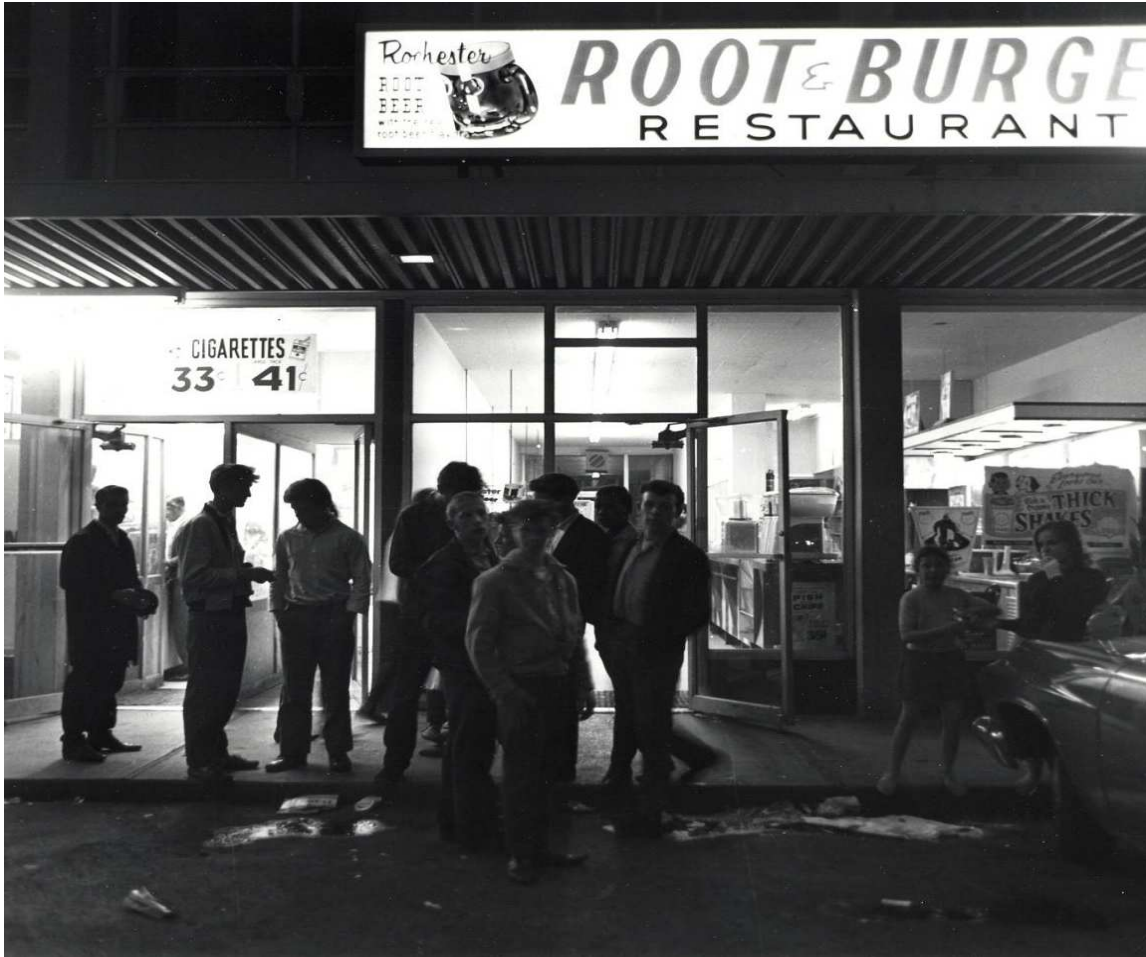


Figure 5.2 - Teenagers in front of the fast-food restaurant located in Regent Park South, 1964. The original caption in the Toronto Telegram read: “Regent Park gang.”

Source: Toronto Telegram Photograph Collection, York University Archives and Special Collections.

Social workers were also beginning to find that the “problem families” that public housing was supposed to help were more of a challenge than previously thought. In an article entitled “Public Housing: A Woman’s Point of View,” Mrs. S.J. Allin of the HAT, worried that the government and social workers had to face “more realistically the knotty problem of those of very low income who also have other problems...those troubled and troublesome families.” Indeed, while many of the adults were “beyond help,” they could not afford to abandon the children.⁷⁵ Sylvia Goldblatt observed in a 1966 study of two

suburban Toronto projects that there were two categories of people in public housing: the “respectable” poor and the “dependent and troubled” poor. The former could benefit substantially from public housing; the latter group of “sick families,” however, needed comprehensive intervention in all aspects of life. Consequently, “Public housing might be used the way we use a hospital.”⁷⁶ In less than a decade, the image of public housing had shifted from the ideal, working-class community to a sick patient needing treatment.

These attitudes were soon reflected in official state and popular media discourse. In 1968, Ottawa organized a Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Redevelopment headed by cabinet minister Paul Hellyer. His 1969 report blasted public housing, holding it responsible for creating “state ghettos” and discouraging social and economic mobility.⁷⁷ The *Toronto Star*, Canada’s largest newspaper and traditionally a supporter of public housing, weighed in with a series of six scathing articles in December 1968 by David Allen and Glen Allen on RPS and its tenants, condemning public housing as a whole and stereotyping tenants, especially young people, as rough, rowdy and socially dysfunctional.⁷⁸ From then on in, RP would be considered another slum.

The newspaper hired a marketing firm to undertake a study of resident satisfaction in RPS. The results showed that 33 per cent of residents were very dissatisfied, mostly citing poor maintenance, rowdy teens and vandalism. The articles blamed project design and poor management, especially the restrictive rent policies that made it difficult to get out of public housing or save money and the woeful lack of recreation facilities for children. David Allen contrasted RPS with RPN arguing that the latter section of the development

was much cleaner and did not suffer from such high levels of vandalism. Yet it is difficult to read the sensationalist prose of the series without coming away with the central message that feral tenants themselves were at least partially to blame for the project's failure.

The series of reports harked back to the lurid exposés of turn-of-the century “slums” and the pro-public housing propaganda of the 1940s. Both the Allens cite numerous tenants dissatisfied with project maintenance, sanitation, vandalism and crime. Dirty corridors and urine and feces in the elevators required “oceans of disinfectant and an army of janitors....” Broken windows and vandalism were so rampant that “many...tenants call their community a jungle,” insinuating that tenants were wild “natives.” “Regent Park South,” David Allen intoned, “which started with such great promise, has become a filthy, crime-infested jungle, probably the only one in Canada ever built with taxpayers’ money.”⁷⁹ The metaphor of “disease” was liberally employed: children and teens, blamed for maintenance problems, petty theft and violence, were both “carriers” and “victims” of the “disease” of public housing.⁸⁰ The series took moral environmentalism to a hyperbolic extreme, using the imagery of the Vietnam war to tantalize readers: “The project itself, and its aura of malevolence, corrupted many of the young people and set them on a course of systematic revenge. The campaign to wreck RPS is a guerrilla action waged by warriors drawn underground and fighting back in the only way they know how.”⁸¹ “I’m afraid for my daughter to grow up among the rebel teenagers here – she might follow their example,” one concerned mother stated.

Glen Allen concluded that urban planning had failed because you could not just build houses and change people; the state itself, in fact, had turned RP into a “ghetto.”⁸² David Allen pointed out the high proportion of families on social assistance and single mothers, but expressed sympathy for those most disadvantaged. He blamed instead the miserable public housing “atmosphere” itself. Lack of exposure to wider (proper) life outside the community had ensured “cultural inbreeding” so that children only interacted with other tenants. When they went to high school outside the project, their previous isolation and fear of the outside led to social troubles and poor scholastic achievement.⁸³ Indeed, RPS tenants were characterized as “oppressed, discriminated against and, most often, ignored. They’re Toronto’s Negroes and like their black-skinned counterparts in Harlem or Detroit or Watts they’ve come to distrust the people on the outside who conspired to put them in such a place and keep them there,” warning that Toronto might also experience the wave of urban rebellions rocking the United States and presaging RP’s imagined status in the 1990s as a racialized ghetto à la Los Angeles and New York.⁸⁴

The series of reports on RPS engendered a 6,000-word letter to the editor by Ontario Trade Minister, Stanley Randall. He skewered the *Star*’s survey methods, showing that the sweeping conclusions were unjustifiable. Randall cited local police, who confirmed that crime rates were not inordinately high, nor, according to local staff, was vandalism so out of control. He was disappointed that the *Toronto Star* had so blatantly smeared tenants and abused its journalistic license. Yet Randall basically shared the same framework of analysis as the newspaper. Both camps were wary of “unruly families;” what they disagreed on was the reform potential of public housing. Randall still preached

that public housing could create a changed environment for the poor and borrowed a page from social work discourse by citing a RPS family success story and how CRW's were dutifully helping needy tenants. Moreover, he accepted the criticism of the disproportionate numbers of welfare families, only lamenting that they could not keep levels down due to strict legal regulations, which prevented them from evicting welfare families.⁸⁵

The *Star* reporters, for their part, seemed oblivious to the fact that while they criticized urban renewal and the state for creating stigmatized housing projects and the local housing bureaucracy for poor project maintenance, they too were reinforcing the disreputable image of tenants by sensationalizing the problems of project living. The choice of repetitive, hyperbolic language to describe tenants in the project tends to overwhelm the evidence offered of the culpability of the housing authority and the state.⁸⁶ Only the overblown, graphic residues of long-standing state neglect and inadequate employment and social services – crime, unruliness and badly maintained physical infrastructure – merited attention, adding credence to explanations based on individual failures.

Tenant opinions that ran counter to this personalizing and sensational discourse, while mentioned, carried little weight. The *Star's* own survey data, for instance, showed that 10 percent of tenant families were “very satisfied,” 22 percent “quite satisfied” and 33 percent “a little” satisfied with RPS, significantly outscoring the percentage of those “very dissatisfied.”⁸⁷ Indeed, the 1973 Government of Ontario Advisory Task Force on

Housing found that residents were generally satisfied with public housing even though they had well-founded critiques concerning project amenities and services.⁸⁸ An intensive survey of 120 tenants in 1973 to gauge attitudes towards living in RP similarly discovered more positive responses than negative discontent.⁸⁹ Alongside the tenant comments on disorderly teens and widespread anti-social behaviour, residents also ventured opinions on why the project had a negative image – explanations completely ignored in the report’s conclusions. Many RP’ers interviewed pinpointed unfair, negative labelling by outsiders, including police, as a key problem. Several tenants explicitly questioned the role of the media itself in whipping up stigmatization.⁹⁰ And the leader of the incipient tenants’ organization, Jerome Murray, refused a second interview with David Allen after his paper’s smear campaign began.⁹¹

This series would signal the start of RP’s fall from grace in the eyes of the mainstream media. Not all media stories directly tarnished RP tenants but, as various studies have demonstrated, the media generally framed its coverage of low-income, immigrant and many ethnic communities in such a way as to stress anything that ran counter to the accepted social and moral order.⁹² Thus in both “hard” news stories concerning politics and economic issues and “soft” coverage of “human interest” issues, RP was “tagged” as a site of poverty, behavioural problems and crime.⁹³ The wider population, with little or no direct relationship with public housing or its tenants, was only presented with the “bad”, the sensational and the exotic which would shape opinion on RP and its tenants.

As Jacqueline Leavitt and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris comment:

For most people, the public housing territory falls outside the cocoon of their immediate, familiar space and is foreign to their understanding. As places dominated by other subcultures the developments seem alien and remote to outsiders. In such instances, one uncritically adopts the media's representations and interpretations that rarely go beyond a surface look of the physical and social context. The social meanings often become dematerialized into insubstantial myths and impressions formed by a superficial 'outsiders' look. The effects on the insiders can be substantial.⁹⁴

Even reports discussing tenant efforts to resist stigmatization or community development projects were firmly situated within an underlying scaffolding of “abnormality” which reinforced stigmatization by obscuring the totality of the realities of tenant life and downplaying structural explanations for poverty. Thus, in a lead, front-page article in 1974, entitled “Regent Park Battles its ‘hopeless slum’ image,” Warren Gerrard of *The Toronto Star*, spent the first quarter of his article depicting RP as a haven for the jobless and the hopeless: a “red brick ghetto” and “ugly fortress” inhabited mostly by social assistance recipients and single mothers. Security concerns, vandalism, teenage loitering, crime and the “poverty cycle” were highlighted in this section of the piece located prominently on the front page. Only on page 3 do readers learn that a sizable and representative tenant political movement was spearheading a campaign to resolutely reject these damning and often inaccurate portrayals.⁹⁵ Suburban politicians would rely on such media-generated portrayals to block new public housing developments. Mayoral candidate Mel Lastman, for instance, blamed the Ontario government in 1978 for “moving Cabbagetown into areas of North York, Etobicoke and Scarborough.”⁹⁶ Such stigmatizing renderings of project life would be common in media coverage throughout

the 1970s-1990s period and would be a focal point for resident criticism of media portrayals of the project.

As well as drawing on common-sense, middle-class attitudes about the poor, popular journalism in the 1960s and 70s also tapped into ideas emanating from the social work profession. RP was an active site of case work intervention by various professional social work agencies, often funded by the state but with more or less semi-autonomy, such as the Children's Aid Society, the Metro Toronto Social Planning Council and Central Neighbourhood House (CNH), as well as numerous charitable agencies, churches and volunteers groups, including the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Salvation Army, Catholic Family Services, and the Family Service Association of Toronto. While these groups had diverse philosophies and methods, they were generally sympathetic to tenants, often documenting poverty and providing financial aid and other forms of assistance. Like the media, however, they tended to simplistically link the poor with moral and emotional depravity,⁹⁷ refrained from involving tenants themselves in programs and took what Howard Buchbinder calls an "apolitical" stance, which conspicuously shunned wider political and economic explanations for poverty and social misery.⁹⁸ More radically-minded social workers and theorists existed in this period and worked alongside tenant organizations, but they operated outside official structures and did not establish a foothold within the project.⁹⁹

Notions of "welfare dependency" and "cultural inbreeding" were, moreover, theorized in mainstream academic discourse on public housing in the late 60s. Albert Rose was once

again at the centre of these intellectual developments. Always defending public housing as an improvement on pre-war slums and necessary to “stabilize” the lives of the deprived so that the state could begin to solve wider social problems,¹⁰⁰ he had nevertheless come to adopt the view of “culture of poverty” theorist Oscar Lewis, as did many liberal social scientists of the era. Lewis and company, forerunners of the currently popular “underclass” thesis, believed that the social and economic environments of poor, inner-city neighbourhoods caused pathological behaviour among the residents. Such social and behavioural defects led to poor education and employment prospects for inner-city dwellers, creating a vicious poverty cycle transmitted from generation to generation.¹⁰¹ Rose bemoaned the lack of motivation among new immigrants and “chronic, Canadian-born families with several generations of deprivation,” contrasting it with the “highly motivated” immigrant families of the 1920s and 30s.¹⁰² “Lower class families” indeed had “a different set of values, a different set of relationships between members of the opposite sex, a different method of relating to and disciplining children, a different attitude towards work and towards many other values commonly held by members of the middle class.”¹⁰³ In Rose’s account, single mothers were responsible for their own predicament. In an article in OHC’s in-house organ, *Ontario Housing*, he cites a sexist joke by his political mentor, former CMHC head David Mansur, calling the situation of women in public housing that supposedly had a succession of common-law husbands “serial monogamy.”¹⁰⁴ The upshot of these arguments, of course, was that the poor themselves, especially women, were to blame for their economic marginalization, deflecting attention away from unemployment, poor educational opportunities, lack of

daycare and other structural explanations of socio-economic inequality, not to mention the effects of stigmatizing attitudes themselves in blocking human improvement.

The “Cherry Beach Express”: Policing Regent Park

Like many poor neighbourhoods in Canada, RP also developed a nefarious reputation in the 1970s as a dangerous area beleaguered by uncontrolled violence, crime and “lawless” youth. Inundated with negative media coverage, it became a “bad” area to be avoided by the general population, the police and other authorities; even some residents contended that it was rife with violent crime.¹⁰⁵ Yet the familiar image of rampant lawlessness in this period was based largely on image, rumour, hearsay and racism. Crime statistics are notoriously difficult to gather and assess,¹⁰⁶ but the limited evidence we do have suggests that RP suffered from very few violent crimes. With privileged access to internal housing authority figures, Albert Rose observed in 1973, for example, that of Toronto’s 38 murders in that year, only three were committed in all public housing in Metro Toronto; there were no reported nor attempted rapes. Project officials and security guards noted that the vast majority of offences in both sections of RP in particular were false fire alarms and “mischief” among youth.¹⁰⁷ A 1976 study ranked the RP area seventh out of eighteen police divisions in Toronto in overall crime.¹⁰⁸ Local police officers confirmed as late as 1989 that crime was not abnormally high in RP, agreeing with residents that the image of Regent Park was much worse than the reality.¹⁰⁹ Ainsworth Morgan, a former professional football player, underscored the differences between the 1970s, when he was growing up, and the RP of the late 1990s, where he returned to teach at a local elementary

school: "When I was a kid, you'd never hear of a shooting in Regent Park – assaults, stabbings, maybe. In the summer we would run relay races or play tag outside till 10, 11 o'clock at night. We used to be able to roam through those buildings freely. Now there are more fences and more of a security presence. It's a different atmosphere."¹¹⁰ Nor was there evidence of substantial racial and ethnic violence except for a misnamed 1976 "race riot," whose very notoriety in the collective memory of tenants points up its anomalous character.¹¹¹

If the criminalization of RP reflected the exaggerated attitudes characteristic of place-based stigmatization, there certainly was an uneasy relationship with law enforcement. Many RP'ers and community organizations considered the police to be "outsiders" in the project and charged that they treated residents callously. Officers in 51 Division, located inside the grounds of RPS and nicknamed the "Punishment Station" due to its reputation as a repository for unruly police officers disciplined in other districts, were singled out as particularly brutal and insensitive to the needs of the local population.¹¹² Almost all the interviewees for this dissertation remarked that tenant-police relations were characterized by mutual hostility.¹¹³ A 1965 study of teenage boys in RPS by Central Neighbourhood House reported that teenagers felt especially harassed by law enforcement just for living in the project and, as in Cabbagetown before World War II, it was considered taboo to "snitch" on neighbours and acquaintances.¹¹⁴ Chris Reading noted that his father had told him that anybody who became a cop moved out of the neighbourhood "right away" due to resident enmity. He explained that even for tenants who were not involved in criminal activities, the "cops represented the outside" and intruded in the project "to do a job on us

for somebody else.”¹¹⁵ David Blackmore argued that police would only “respond to complaints and emergencies,” and “then they would be gone,” failing to establish a lasting, positive presence in the project.¹¹⁶ According to some residents, this attitude by law enforcement translated into a cynicism, defensiveness and lack of interest in community concerns by local police officers and sometimes into brutal treatment of disadvantaged peoples in RP and the surrounding area.

Norma Penner recalled that the police handled situations confrontationally and were quick to arrest people on the “slightest provocation.” One incident in particular sticks out in her mind. At a banquet of the Regent Park Community Improvement Association (RPCIA), two policemen burst into the gathering and went right for a table of teenagers. Investigating the theft of a wallet, they demanded identification from one of the boys, who resented this, saying, “I don’t have to show you my identification.” According to Penner, the police viciously beat the youth and then arrested him for assault on a police officer. Despite letters of protest by the tenant political association, several of whose members witnessed the incident, and by local Alderman and soon-to-be mayor of Toronto, John Sewell, the youth received a nine-month sentence in the Reformatory.¹¹⁷ Indeed, ritualized police beatings of area residents at Cherry Beach, an isolated area on Lake Ontario due south of the project, have been immortalized in popular culture,¹¹⁸ expressing the fear of and lack of respect for local law enforcement. When he was 14, David Blackmore took a frightening ride on what was euphemistically known as “The Cherry Beach Express.” With a group of other kids, he broke into an abandoned factory and was apprehended by the police. The police demanded to know the names of his

friends. When he refused to name names, they took him down to Cherry Beach, tied him up with ropes and hung him over the side of a generator plant wall, threatening to kill him. Then, they “beat the hell out of” him. Blackmore said that this was not an uncommon occurrence. Indeed, a 1994 inquiry by the Ontario Legal Aid Plan into the policing of disadvantaged communities in Toronto had a separate section on excessive use of police force and power in Cherry Beach. One service provider in the RP area told the inquiry: “I have heard stories about Cherry Beach for the last 15 years.” The inquiry catalogued a range of complaints against the police centring on physical and verbal abuse of welfare recipients, native peoples and blacks.¹¹⁹ Police attitudes towards and treatment of black youth in RP continues to be one of the key political issues among many tenants in the project.

Not all RP residents were fearful of the police. In the 1970s and 1980s, tenant apprehension over vandalism, petty theft and physical rowdiness prompted some to demand “a more effective” security presence. Security guards were hired in the mid-1960s and a ten-year experiment with unarmed private security guards drawn largely from the project itself, the Community Guardians, was another concrete response to these concerns. Self-described as “the security service with a social conscience,”¹²⁰ it patrolled the project grounds, intervening in non-threatening disputes and gathering information about vandalism and theft. David Blackmore, who joined the Guardians at 18 years of age, believed they played a positive role in the neighbourhood since they had often grown up themselves in the project and knew the residents well. They also avoided the pitfalls of the “heavy” presence practised by the police.¹²¹ Yet they were always controversial

among tenants. Some considered them similar to the police and resented their role as “snitches” to housing management; others worried they were just not effective enough in dealing with the problems of crime.¹²²

Conclusion

Policy prescriptions in public housing operated within a judgmental moral framework that was not reproduced in private market tenures. RP residents faced unduly authoritarian regulations on tenant selection and rental policies as well as attempts to impose standards of behaviour within the project, showing up the limits of “citizenship rights” within the post-war welfare state. If outright state moral regulation waned somewhat in the 1970-1990s, it was replaced by the punitive consequences of territorial stigmatization buttressed by the increased marginalization of RP residents. For three decades, RP tenants suffered from an insidious external representation of the project as a dangerous problem area beset by socio-economic marginalization, crime and immorality. Territorial stigmatization has been one of the most striking elements of the lived experience of RP residents. The powerful demonization of RP as a site of social depravity and behavioural deficiency would become a central feature of tenants’ lives, helping to explain their stark material and social marginalization and featuring prominently in strategies of coping, resistance and escape.

Notes to Chapter 5

¹ (Emphasis added). City of Toronto Archives (hereafter CTA), Housing Authority of Toronto (hereafter HAT), RG 28, B, Box 27, File: Judicial Inquiry 1965, "Report of His Honour Judge Robert Forsyth, Judicial Inquiry Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon Allegations Made by Alderman June Marks...."

² CTA, HAT RG 28, B, Box 11, File: 1968 Election – Rosedale Riding, Mr. And Mrs. CWR to R. Bradley, 29 July 1966; R. Bradley to DM, 11 January 1968; R. Bradley to CSM, 2 May 1967.

³ Ibid., File: 1965-1968 R, Letters to R. Bradley 24 January 1966; 8 February 1966; 15 October 1966.

⁴ Ibid., Box 28, File: Studies, Questionnaires, Reports, 1963-1968, Board of Education for the Borough of North York Adult Education Department, Schedule, Urban Renewal and Public Housing Course, 1967.

⁵ Ibid., Box 11, File: 1965 Press Release, Press Release from William Dies, Chairman of the HAT, 12 October 1965. On visits by university and high school teachers note Ibid., Box 10, File: 1964-1968 M, Mrs. EAM to R. Bradley, 28 September 1968; Bradley to AM, 23 December 1964; Box 17, File: 1966-1969 Memos, William Dies, HAT Chairman's Report 1964, 6 January 1965; Box 12, File: 1964-1968 G, R. Bradley to PG, Toronto General Hospital, 27 December 1967. Box 10, File: 1964-1968 K, has numerous letters from Grade 12 Home Economics teachers inquiring about urban renewal.

⁶ Ibid., Box 19, File: Publicity 1964-1966, Executive Secretary, HAT, to Alderman Grayson, 22 December 1964.

⁷ Ibid., Box 11, File: 1967 Regent Park Questionnaire, Untitled Questionnaire.

⁸ Howard Buchbinder, "The Just Society Movement," in Brian Wharf, ed., *Community Work in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), 130-131.

⁹ Paul Ringer, "The Housing Project Manager," *Canadian Welfare*, 15 September 1960, 234-237.

¹⁰ On the project-level OHC management structure, see "OHC Staff in Regent Park," *Regent Park Community News*, 2 (April 1973), 3.

¹¹ "Robert Bradley, Director of OHC's Community Relations Branch," *Ontario Housing*, 16 (December 1971), 2-3.

¹² Comments by Don Davis, Chairman of the Ontario Federation of Citizens' Associations, cited in Canadian Council of Social Development (CCSD), *Who Should Manage Public Housing?: A Report of a Workshop* (Ottawa: CCSD, 1970), 14-15. For a description of the "individual problem" approach of the TRW's, see Robert Bradley, "Community Relations: Where People Count," *Ontario Housing* 16 (December 1971), 2-3. and OHC, *Handbook for Housing Authority Members* (Toronto: Ministry of Housing, 1977).

¹³ Susan Fish and Michael Dennis, *Programs in Search of a Policy: Low Income Housing in Canada* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), 198-199.

¹⁴ See Albert Rose, "Housing Policies," in Michael Wheeler, ed., *The Right to Housing* (Montreal: Harvest House Ltd, 1969), 74-75 and George Michael Gabor, "Tenant's Associations and Issues in Public Housing," BA Thesis, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, 1981, 38.

¹⁵ "Debate on Public Housing," *Chez News*, April 1976, 1. For similar comments by Marion Waterson, a long-time OHC Tenant Relations Officer, see "CRW reflects on public housing career," *Chez News*, December 1975, 6-7 and "Community responsibility rests with tenants," *Chez News*, June 1976, 4-5. *Chez News* was the internal organ of employees at the Ontario Ministry of Housing.

¹⁶ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 12, File: 1966-1968 Staff, R. Bradley to J.B.S. Smith, 11 September 1967.

¹⁷ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 7, File: 1964-1968, Members of City and Metropolitan Councils, Helen Johnston to Robert Bradley, 19 March 1968. Consult this same file for several similar letters.

¹⁸ CTA, Harold Clark Papers, SC 61, Box 1, File: MTHA Meetings 1964, MTHA, Minutes of MTHA Meeting, 26 August, 1964, 5-6.

¹⁹ HAT claimed in 1968 that no applicant had been refused access to public housing on the basis of poor housekeeping alone, but that it had been a factor along with other problems. MTHA, however, admitted that 6 applicants had been refused in 1967 on the basis of poor housekeeping alone and ten other applicant families were rejected for this in combination with other factors. Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Extract from the Welfare and Housing Committee Meeting, 31 October 1968, Memo from Commissioner of Housing and Commissioner of Welfare.

- ²⁰ See Franca Iacovetta, "Making 'New Canadians': Social, Workers, Women, and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families," in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 261-303.
- ²¹ "How they decide if you will live in public housing," *Toronto Daily Star*, 19 August 1969, 3; OHC Applicants Grievance Committee (OHC AGC), *The Ontario Housing Corporation: Cure or Cause of Your Housing Problems?* (Toronto: OHC AGC, 1974), 1-2.
- ²² Dan Heap, "Inside City Hall," *Guerrilla*, May 1973, 4.
- ²³ See Dorothy Quann, *Racial Discrimination in Housing* (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, 1979), 33-34. On the cases of two black women who were evicted from RP because of this situation, see CTA, Sewell Papers, SC 306, File: Regent Park, 1972-1977, Mary Anderson, Community Legal Worker to Margaret Scrivener, MPP, 1 September 1977. On protests, see Karin Joeveer, "Mothers fight Ontario Housing," *Seven News*, 11 January 1980, 6-7.
- ²⁴ Margaret Little, *'No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit': The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), chap.6.
- ²⁵ "Welfare workers accused of humiliations," *Globe and Mail*, 14 May 1969, 7; "How the poor are upsetting the welfare applicant," *Chatelaine*, February 1971, 164-167. James Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario, 1920-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 240-241.
- ²⁶ "Ontario Task Force on Community and Social Services, Report on Selected Issues and Relationships: Response from the Committee on Community and Social services of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario," May 1975 cited in Struthers, *The Limits of Affluence*, 241.
- ²⁷ Metropolitan Toronto Archives (hereafter MTA), Department of Public Welfare (hereafter DPW), R.G. 5.1 86.4 v3, Box 190, File 9: Nursery and Day Care Centres – Regent Park South Day Care January 1963-March 1971, R.J. Morris, Commissioner of Public Welfare to the Committee on Public Welfare, Fire and Legislation, 13 February 1964. The RPS Day Care centre was originally founded in the 1940s as a private venture and was called "The Toronto East End Day Nursery and Settlement." See Metropolitan Toronto Public Library, Baldwin Room, S51, The Toronto East End Day Nursery and Settlement, Box 1.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, R.G. 5.1 86.20 v13, Box 210, File 6: Nursery and Day Centres – Regent Park South, May 1960-January 1968, "The Regent Park South Nursery School Brief Re: The Effect on the School of the New Regulations Under the Day Care Act, 1966, 22 January 1968."
- ²⁹ CTA, HAT, RG 28, Series B, Box 29. Boxes 29, Tenant Case File 53. For another similar case see Tenant Case File 75.
- ³⁰ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 25, File: 1956-68 Housing Manager, George Hees, Minister of Trade and Commerce to Frank Dearlove, 10 October 1962.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, Box 12, File: 1964-66 Staff, Memo from Gordon Frizelle to Bradley, undated, probably February 1965.
- ³² "Lose Last Luxury, If Regent Rents Up," *Toronto Star*, 26 April 1963, 31.
- ³³ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 12, File: 1964-166 Staff, Memo from Robert Bradley to Gordon Frizelle, 26 February 1965.
- ³⁴ "Oust Three Regent Park Families," *Toronto Daily Star*, 1 November 1961, 23. For details on evictions in RPN in the same year, see CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 25, File: 1957-1966 Regent Park North, "Analysis of Vacancies from January 1 1961 to May 1, 1961 Inclusive, RPN." For a similar case, in which a woman was forced to give up work because of the rent restrictions see Tenant Case File 41.
- ³⁵ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 7, File: 1964-1968 Controller Margaret Campbell, Bradley to A.W. Varcoe, Commissioner, Department of Housing, 26 September 1968.
- ³⁶ Regent Park Community Improvement Association (hereafter RPCIA), *A New Deal for Ontario Housing Tenants* (Toronto: RPCIA, 1972), 2.
- ³⁷ "Order Study of Families in Public Units," *Globe and Mail*, 8 January 1960, 5.
- ³⁸ "Hundreds said cheating city on rent," *Toronto Star*, 19 October 1967, 37. On Marks' muckraking history, see Kevin Brushett, "'Blots on the Face of the City': The Politics of Slum Housing and Urban Renewal in Toronto, 1940-1970," Ph.D. dissertation, Queen's University, 2001, 411-430.
- ³⁹ "Ontario Housing turfs out families with out-of-work teenagers," *Toronto Star*, 14 April 1977, B1 and James Hendry, "Review on 'empty nesters' feared herald of eviction for 100 mothers in OHC," *The Globe and Mail*, 19 September 1981, 5.
- ⁴⁰ Brian Rogers, "OHC is evicting tenant after his family deserted him," *Globe and Mail*, 25 May 1977, 25.

- ⁴¹ Margaret Hillyard Little and Ian Morrison, “‘The Pecker Detectors are Back’: Regulation of the Family Form in Ontario Welfare Policy,” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 34 (Summer 1999), 110-35. Paul Ringer and Norma Penner, Coordinator of the RPCIA, recalled that scapegoating of welfare recipients remained implicit during this time in contrast with the intense stigmatization of the 1990s. See Norma Penner, interview with the author, tape recorded, 14 November 1996 and Paul Ringer, interview with the author, tape recorded, 12 November 1996. For confirmation of this argument, see Patricia M. Evans and Karen J. Swift, “Single Mothers and the Press: Rising Tides, Moral Panic, and Restructuring Discourses,” in Sheila M. Neysmith, ed., *Restructuring Caring Labour: Discourse, State Practice, and Everyday Life* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2000).
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- ⁴³ Copies of the Lease and Rules and Regulations that appear to have been used until 1970 can be located in CTA, HAT, RG 28, Series B, Box 29 along with tenant case files.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Box 18, File: 1961-1962, Sub-Committee Reports, “Report No. 3 of the Subcommittee,” 1
- ⁴⁵ F.W. Challoner, “Report on Proposal...,” 2.
- ⁴⁶ Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, *Annual Report 1959* (Toronto: MTHA, 1960), unpaginated.
- ⁴⁷ Tenant Case File 9.
- ⁴⁸ Tenant Case File 13.
- ⁴⁹ Tenant Case File 19.
- ⁵⁰ Tenant Case Files 59, 78, 79, 82 and 111.
- ⁵¹ Tenant Case File 7. For a similar comment see Tenant Case File 26.
- ⁵² Margaret Pope, “The Design of Public Housing and Its Effects on the Tenant Family: A Woman’s Point of View,” *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Ontario Housing Conference* (Toronto: Ontario Department of Commerce, 1961), 104-105.
- ⁵³ See Tenant Case Files 22, 23, 35, 61, 70, and 71.
- ⁵⁴ CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 7, File: 1964-1968 Controller Margaret Campbell, Robert Bradley to A.W. Varcoe, Commissioner, Department of Housing, 26 September 1968.
- ⁵⁵ For the case of a family reprimanded for painting their own apartment, see Tenant Case File 33. For Dearlove’s demand to remove a pet or face eviction see Tenant Case File 47.
- ⁵⁶ The phrases in bold are from the original *Tenants’ Handbook* (Toronto: HAT, 1958) 1-10 found in CTA, HAT, RG 28, B, Box 6, File: 1953-1958 Regent Park North. Also see for a list of warnings and reminders, RG 28, B, Box 36, File: Administration – Memos to Tenants, 1953-1956.
- ⁵⁷ F.W. Challoner, “Report on Proposal,” 3.
- ⁵⁸ MTHA, *Annual Report 1960-61*, unpaginated.
- ⁵⁹ Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Extract from the Welfare and Housing Committee Meeting, 31 October 1968, Memo from Commissioner of Housing and Commissioner of Welfare.
- ⁶⁰ *Tenants Handbook*, 6.
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- ⁶⁴ Susan Anderson, “Volunteers will teach skills to bored mothers,” *Globe and Mail*, 15 December 1967, 29.
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- ⁷² Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, *Urban Renewal Study* (Toronto: Metropolitan Toronto, 1966), 17.
- ⁷³ Hal Tennant, "Our Second Chance at Public Housing," *Maclean's*, 20 March 1965, 20, 32.
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- ⁷⁵ S.J. Allin, "Public Housing: A Woman's Point of View," *Ontario Housing*, 7 (October 1963), 16.
- ⁷⁶ Sylvia Goldblatt, "Integration or Isolation," *Habitat*, January-April 1966, 23.
- ⁷⁷ Paul Hellyer, *Task Force on Housing and Urban Development* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1969), 53-54.
- ⁷⁸ David Allen, *Toronto Star*, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 18 December 1968.
- ⁷⁹ David Allen, "Regent Park South called colossal flop," *Toronto Star*, 7 December 1968, 1, 10.
- ⁸⁰ David Allen, "To its youngsters Regent Park South is a place to wreck," *Toronto Star*, 9 December 1968, 1, 7. On present-day metaphors of disease used to describe poor American neighbourhoods, see Harald Bauder, "Neighbourhood Effects and Cultural Exclusion," *Urban Studies*, 39, 1 (2002), 85-93.
- ⁸¹ David Allen, "To its youngsters...", 1
- ⁸² Glen Allen, "One day in the life of Regent Park South," *Toronto Star*, 7 December 1968, 10.
- ⁸³ David Allen, "To its youngsters...", 7.
- ⁸⁴ David Allen, "Regent Park South, 'Living here is like getting kicked in the teeth,'" *Toronto Star*, 18 December 1968, 9. For a similar media depiction from the *Toronto Telegram*, note the discussion in Jennifer McCabe, "Public Housing in Metropolitan Toronto," Bachelor's Thesis, Ryerson Polytechnic Institute, 1975, 60.
- ⁸⁵ Stanley Randall, Letter to the Editor, *Toronto Star*, 13 December 1968, 3.
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¹¹⁶ David Blackmore, interview with author.

¹¹⁷ Norma Penner, interview with author. CTA, SC 306, John Sewell Papers, Box 7, File: Regent Park, 1972-1977, RPCIA to Inspector Marks, Station #51, 11 July 1974.

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