REFRAMING COMMUNITY PRACTICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: MULTIPLE TRADITIONS, MULTIPLE CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT: *"Community" in the twenty-first century seems to be everywhere and nowhere. On the one hand, the rhetoric of community is omnipresent, as nonprofit organizations, civic associations, government agencies, and even multinational corporate entities routinely describe their activities to be community-oriented. On the other hand, community in the broader sense of shared interests or solidarities appears to be under unrelenting attack, challenged by sociopolitical forces and intellectual currents that point toward more fragmented social orders. Locating community as a particular field of practice poses similar dilemmas. This article summarizes the broad outlines of the history of "community organization" in the United States, emphasizing both its multiple traditions and the enduring nature of its practical and strategic dilemmas. It provides an analysis of the key intellectual and social challenges facing the field and the different kinds of pressures they may be exerting on the different traditions of community action. Finally, it suggests four "boundary-crossing" areas of activity that cut across the inherited traditions and may represent emerging sources of innovation for community-based action.*

"**C**ommunity" in the twenty-first century seems to be everywhere and nowhere. Although this state of affairs is hardly unprecedented—community has been lost, found, and rediscovered over the years with disturbing regularity (e.g., Stein, 1960; Sampson, 1999)—the problem is especially pressing today. On the one hand, the rhetoric of community is omnipresent, as nonprofit organizations, civic associations, government agencies, and even multinational corporate entities routinely describe their activities to be community-oriented. Long-neglected inner-city community areas have been rediscovered; new conceptions of communal ties (e.g., social capital) have emerged; new kinds of planned communities are being constructed. On the other hand, community in the broader sense of shared interests or solidarities appears to be under unrelenting

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attack, as traditional notions of collective action and inclusive modes of social development are challenged by sociopolitical forces (globalization, social-welfare retrenchment, religious sectarianism, militarism) and by intellectual currents (neoliberalism, postmodernism) that point toward more fragmented social orders.

Locating community as a particular field of practice poses similar dilemmas. Those who consciously define their work as "community practice" often embrace a definition of community that disconnects their strategies from larger structures and processes (e.g., Johnson, 2001) or that gestures toward "macro" forces in only the most generic terms. The obverse approach is to label any and all activities as community work—a claim that fails to assert a tenable conception of community either as theoretical construct or as practical model. Beyond the problem that comes from being overly narrow or broad, though, there are also approaches that simply ignore, or at best overlook, community. This position of *communitas in absentia*, which seems to be the hallmark of congeries of professionals who do applied work in urban environments but do not see their work as connected to "community," further complicates any search for meaningful definitions.

The importance of renewing such a search, and of initiating a broader conceptual remapping of community as a field of practice, becomes apparent when we consider the intellectual and practical costs of the current state of confusion. Recent theoretical critiques have come to question the very conception of community with particular trenchancy. To be sure, community has long been seen as an especially slippery signifier, and one whose fuzzy connotations can render it unsuitable for sharp analytical purchase (Williams, 1976, p. 66). Yet recent proliferation of the rubrics of community— community cohesion, community participation, community regeneration and renewal—within a raft of foundation-funded and government-led initiatives, and within a social context marked by corporate globalization and durable public austerities, has led certain observers (e.g., Amin, 2005) to suggest that notions of local community retain little more than ideological utility. Intellectual currents associated with postmodernism and deconstruction, meanwhile, have spurred different but no less sweeping critiques of community as socially essentializing and politically conformist, and thus as almost inherently oppressive (e.g., Young, 2000).

Although the challenges posed by such critiques confront both theorists and practitioners, it is important to recognize that the latter—whose diverse projects are in any event not reducible to single tendencies (DeFilippis, Fisher, & Shragge, 2006)—also face problems that are more basic still. These fundamental problems often rest upon a lack of conceptual clarity about the underlying structure of the field in which practitioners work as well as an uncertain grasp of its history. Such basic weaknesses have only been compounded by the ubiquitous "turn" to community of recent times, which makes it doubly difficult for community-level actors to relate disparate bodies of contemporary field lore to distinctive traditions of practice, to navigate and communicate across different kinds of practice traditions that have longstanding histories of conflict as well as (especially recently) conflict-avoidance, and to relate efforts within different traditions to broader projects of social change. Engagement with the world(s) of community practice today, then, requires not only taking the diverse objectives of different kinds of practices as an empirical given but focusing on this multiplicity as a core analytical problem to address.

Such a daunting picture suggests the need for re-articulation of intellectual signposts and strategic practices in relation to contemporary opportunities and challenges. This paper undertakes this task, attempting to make sense of the disparate tendencies and internal tensions among approaches to community practice, in relation to the shifting political-economic and intellectual currents of our time.

We begin by summarizing the broad outlines of the history of community practice or "community organization" in the United States, emphasizing both its multiple traditions and the enduring nature of its practical and strategic dilemmas. Our effort to trace the evolution of these traditions is guided in general terms by regulation theory, which directs attention to how each of the community-practice traditions responded to the successive challenges posed by Fordist and

post-Fordist restructurings within the U.S. context. We argue, in particular, that economic and political changes after the 1960s tended to sharpen pre-existing tensions within each of the major paradigms of community organization. We also seek to locate how, at certain moments, actors at different levels (e.g., community organizations, residents, foundations, government, intermediaries) have played important roles in reshaping their fields of practice and even in influencing the political and economic conditions that confront them. This historical retrospective builds toward an (opinionated) analytical discussion of the key intellectual and social challenges facing the field, and the different kinds of pressures these may be exerting on the various traditions of community action. We conclude by distinguishing between the conceptual boundary-marking we advocate and other inherited (and more invidious) barriers, and use this distinction to point to four "barrier-crossing" sites of activity that seem to cut across traditions. These cross-cutting forms of practice, which endeavor to straddle a number of social, spatial and sectoral silos that often isolate activists, may represent emerging sources of innovation for community-based action.

The purpose of this article, then, is to offer neither a theoretical critique of community nor a defensive empirical catalogue of the field's diversity and enduring value. Instead, our goals are: (1) to provide a certain conceptual order to the range of orientations and practices that characterize this field of endeavor, so that self-reflection and debate can proceed more coherently; (2) to reflect systematically on the multiple traditions from which these practices have emerged, so that this dialogue might be more grounded in shared historical understandings; and (3) to encourage the use of theoretical and historical insights thus generated to help locate emergent practices that may be of particular interest.

Throughout the following discussion, there is an emphasis on larger tendencies rather than specific contributions. It should be duly noted that a broad-brush approach does bring with it a number of risks, not least of which is the potential for overgeneralization. This kind of overview remains nevertheless a crucial task for a field that often lacks basic conceptual and strategic clarity. Beyond this, we hope that achieving greater clarity about what necessarily distinguishes different kinds of community practitioners might also help clarify what unnecessarily divides them.[1]

HISTORY AND STRATEGY: REASSESSING "COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION"

"Community Organization" has occupied an important, if sometimes hard-to-specify, position within the urban professions broadly and within the fields of social work and urban planning particularly. Tracing the origins of its social-scientific research orientation and its social-change impulses to the Progressive Era, community organization became recognized as a distinctive social-work practice area as early as the 1920s and 1930s (Fisher, 1994; Rothman, 1974). While the area's earliest conceptions of social organization and disorganization were drawn primarily from the sociological theories of the emerging Chicago School, it was a cohort of post-World War II scholars and activists who established both core theoretical foundations and graduate-school specialization in community organization. The field's self-definition underwent further expansion during and after the 1960s, when strategies of comprehensive planning, grassroots organizing, political mobilization and local development became major touchstones in what increasingly came to be seen as a multiple-paradigm field (Fisher, 1999; Rothman, 1999; Spergel, 1999; Shragge, 2003).

Multiple definitions of community organization and community-based practice have been in play throughout this evolution, and uncertainty as to the boundaries of the field—and its relationship to intellectual disciplines of knowledge and to the urban professions—has been endemic. For many years, "community organization" remained the standard rubric in the United States for the great number of practices involving purposive community change, among them community organizing, community development, community-based planning and implementation, community mobilization and social action, community collaboration and partnership, advocacy,

coalition building and civic participation. Within some urban professions, such as social work, the term "community organization" has had the virtue of a widely recognized intellectual lineage. In particular, community organization points to a theoretical conception of its object of practice as understood by classical sociology: social forces organize (and disorganize) communities in particular ways, and therefore a social-scientific understanding of those forces (demographic, economic, social, etc.) is necessary to guide whichever practice approach one wishes to undertake. It also, ecumenically, refuses to privilege any one community practice or strategy and thus can serve as a nonoffensive placemarker for a multiparadigm field.

These traditional advantages have been undermined, it is true, by the term's failure to resonate with recent practitioners working in *any* of its traditions. Even in theoretical contexts, it seems clear that community organization is less and less often invoked as a general rubric, whereas "community organizing" and "community development" continue to designate (sometimes along with "social planning") recognized intellectual traditions as well as distinct practice strategies.[2] For example, certain community organizers view the substance of the theoretical dimension of community organization as unduly restrictive: community organization seemed to suggest, following functionalist sociology, that the fundamental problem with disadvantaged communities is that they lack organization rather than, say, power.

The fact remains that, even though urbanists have wrestled with various elements of this problematic, there is no single disciplinary tradition that adequately frames "community" as a field of practice. Nevertheless, we will suggest that the idea of community organization provides a useful place to start, if only because of its extended lineage in social work—a field in which some useful (if not entirely unproblematic) concept-building has taken place.[3] This lineage stems from the reality that social work historically has been compelled to grapple with the difficulty, and often the stubborn incongruency, of addressing both theory and practice simultaneously. In doing so, it has been forced to tack back and forth between the academy and the world—when neither directly maps onto the other.
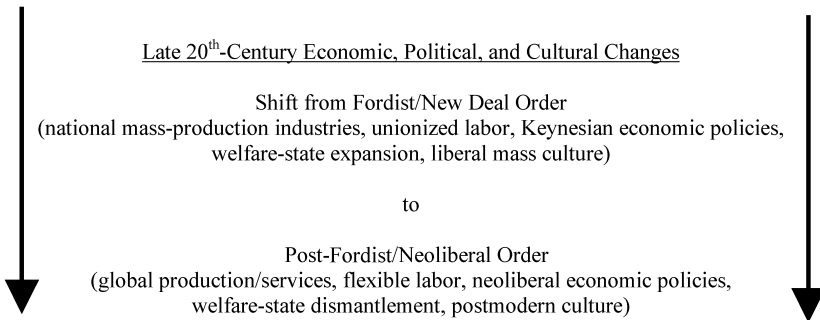
Community organization, in light of its diverse array of activities, is commonly seen as a multiple-paradigm field in which practitioners rely on a number of different competencies. Although it is possible to typologize these paradigms in a number of ways, Rothman's (1974) conception of three major approaches to community intervention (well-known within social work and in certain quarters beyond) has the advantage of clearly highlighting ideal-typical differences in theory and practice while also offering a certain historical applicability.[4] These three approaches or modes—which we name here as *social planning*, *community organizing* and *community development*—encapsulate in rough terms the major twentieth-century traditions of community intervention within the United states.[5]

Current practitioners may argue, of course, that these ideal types oversimplify a messy reality or are no longer representative of the field, and these objections may be correct. (Practitioners will also note that the term "social planning," in particular, is rarely encountered in the field.) Nevertheless, the virtue of models is that they enable practitioners to reflect upon their work by making underlying assumptions, and potential contradictions, explicit. Continuing to use Rothman's categories for purposes of discussion enables us at least to consider the possibility that whatever mismatch emerges may result from a problem with the field rather than with the concepts. Rothman's models can also be criticized (e.g., Shragge, 2003, p. 73) as failing to link "modes of practice" to historical context or to broader visions of social change. In this paper we attempt to draw out at least some of these linkages.

In the following paragraphs, we summarize very briefly the characteristics of these modes of intervention, their distinctive moments of historic emergence, and the core dilemmas faced (or at least recognized) by each approach even during its era of greatest success. It is important to bear in mind that, as ideal types, these approaches do not correspond neatly to real historical organizations

Traditional Map of the Community Field
(e.g., Rothman, 1974)

Social Planning	Community Organizing	Community Development
• Communities as functional/ecological sub-units • Community intervention as technical/organizational, research-based process to solve social problems • Key Challenge: Tensions between controlled conditions conducive to knowledge production & implementation vs. unstable conditions typical of community-level social life	• Communities as political actors • Community intervention as the building of conflict-initiating democratic-action organizations to redistribute power and resources • Key Challenge: Constructing durable organizations that also continue to initiate and pursue conflict (i.e., avoiding the problems of cooptation vs. disintegration)	• Communities as participatory self-governing arenas • Community intervention as a process in which community members create accountable development and service activity • Key Challenge: Achieving sufficient capacity to make meaningful change while also retaining community-level accountability in the process

Late 20th-Century Economic, Political, and Cultural Changes

Shift from Fordist/New Deal Order
(national mass-production industries, unionized labor, Keynesian economic policies,
welfare-state expansion, liberal mass culture)

to

Post-Fordist/Neoliberal Order
(global production/services, flexible labor, neoliberal economic policies,
welfare-state dismantlement, postmodern culture)

Flexible Services	Interest-Group Advocacy & Coalition-building	Economic Development and Community Building
Retrenchment and privatization encourage community-based providers to compete for resources and target services to operate more effectively and responsively; non-profits and private funders grow more influential; horizons become shorter-term and many research agendas become narrower; new emphasis on collaboration and multicultural practice	Economic and political pressures push many organizations toward community development and pursuit of interest-group advocacy strategies to secure support; others seek to build new coalitions and movements (predatory lending, living wage, environmental justice) to promote new forms of social regulation	Drawing on complex arrangements from public and private sectors, certain groups focus on housing and economic development; others on building community assets or social-capital-centered development; still others embrace comprehensive initiatives or network-building to bring these together

FIGURE 1

Changing Paradigms of Community Intervention

and strategies, even though certain of the latter are mentioned for purposes of illustration. Such illustration is also important to emphasize the ways in which particular social actors, through their concrete work and activities, contribute to, mediate the effects of, and shape responses to the broader trends and forces we describe. We follow this summary with a similarly abbreviated discussion of the impacts of late-twentieth-century economic and political restructuring on each tradition, and their implications for current challenges (see Figure 1).

Social Planning

Social planning approaches (or simply "planning" approaches) see community intervention primarily as a technical or organizational process of problem-solving, one that is focused on a substantive social challenge (e.g., delinquency, housing, mental health) that can be defined and addressed. Emerging from late-nineteenth-century sociological theories of social disorganization and dysfunction, social planning approaches were predicated on notions of communities as functional (ecological) subunits of an urban industrial society that was dynamic, assimilative and progressive. Social planning efforts, rooted in the experience of the settlement-house movement within the early-twentieth century European-immigrant city but also in social-scientific progressivism more generally (e.g., public health, urban planning), emphasize planning and organizing projects guided by objective research and involving the functional integration of citizens through efficient access to (and routinized improvement of) services. Such endeavors require social-welfare planners or "organizers" in the form of professional experts who gather and analyze data, administer large-scale organizations efficiently, and enforce predictability of service-delivery, while also understanding the complex conditions and requirements of community-level implementation (Warren, 1963). Many Fordist-era government and private social-service organizations (from settlement houses and health departments to child-welfare agencies) were predicated on social-planning models of service design and delivery, though a late-twentieth-century program like New York City's 10-Year Housing Plan (Schwartz, 1999, p. 99) might also be seen as aspiring to fit this mold. Innovative practitioners in this tradition, from the settlement-house movement onward, also contributed to what would eventually become rival traditions; thus certain seeds not only of community development but even community organizing/social action (as in Jane Addams' antiwar dissent, social-work radicalism in the 1930s, or Mobilization for Youth activism in the 1960s) often emerged, if indirectly, out of "social planning"-type work (Selmi, 1998).

Although a range of challenges have faced planning approaches throughout their history, a key tension within this mission was between, on the one hand, the kinds of conditions conducive to effective social-scientific knowledge production, bureaucratic organization and service-delivery economies of scale (stability, predictability, controls, etc.), and on the other, the actual conditions (often involving unpredictability, chronic instability, inefficiency, singularity, etc.) typical of community-level social and organizational life, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Hence, even under the historical conditions that were relatively conducive to the pursuit of this model in the United States (e.g., the New Deal or Great Society periods), contradictions between centralized planning and local implementation presented a host of challenges that were understood within this approach to be primarily technical or organizational but that were, of course, also political and social. We can see such problems in numerous initiatives, from the community-center movement of the early twentieth century (Fisher, 1994, pp. 15–23) to the mid-century public housing and urban renewal programs (Schwarz, 1993, pp. 25–60) to the Ford Foundation's Gray Areas projects of the early 1960s (Halpern, 1995, pp. 89–101; O'Connor, 1996).

Community Organizing

Community organizing approaches understand community intervention primarily as a process of organizing aggrieved or disadvantaged groups to make demands on the larger community for resources, recognition, or broader social change. Rooted conceptually in critical or radical theories of power and inequality, these approaches emerged from community organizing initiatives that were inspired by (and to some extent contributed to) twentieth-century social movements in labor and civil rights. Defining "community" as a political (insurgent or transformative) actor, this tradition emphasizes strategies of conflict or mobilization linked in the short term to redistributing

power or resources and in the long term to full democratic citizenship, movement building and social transformation (Fisher, 1994). As codified in its best-known variant, the neo-Alinskyite model, these endeavors require professional community organizers who understand how to build democratic action organizations, train indigenous leaders, define and analyze political issues, mount organizing campaigns, mobilize participants, and expand the terrain of conflict (Alinsky, 1971; Delgado, 1986; Heathcott, 2005). Historic successes within this broader tradition might be said to include major civil-rights legislation and labor law, antidisplacement actions against urban renewal, and the community reinvestment mandates (Gotham, 1999; Morris, 1984; Sugrue, 2004; Squires, 1992).

Concrete historical efforts to pursue this approach have encountered a number of obstacles, but one core tension recognized by actors themselves has been the challenge of constructing durable community-based organizations that also continue to initiate and pursue conflict (Piven & Cloward, 1977, 1999). Furthermore, while building such organizations was laboriously difficult work, success could be just as problematic as failure, as the subsequent activity of a number of once-insurgent groups (from the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council to The Woodlawn Organization) indicates. In effect, the problem of co-optation—and, conversely, the marginalization of groups that turn their back on opportunities for co-optation—emerged as a perennial challenge for social action groups even under conditions in which conflict strategies were not outright suppressed or delegitimated. By the same token, this kind of community organizing at times has transcended its neighborhood-based origins, contributing to mobilization efforts as diverse as environmental-justice actions, labor campaigns and antiglobalization movements (De Filippis, 2004, p. 156; Pellow, 2002; Simmons, 1994).

Community Development

Community development approaches, finally, understand community intervention as a locally based, bottom-up process of self-directed regeneration. While this approach can trace elements of its origins to a number of early-twentieth-century innovations in democratic theory (e.g., John Dewey) and community-based initiatives, its post-World War II theorization in the U.S. drew on rural sociology as well as on international development work associated with the United Nations (Cary, 1970). Its emergence as a distinct urban-community strategy gained momentum from 1960s demands by urban social movements for "community control" and their subsequent evolution in the face of intensified inner-city decline and abandonment. These variants were articulated theoretically first within visions of radical democracy and national self-determination (Breines, 1989; Katznelson, 1981; Shragge, 2003) but, more recently, have been recast within communitarian conceptions of civil society (Halpern, 1995; Harrison, 1974; Sites, 1998). Regardless, notions of community development tend to define "community" as a participatory, self-governing arena in which residents and stakeholders create services or development activities that remain accountable to this community. More than other approaches, this model contends that, even in impoverished areas where significant external resources are needed, key internal assets (people, relationships, associations, etc.) need to remain at the center of strategies of revitalization if development is to be directed by, and is to benefit, local community members. Emphasis in this approach is on *process* goals—encouraging participation, enhancing community competency, promoting collaboration and partnership, developing leadership—within a strategy of incremental, consensual and self-directed change (Blakely, 1979). Although it is possible to point to a number of weaknesses within such an ideal-typical model, the key tension recognized by the tradition itself has been that between, on the one hand, achieving sufficient community capacity to make meaningful change and, on the other, retaining community accountability in the process (Ferguson & Stoutland, 1999, pp. 51–55). This tension has manifested itself in a number of critiques of community development

organizations, including their dependence on external resources, their tendency to substitute orga-
nizational goals for constituent interests, the struggle to "scale up" successful initiatives, and the
slow pace of incrementalism (Stoecker, 1997). In short, the dilemma of capacity vs. community
control has continued to bedevil the community-development approach, even its storied successes
(Johnson, 2004).

Each of the traditional community approaches, then, was a major source of historical innovation
that also came to embody a core dilemma (not to mention a number of other ancillary problems)
even under promising conditions. Of course, it is important to recognize that community action
within these traditions had played a role in creating some of those conditions in the first place.
Settlement houses and other 1930s-era community organizations, for instance, participated in the
advocacy efforts that led to key New Deal policy innovations, such as public housing (Schwartz,
1993), and a number of social planning and social action projects (e.g., Gray Areas, Mobilization
for Youth) became influential precursors of the antipoverty and community action programs of
the 1960s (Fisher, 1994; O'Connor, 1996). More generally, many of the social aspirations given
voice by community activists over the course of these decades—notions of collective welfare,
grassroots power, participatory decision-making—continued to live well beyond the historical
moments that gave rise to them. Yet it is also apparent today that post-1960s changes in social
and political conditions have posed further challenges to all three approaches.

Despite the differences between the models, for example, it is clear in retrospect (see, e.g.,
O'Connor, 1999) that all three took shape in tandem with—or in response to problems with—
similar nation-centered social structures linked to U.S. Fordism[6] or the New Deal Order (Florida
& Jonas, 1991; Fraser & Gerstle, 1989; Mollenkopf, 1983). Comprised in broad terms of a mass-
production economy, large-scale unionization and an expanding welfare state, these structures
served to undergird, up through the 1960s, uneven but nevertheless long-term processes of social
integration, state regulation and growing political and social equality.[7] Indeed, it can be argued
that the second and third community-practice paradigms (community organizing and community
development), in spite of their critiques of the undemocratic and top-down nature of the social-
planning paradigm typically supported by New Deal and Great Society liberalism, tended to
assume that such liberalism would remain an established structural component of American
society. Since the 1960s, however, economic and political restructuring has altered the social
terrain in very significant ways, and these changes have sharpened the tensions within all three
paradigms of community organization.

POST-FORDIST RESTRUCTURING AND THE SHIFTING TERRAIN
FOR COMMUNITY

The final quarter of the twentieth century significantly reshaped the economic and political
landscape and, along with it, the prospects for effective community action. Beginning in the
1970s, an international economic crisis accompanied the crumbling of key domestic pillars of
twentieth-century Fordist capitalism within the United States, such as mass-production indus-
tries, unionized labor, middle-class consumption, Keynesian fiscal and monetary policies, and
welfare-state expansion. These pillars, which had supported relatively stable economic growth
and rising standards of living for most citizens through the middle part of the twentieth century,
gave way increasingly to new strategies of corporate-led growth based on greater capital mo-
bility, service-sector expansion, flexible nonunionized labor, niche consumption and neoliberal
state policies (Amin, 1994; Bluestone & Harrison, 1982, 2000; Harrison & Bluestone, 1988; Peck,
2002; Levy, 1998). Growing social diversity emerged alongside these shifts, as the post-1964 wave
of immigration swelled. This new migration, largely comprised of non-European immigrants-of-
color, transformed urban communities in myriad ways—older ethnic neighborhoods were revived,

new enclaves established, divisions of labor altered, and ethnic political coalitions renegotiated (Piore, 1979; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Waldinger, 1996). These changing conditions—economic, demographic, and political—created significant challenges and opportunities for community approaches, as citizens looked to community organizations and strategies either to resist the dominant sociopolitical changes or to fill in for downsized state institutions. Yet, within the U.S., the social consequences of these changes were, broadly speaking, increased levels of economic inequality, political disengagement and community fragmentation, though there were also selective advances in certain kinds of social well-being, new opportunities for community identity and self-representation, and greater levels of sophistication and flexibility in the provision of certain kinds of community-based services.

FROM SOCIAL PLANNING TO FLEXIBLE SERVICES?

Social planning, as we have seen, was predicated on notions of stable, state-centered institutions capable of supporting careful, comprehensive and long-term-oriented approaches to research, program design and community-level implementation. These were, however, not easily made congruent with late-twentieth-century conditions of privatization, flexible services, and recurrent fiscal stress. In response, the post-1970s emphasis on market solutions to social problems has in many ways redefined "community" from a functional/ecological unit to a market/demographic category or service niche. Likewise, models of organizational practice have shifted from large-scale bureaucracies to principal/agent contracting relations in which entrepreneurial agents compete for markets (Fabricant & Fisher, 2002; Smith & Lipsky, 1993). Proponents point out that this decentralization of planning and service provision can lead to better-targeted, more cost-efficient delivery; this can also mean administrators who become more sensitive (at least relative to old-style social planners) to the needs of clients or "consumers" and to neighborhood-based interests. Yet even for proponents of the new flexibility, the challenges loom large: endemic financing gaps, overspecialization, growing numbers "falling through the cracks," overwhelming emphasis on short-term-oriented services. It is also worth pointing out that overall "planning strategies" in most fields (e.g., "deconcentrating poverty" in housing, "temporary assistance" in welfare, expansive incarceration in criminal justice) continue to be established by government policies or agencies, even when these strategies appear to emerge as demands for flexibility or accountability from local communities (Brodkin, 2003; Marwell, 2004; Smith, 2000). In general terms, the core practice dilemma of this tradition—the tension between research-based knowledge and institution-based practice—has been significantly exacerbated, as the "market" demands of short-term entrepreneurialism often run directly counter to the careful knowledge-building, institutional predictability, and comprehensive approach required for effective implementation. We would also note, following O'Connor (2001), that in certain respects the enterprise of social-scientific research or "poverty knowledge" itself has narrowed in ways that actually facilitate and accelerate these tendencies.

FROM COMMUNITY ORGANIZING TO INTEREST GROUP PRESSURE?

Post-1970s globalization, party-political realignments, and state-supported neoliberalism all served to undermine social-action-type community organizing. If core community-organizing strategies were predicated on the instrumental use of pressure to extract concessions from economic and political elites, the enhanced capital mobility of the post-Fordist economy enabled corporations to use the powers of "exit" (or merely its threat) to discourage such pressure from below. Republican resurgence, and the detachment of Democratic Party politics from institutional bases in unions and communities (as part of a more general drift toward the right), set

the stage for a significant unraveling and restructuring of the more vulnerable cornerstone poli-
cies of the New Deal order, manifested in cuts in federal urban/community assistance, weaken-
ing of labor law and worker and consumer safety, welfare reform, and privatization of public
housing (Dreier, Mollenkopf, & Swanstrom, 2001; Ferguson & Rogers, 1986; Fraser & Gerstle,
1989; Peck, 2001). Even locally, where mobilizational strategies succeeded in putting in place a
number of "progressive city" regimes, these steps failed to institutionalize a set of community-
oriented policies or sustain broad action-coalitions over time (Clavel, 1986; Sites, 2003). Certain
community-organizing groups, seeking to take advantage of market and state-sponsored oppor-
tunities, took up community-development projects that tended, over time, to replace their older
"action" strategies (see below). Others, confronted by an economy and state no longer so disposed
to be "concessionary" and faced with their own long-term organizational instability and political
defensiveness, became much more careful in their use of confrontation and pressure. Interest-
group advocacy strategies (involving lobbying, targeted pressure, *ad hoc* coalition-building, and
sporadic grassroots mobilizations) became the norm, whereas groups that remained committed to
movement-building and broader change in a context of widespread citizen disengagement found
themselves either financially strapped to support a staff or increasingly dependent on churches,
foundations, and other large institutions such as universities (Boyle & Silver, 2005; Fisher, 1994;
Weir, 1999).

In this sense, the old social-action challenge—how to avoid both co-optation and marginality—
became more difficult, and groups that turned their backs on the growing community-development
field (or at least resisted redefining themselves entirely within it) sometimes struggled to develop
a new identity. In the process, both "community" and "organizing" were often redefined—the
former in ways that enabled groups to speak for a variety of overlapping constituencies, the
latter in ways that comprised a much more varied set of activities that were more likely to focus
on leadership-centered, institution-based (rather than grassroots or new base-building) kinds of
organizing. Neo-Alinskyite efforts associated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), for
example, relied more heavily on established institutions such as churches, not only for funding
but for new normative bearings and organizing structures. While such changes enabled many
of these groups to evolve beyond the neighborhood-level constraints and racially exclusionary
practices associated with traditional Alinskyism, the new emphasis on strategic moderation and
on forging partnerships with public officials led to concerns about leadership and accountability
in an interest-group arena (Fisher, 1994, pp. 192–196; Warren, 2001, pp. 234–238). Despite
these challenges, social-action community organizing did survive, and even took on new issues,
such as environmental racism, predatory lending, transportation equity, immigrant rights, and the
living wage (Fine, 2006; Kong and the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, 2001; Luce, 2004;
Mann, 1996; Martin, 2001; Pulido, 1996; Szasz, 1995). In certain cities, organizers rearticulated
neighborhood-based mobilizing strategies to confront residential displacement or employment
loss, as well as to demand community benefits in the form of jobs, affordable housing, and
public space (Haas, 2002; Gross, LeRoy, & Janis-Aparicio, 2005; Shaw, 1996). These activities
also introduced social-action organizations to new (or long-forgotten) coalition partners, such as
environmental public-interest groups and labor unions (Fine, 2005; Simmons, 1994; Shaw, 1996,
pp. 81–114).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: TOWARDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR COMMUNITY BUILDING?

The post-1970s socioeconomic conditions that undermined the social-action model—
globalization, the rightward political turn, welfare-state retrenchment—posed both challenge and
opportunity for the community-development field. On the one hand, cutbacks in federal urban

aid, direct outlays for housing, and other such measures served to restrict access by lower-income community residents to nonmarket resources in a period of diminished employment and housing opportunities, educational decline, and the constriction of healthcare coverage. Yet expanded support for certain types of community development, particularly in the form of low-income housing tax credits and block grants, subsidized a large number of community-based housing providers. An enduring and reasonably stable community-development provider industry established itself, concentrating mostly on affordable housing but expanding out from its core competency to take on a number of other activities, including a range of social services (Swanstrom, 1999; Rosen & Dienstfrey, 1999). In the process, the archetypal community development corporation (CDC) redefined the community-development model (Stoutland, 1999). Though their earliest instantiations had emerged in many cases under the leadership of organizers and activists in the civil rights movement and were initially designed to address community revitalization holistically (linking social, physical, and economic strategies in the pursuit of community development), these CDCs over time emphasized the *development* in community development (creating bricks-and-mortar projects or tangible economic products and services), shifted from community participation and accountability to entrepreneurial inventiveness in an environment of scarce and fluid resources, and redefined "community" from lower-income or minority community to mixed-income community (Clarke, 1999; Halpern, 1995). Not surprisingly, turf or inter-organizational rivalries became common, though as this competitive "industry" matured it also succeeded in building practice partnerships and pursuing larger coalitional interests on the advocacy front, and in establishing a strong group of intermediary organizations and associations to provide funding, technical assistance, and other forms of support (Keyes et al., 1996). Perhaps more frustrating to CDC proponents has been the long-term problem of moving beyond housing to other kinds of economic development, especially small businesses and stable, well-paid employment (Lemann, 1999).

The central tension of this model (now well past its infancy) endures, as CDC-style bricks-and-mortar community development has not achieved the capacity to lift neighborhoods out of poverty even while it has also failed to preserve communities from gentrification-induced displacement or sustain grassroots participation and accountability. Partly in response, more recent notions of "community building," inspired loosely by communitarianism and increasingly supported by foundations, made inter-agency partnership the cornerstone of a more inclusive and flexible community-development paradigm in which personal relationships, social networks, and institutional collaborations—i.e., "the social" as a resource—become central hubs linking together both physical redevelopment and group empowerment (National Community Builders Network, 2000; Beck & Eichler, 2000). Whether couched in terms of "community assets" or "social capital" or "capacity building," this approach re-articulated community development's emphasis on process-oriented goals—participatory self-help, leadership development, community-based collaboration, incremental and consensual change—within more ambitiously stated agendas of *social* development (such as those that spoke of "comprehensive" community development or those that sought to build community across racial boundaries) that to some extent reconnected community development with the social planning tradition (Briggs, Miller, & Shapiro, 1996). In effect, this more *socially* focused community-development paradigm promised, to its credit, to directly confront the longstanding tension within community development by both enhancing community-level capacity to make meaningful change while also deepening the rootedness and accountability of community-based institutions.

Yet *how* such agendas might be implemented in the face of neoliberal economic structures and government policies was often unclear, and the sustainability of even the more visible community-building initiatives—given these broader conditions—remained uncertain. Implementation of these agendas was further complicated by a set of ambiguities and constraints built into community-building efforts, including the reliance on broad principles rather than articulated

theories of change to guide initiative action, the contrasting goal-orientations and priorities of various stakeholders involved, and the fickleness of funder interests and essential aversion to risk that characterizes much grant making (Chaskin, 2005). These dynamics produced a set of inherent tensions—between capacity building and achieving "hard" development outcomes, between focusing on long-term versus short-term change, between broad community-change ambitions and aligning expectations with the scale and nature of interventions supported (Chaskin et al., 2001; Kubisch et al., 1997). Furthermore, as funders themselves grew both more prescriptive in their agendas for community groups and more pressed to generate research to support their initiatives, the community-development field came under pressure to acquire more than a superficial resemblance to traditional social-planning approaches (e.g., an increased focus on data-driven and "evidenced-based" practice; an increasing attraction to performance-measurement outcome evaluation), but with less tolerance for notions of long-term system change.

GLOBALISM & POSTMODERNISM: RECENT INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES

Beyond these structural and strategic difficulties faced by each model over the past generation, there were also two major intellectual developments of the late twentieth century that threw into question longstanding notions of "community organization" that were shared by all three traditions. One such challenge was posed by *theories of globalization*, which have problematized the nation state and nation-state-centered conceptions of community.[8] These theories have emphasized instead the importance of international and regional scales, along with potentially new kinds of communities (transnational/cross-national, regional, inter-local, etc.) that emerge at or connect across such scales. Such notions undermine at least two conceptual moorings of the social planning tradition: the nation-state as a stable and relatively autonomous arena for and actor in social development, and social and political assimilation as an inevitable or desirable trajectory for immigrant populations (Castells, 1997; Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt, 1999; Reich, 1991; Sklair, 1995). Conceptions of globalization challenge the other two traditions as well, at least in terms of the routinized scales and locations of their practices. For the social-action community organizing model, transnationality questions the primacy of national spaces and of national citizenry as the ideal activist subject, shifting attention instead to the transformative and redistributive potential of transnational advocacy networks, cross-national publics, or global democratizing projects (Khagram, Riker, & Sikkink, 2002; Smith, 2001). For community development, the challenge of globalization is primarily directed at place-centered claims of local agency. In other words, to the extent that international integration is forging forms of community detached from (or stitched between) local places, then notions of community development linked to singular neighborhood-level spaces might be disempowered or displaced by conceptions of regional or cross-local community development (Pastor et al., 2000; Smith, 2006).[9] In more general terms, notions of globalization make clear that all three paradigms have tended to assume a certain kind of urban spatial-structure and locus as the natural setting in which community practice was conducted—the "inner-city" neighborhood or community of concentrated neglect—that now needs revision.

It is important to caution that the claims of this kind of globalism can be overdrawn, or simply wrong, particularly when used to dismiss the continued relevance of the nation state or the enduring capacity for local action, and one would not want to adopt their implications wholesale (Bosniak, 2000; DeFilippis, 2004; Panitch, 1996; Sites, 2003). Nevertheless, even many critics of globalism concede that there is *some* merit to these claims (e.g., the international economy *is* more integrated, cross-national ties *are* more extensive, traditional place-based strategies *are* undermined by capital mobility), and thus there is good reason to reevaluate practice in light of them. Beyond this, theories of globalization have forced analysts and strategists alike to think more

carefully about the importance of *scale*, along with the linkages between actions at different scales (Brenner, 2001; Smith, 1993). There is a growing body of work on social movements, for example, that focuses on the emerging potential of networked and multiscalar forms of mobilization and policy advocacy (e.g., Köhler & Wissen, 2003; Leitner, 2004; Tarrow, 2005).

A second intellectual challenge to twentieth-century traditions of community organization has been posed by *postmodern conceptions* of community and identity. Driven in part by poststructuralist insights into discourse, these conceptions, while hardly reducible to a single stance or critique (e.g., Cohen, 1999; Frug, 1999; Scott, 1992; Young, 1990, 2000), tend to argue that traditional ideals of community—with their emphasis on unity and harmony, shared consciousness, transparency, and face-to-face relationships—are false and oppressive because these ideals dissolve or essentialize internal differences between members, enshrine deceptive notions of full presence and understanding, and fail to acknowledge that many communitarian ideals are based on the exclusion of outsiders. In place of community as a real, essential, centered, and autonomous subject, postmodernists present notions of community as constructed, fluid, heterogeneous and relational forms of identity—group affirmations that acknowledge internal differences (class, race, gender, sexuality) as well as inter-group relationality, and individual affirmations that recognize a fluid multiplicity of self-identities. For this reason, postmodern community-building is sometimes framed as involving the capacity to recognize and accommodate oneself to strangers (Young, 1990), at other moments as the construction of complex solidarities across multiple oppressions (Ettlinger, 2002; Kelley, 1997). To some extent, these conceptions find important echoes within the practices of urban-based social workers and planners who increasingly recognize different social identities and the need for multicultural practice (Gutiérrez et al., 2005; Weil & Gamble, 2005). Efforts to embrace multiple identities and constituencies within particular communities through representational mechanisms on governance entities and simultaneous translation at community meetings (e.g., Medoff & Sklar, 1994), or through incorporating design elements responsive to multiple ethnic and cultural traditions in development projects (e.g., Robinson, 2005) are some examples of this. It is also echoed in perspectives that foreground self-awareness by practitioners of their own social and organizational positions; community practitioners are embedded in class, racial, and gender structures that animate their intentions, strategies, and commitments (Walkowitz, 1999; McIntosh, 1990). Yet radical postmodernism also challenges the use of power embodied in traditional notions of community organization—whether that is the power to "name," "fix," and define communities that is claimed in the *social planning* tradition by state or other institutional planners, or the micro-power of the community organizer to "manipulate the masses" implied in Alinskyite *community-organizing* models, or the discursive power to speak for "the community" that is often claimed by *community development* practitioners or community builders. It is true that radical postmodernism itself is also prey to precisely these criticisms, as well as to an incapacitating skepticism towards projects of social change. Nevertheless, it is important for those working in and with communities to recognize and respond to these challenges to many of the inherited certainties about what constitutes community, a process that is in certain respects under way (Fisher & Kling, 1997). If nothing else, postmodernism, by challenging inherited notions of social science and practice as a positivist and cumulative pursuit, throws into doubt once-confident notions of social development as an incremental and "progressive" process, one that is informed by the patient, cumulative application of knowledge and coordinated action (*social planning*), political pressure (*community organizing*), or community building (*community development*).

Both globalism and postmodernism present, in different ways, important critiques that need to be taken seriously. Both perspectives have been guilty, it is true, of significant intellectual overreach. Yet in different ways each perspective, by breaking down inherited notions of community, agency, and identity also offers insights into new possibilities for planning, action, and development. Globalism, while often misconstruing the nature and scope of international

restructuring, nevertheless draws attention to increased opportunities for transnational planning initiatives, cross-border organizing, and international community development (sometimes even if it is simply to assist groups in the local work they do). Globalism, and critical responses to globalism, also highlight the renewed importance (and complex challenge) of cross-national comparative research in order to understand the conditions for community action in, or across, multiple contexts. By recognizing the enhanced importance of metropolitan regions as actors within a globalizing economy, moreover, theories of globalization may point to significant openings for planning, organizing, and community development on a regional scale. Postmodern or poststructuralist theory, for its part, may suggest ways in which different modes of community practice can be deepened through a more rigorous encounter with the social construction and valorization of difference. Social planning, for example, needs to grapple with its own historic role in the "regulation" and "surveillance" of social groups. Community organizing, through its confrontation with "identity politics," may come to better understand coalition building neither as a tactical exercise nor as a melding of identities but as a longer-term process of inter-group recognition, overlapping interest-building, and respect for autonomy. Community development, informed by postmodern critiques, might more easily grasp the exclusionary elements in communitarian visions that ask certain groups to give up who they are in order to participate in broader collectivities. At the same time, such critiques could also push multicultural community practice to move beyond superficial designations of group characteristics in order to understand how a given community may embrace multiple traditions of community self-definition and self-organization.

Finally, as we move beyond the early years of the twenty-first century, there will no doubt be further challenges to the field of community organization. The long-term tendencies presented by the twenty-first-century neoliberal political economy—growing economic inequality and poverty, political disengagement, and social fragmentation—will likely represent the basic structural conditions with which any community practice will be forced to contend. Beyond this, it would be willfully oblivious not to suggest that very recent events connected with the U.S.-led war(s) on terrorism are no doubt establishing further key conditions for community practice over the coming decades. Several characteristics associated with these wars—their enormous financial costs, their consequences for the legal rights of U.S. citizens and residents, their effectiveness in overshadowing a broad range of other social and political problems, and their tendency to be perceived in much of the world as demonstrations of the increasingly open, unilateral, and militaristic nature of U.S. international hegemony—are likely to have important implications for "our" communities (however "our" is defined), though their longer-term impacts are not yet fully clear.

FUTURE OF COMMUNITY PRACTICE: SUSTAINING TRADITIONS, CROSSING BOUNDARIES

It seems clear from the above review that multiple models of community organization and practice remain relevant to contemporary conditions. Indeed, it is not difficult to recognize that basic precepts from each tradition offer important signposts for twenty-first-century community practice. Core insights of the social planning tradition—the complexity of social problems, the value of quality social-scientific research, the importance of stable governing institutions in guiding and supporting the social development of communities, and the necessary tension between these efforts and community-level implementation—continue to be crucial elements to any community practice that would seek to address social disadvantage in an informed, effective manner. Key insights from the community-organizing tradition—that social disadvantage is routinely produced by existing structures of power and is linked to a broader crisis in democracy, that organized political agency (including the use of conflict as a resource) is a crucial mechanism for building democratic engagement and movements for social change, that organizers need to

be trained to catalyze and guide such processes—remain fundamental to generating power from below in a society marked by growing economic and political inequality. Important insights from the community development tradition—that local communities (and the relationships among their members) represent vital social assets and offer important, accessible arenas in which to promote participation, collaboration, indigenous leadership and accountability—are still valuable lessons for building a robust civil society in which citizens gain the experience needed to debate, design, and govern their own institutions. None of these traditions can we afford, as a society or as a field of endeavor, to do without.

It should also be clear, however, that these core insights cannot simply be synthesized into a single best-practice model. Of course, insights from different traditions can be (and are) brought together selectively in creative ways, and one of the tasks of contemporary theory and field wisdom is to guide how this might be done more effectively. But it should be recognized and respected that the basic models often espouse disparate principles (e.g., consensus vs. conflict vs. respect for difference), strive toward distinctive ends (e.g., social stability vs. power redistribution vs. community self-sufficiency), and focus on different strategies (e.g., designing and implementing systems vs. generating movements vs. building communities), and that these differences, while not entirely zero-sum, are not fully compatible, either. Certainly, it can be argued that any healthy modern society needs strong service-delivery systems, empowered citizens and vibrant communities, and thus that, in some sense, making progress on one of these fronts is probably good for the others. Yet, at the practice level, where community planners, organizers and developers are forced to make strategic decisions about how to address challenges and invest resources, it is useful to continue to highlight sharp differences between the traditions and their central modes of practice. The failure to do so (as is sometimes visible in the kinds of documents on "community" produced by some foundations and advocates) often results in a conceptual mishmash that keeps sponsors and practitioners from being clear about what it is they are trying to accomplish. It also ignores the multiple dimensions of community.

If it is important to draw these distinctions, then what unites this disparate field of endeavor? One traditional boundary-drawing device, recently resuscitated, has been to define community—the preeminent site of civil society—as a social realm or activity that is neither "market" nor "state" (Elshtain, 1995; Tocqueville, 1966; Wolfe, 1989). This sort of residualism has always been conceptually problematic (see the critique by Somers, 2005), but because of recent changes in the social and intellectual terrain this tendency has grown more debilitating, reducing social planning to contracting, social action to the historical past (whether storied or accursed), and "community" to what's left over—i.e., a shrinking assortment of voluntary associations, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic funders, neighborhood-level informal activities, and social processes that happen (for the time being) to lie outside the market or formal state institutions. To accept this reductive notion of community not only ignores the continued centrality of the state and politics (and thus the role of the *democratic social community* in the broadest sense) in shaping both market processes and contemporary notions of community, but it also accepts as natural a residualism currently enforced by that politics, which is a recipe (under current conditions) for permanent retreat. This notion of a receding community realm helps explain the counter-trend that involves market and state actors applying the term "community" to practically anything having to do with efforts to promote social cooperation or client and consumer satisfaction.

The ultimate power of community, or of any community practice, lies not in its status as a distinct sector of activity but in the extent to which it contributes to social justice (Fainstein, 1999, 2005). Of course, each mode of practice is positioned—in this respect, too—to make its contribution in a distinct way. Within the social planning tradition, community offers a crucial mode of understanding and differentiating social needs so as to respond to them in ways that effectively improve material and psychological well-being. For community organizing, community

designates any number of spaces or collectivities that can be leveraged, at least as starting points, to challenge dominant forms of social power. For the community development tradition, community furnishes a recognition that all forms of modern social activity—even those dominated by supposedly "self-regulating" markets and large-scale political institutions—depend on certain communal ties, values (reciprocity, stability, equity, respect for difference, etc.), and modes of social regulation in order to function cohesively. Stated in this way, though, it becomes clear that each of the three community traditions, in spite of their different approaches, harbors the potential to make significant contributions to broader social-justice projects. What unites community organization across the various models, therefore, is not simply a common field or site of practice (let alone the more dubious solidarities of a profession) but a larger *social project* or *mission*. In practical terms, this more expansive and normative sense of social project points to a large, varied professional terrain in which knowledge of community dynamics and strategies can be seen as highly relevant, from corporations, governmental agencies, and various social and political groupings or networks to more easily recognizable "community organizations."

Even while reflecting on the importance of a broader social mission, then, we believe that it remains useful to sustain the three traditional paradigms as conceptual frames that orient community practice. These paradigms continue to make sense (as our earlier discussion has shown) as a way to read the history of the field and to think about the challenges currently faced by different modes of community intervention. They also map the community-organization terrain quite broadly, and thus cut across the shifting (and increasingly vestigial) distinctions between market, state, and community that were criticized above. At the same time, each of these paradigms faces significant intellectual and practical challenges, as was suggested in the preceding sections, and therefore it makes sense to view these paradigms not as rigidly distinct or opposed practice methods but as conceptually coherent "schools of thought," distinct tendencies, or evolving trends-in-progress. They offer a useful prism through which to see and talk about certain historical continuities within a heterogeneous field, but it is important not to focus on these paradigms and their boundaries to the exclusion of opportunities for innovation that come from other theories (see, e.g., the earlier comments on the challenges of globalism, postmodernism, and multiculturalism) or from emerging practices in the field.

It is also important not to confuse the conceptual "boundary maintenance" that we are proposing with other, much-less-productive boundaries that community groups have sometimes drawn around their efforts. At various moments throughout the twentieth century, organizations within each of the three traditions sought to survive (or thrive!) by narrowing their issue focus, localizing their operations, or retreating to a homogeneous social base—in effect, by nesting within the isolated substructures of a fragmenting society rather than confronting directly these structural sources of social division.[10] Considerable community-level effort, in turn, has gone into defending these constricted domains, a form of boundary maintenance that has often worked against the sort of conceptual and strategic clarity (not to mention the larger social-justice project) we wish to underscore. Indeed, while continuing to embrace the three traditional paradigms as conceptual frames, we would like to conclude by suggesting four sites of "transgression," where new ideas, or the challenges posed by new realities, are encouraging practices that cut across precisely the sorts of traditional community barriers that too often reflect structures of inequality and division. Such examples offer opportunities, we also suggest, for potentially effective community work in any of the different paradigms.

The first type of useful boundary-crossing concerns the bridging of *social* divides, such as those between immigrant and native-born communities or between classes, as a way of forging common initiatives, extended networks, or broader coalitions. Many community organizations, such as the Metropolitan Alliance and Action for Grassroots Empowerment and Neighborhood Development Alternatives (AGENDA) in Los Angeles, have been engaged in deliberately multiracial

organizing efforts that bring African-American and immigrant residents together, especially in rapidly changing demographic contexts. A number of service-sector unions are pursuing such strategies as well, often drawing upon community partnerships to broker connections between workers (Parks, 2006).

The second site of productive transgression relates to the crossing of *spatial/political* boundaries, as in efforts to link communities across cities and suburbs or to connect local projects cross-nationally. Certain progressive regionalist initiatives, for instance, such as the effort in Chicago by an IAF-guided coalition called United Power for Action and Justice, seek to organize metropolitan-wide coalitions in support of state-level redistributive policies (e.g., on healthcare or housing) that have historically foundered because of suburban-centered resistance (Sites, 2004). Meanwhile, innovative cross-national initiatives at the community level range from the organizing, networking, and support of local producer cooperatives through fair-trade arrangements and microfinance schemes to the transnational advocacy work of activists, NGO networks and others around such issues as indigenous rights, debt relief, and environmental justice.

A third area concerns the crossing of *sectoral* boundaries, as when traditionally discrete areas of service or action (e.g., housing and social welfare, or labor and community) are brought together. Many recent comprehensive community initiatives, for example, have sought to connect development strategies and activities across sectors in an effort to promote integrated social, economic, and physical community change, either through multifaceted project implementation (e.g., incorporating training, employment, construction, and social service provision to support low-income housing development, workforce participation and home-ownership opportunities), or through supporting interorganizational collaboration in the provision of linked projects (Chaskin et al., 2001). Cross-sector mobilization around the recent generation of living-wage policies targeting private-sector jobs, such as Chicago's Big Box Living Wage Ordinance and the extension of Los Angeles's living-wage law to employees at LAX airport hotels, reflects the carefully coordinated organizing activities of both labor unions and community organizations. The most successful community benefits agreements across the country, such as the Staples Center agreement won by the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice in Los Angeles, similarly reflect campaigns initiated and diligently carried out through labor and community partnerships (Haas, 2002; Gross et al., 2005; Warren, 2005).

Our fourth site of productive barrier-crossing relates to the traversal of *scalar* boundaries, as in shifting initiatives to more promising venues (e.g., scaling up or down) or building organizational connections that bridge local and extra-local arenas. The World Social Forum, for example, which began as an international counter-summit to the one held regularly by global corporate elites, has spawned over time—and via a series of downward scale shifts—a complementary array of regional and local "social fora" that facilitate interconnection between an enormous number of economic and social justice organizations (Köhler, 2005; Tarrow, 2005, pp. 132–134). The type of community-level groups involved, as well as the kinds of linkages created, have varied quite significantly across the European and North American contexts in which these gatherings have taken place, yet it seems clear to certain observers that qualitatively new sorts of interscalar networks are emerging (Mayer, 2007).

While hardly exhaustive, this typology provides at least a preliminary sense of certain directions that innovations in practice may be taking. These four areas, it should be noted, tend to mark new locations or "spaces" of community practice without dictating the type of practice that is appropriate—i.e., they point to the "where," but not the "how" of new community practices. The *how*, of course, is always in part a strategic question—hence, the enduring importance of bringing to bear insights derived from the traditional community strategies, from recent analyses of emerging structural and political conditions, and from the efforts of contemporary organizers, developers, and planners themselves.

ENDNOTES

1 We would like to acknowledge the helpful comments of James DeFilippis, Robert Fisher, and Eric Shragge (along with those by Kathe Newman and other participants in the Urban Affairs Association 2006 session on Community Organizing: Reflecting on Theory and Practice) on an earlier version of this article, and to draw attention to their own subsequently published commentary (see DeFilippis et al., 2006) on a number of the same issues we address here.

2 Practitioners increasingly employ "community development" as a generic term for the entire field. While commonly used in this way in Britain for a long time without evident problems, "community development" in the U.S. has been sufficiently counterposed to "community organizing" so as to imply exclusion of the latter unless it is specifically mentioned (e.g., Stoecker, 2002).

3 We come to this position as scholars who, while hailing from various academic backgrounds (sociology, geography, anthropology, planning), have found social work to be a useful point of departure.

4 Although Rothman has continued to expand on this conception (Rothman, 2001), we believe that the clarity and simplicity of his early formulations are best-suited to our purposes here.

5 Rothman referred to community organizing as "social action" and to community development as "locality development." We use community organizing here because it clearly stresses community as the organizing principle and unit of action and because it has generally been adopted in the field to describe community-based social mobilization strategies. Similarly, subsequent commentators have generally eschewed the term locality development, as do we, in part because all three of Rothman's modes entail (complex and different) relationships to place.

6 For discussion of regulation theory and the concepts of Fordism, post-Fordism, and neoliberalism, see Amin (1994), Boyer (2000), and Brenner and Theodore (2002); for certain problems with these concepts, see Goodwin and Painter (1997, pp. 18–20), Painter (1997, pp. 126–27), and Sites (2003, pp. 27–28).

7 Of course, this so-called "golden age" of U.S. capitalism (Marglin & Schor, 1990) also set in motion a number of destructive processes, from deindustrialization and urban decline to intensified ghettoization of minority residents that would continue in the decades ahead.

8 Of course, globalization is profoundly intertwined with many of the neoliberalizing processes we have already addressed; here we single out globalization because of its potentially important implications for the spatial and scalar dimensions of community practice.

9 In other professional fields besides social work, and in other national contexts, community development has long been conceptualized within an international context (see, e.g., *Community Development Journal*); in this sense, the frame of globalization may simply call for a return to origins.

10 In doing so, of course, they were (it bears emphasizing) typically encouraged by governmental and corporate institutions.

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