THE JOURNAL OF
INQUIRY
STUDENT CROSS-CULTURAL FIELD RESEARCH

CONTENTS

THE JOURNAL OF
INQUIRY
STUDENT CROSS-CULTURAL FIELD RESEARCH

CONTENTS

A Case for Christian Communalism: Overcoming Individualism and Racial Segregation in a South African Catholic Parish

by Jordan Layton, sociocultural anthropology

In post-apartheid South Africa, politicians have raised concerns about rising individualism and decreasing communal, humanistic, ubuntu *values. People in East London, South Africa, defined ubuntu first, as a bringing together of people, and second, as a sense of sharing or interaction. On the contrary, scholars often characterize Christianity by intense individualism, while others link ubuntu closely to Christian spirituality. In contrast to arguments of Christian individualism, the Immaculate Conception Catholic parish contributes to ubuntu through its liturgical (or public) worship. First, the parish promotes Vatican II-inspired unity of worship—or the "bringing-together" of people. Second, the parish promotes sharing and interaction through participation in both the liturgy and non-mass ministries of the church, such as the choir. The communalism promoted in the Immaculate Conception Mass not only contradicts claims of Christian individualism but proposes significant racial implications for uniting post-apartheid South Africa.*

Introduction

"That man across the street is the only one I don't care for. He put up those rugby posts—as we call them—and he didn't even ask permission of anyone," a Buffalo Flats resident I call "Auntie" vents, pointing to the tall concrete wall and gate over the neighbor's driveway across the street. We sit inside the open, sliding-glass doorway, enjoying the comfortable winter temperature and watching neighbors pass by. A neighbor walks across Auntie's dirt yard, taps on the door, and pokes his head in, yelling a conversation to the back kitchen. A neighbor's ability to stop by as this man did depicts a sense of community being threatened by the other neighbor's "rugby posts." This was not always an issue. Auntie tells of the early apartheid days when common resistance unified her with her peers. As students, they would run and hide to avoid torture whenever they resisted white policies. "We depended on other students to house us. There were a lot of friendships born out of that. We became like family."

The apartheid era of South Africa came and went, sweeping the country into a physically and mentally divided state, a division that would far outlast the end of the oppressive regime. In East London, South Africa, post-apartheid life still heavily reflects the divisions and inequalities that were created over the decades of white rule. Driving down the trash-ridden streets of town one could scarcely count the number of poor African individuals making a meager living selling penny candies off of box-tops along the sidewalk, or passing out slips of paper for abortion clin-

ics and traditional healers. Heading east one finds the economically depressed coloured (a mixed race, long since established as an ethnic group of its own) township, Buffalo Flats, where one would be hard-pressed to find a white person setting foot. Continuing clockwise one passes through the African township Duncan Village, where the miles of metal and wood shacks and depleted yards double as dumpsters and children's play areas. Across the road comes the much-improved Indian (first- to third-generation immigrants from India) neighborhood, Braelyn.

Eventually, a traveler might stumble into what seems to be an ignominious difference in economic situation from Duncan Village and much of the rest of town—the "white" neighborhoods. Here the roads are clean, security guards sit outside stores, walls with razor wire and security systems protect from robbery. However, many blacks, coloureds, and Indians now live in these previously "white" areas. Unfortunately, the poor majority seem to have grown poorer while only a few have made the leap to financial success. Then, as if racial divisions were not enough, what once were united communities, such as Auntie's, are increasingly facing individualism and isolation. Not only is an interracial community a long-shot, but it seems a sense of community itself is being threatened.

As I near my host family's neighborhood, the streets feel like constraining tunnels. Lining the curbs, wall after wall of concrete rise above my head, each topped with razor wires, electric lines, or metal spikes. Only tall, jail-like gates break the walled monotony. Shutting my automatic gate behind me instills the intentional impression of exclusion from the outside. My hosts admit they rarely speak to neighbors beyond an occasional passing greeting, but their Catholic Church in another neighborhood, Cambridge, acts more as a community than does their actual geographic neighborhood. As both local and international eyes look on in hopes of a restoration of unity, one begins to wonder if an interracial sense of community can ever truly be forged. That is until they sit in on mass in East London's Immaculate Conception Catholic church and there hold hands with people of all races in joint singing and praying. Although after church "people still go back to their own neighborhoods," this Catholic parish brings people together from all neighborhoods into interactive sharing in a way that is increasingly threatened in the neighborhoods of East London. Catholicism promotes a traditional South African concept, ubuntu, in opposition to increasing individualism in East London society and arguments that Christianity is inherently individualistic.

Ubuntu's Endangerment

The "rugby posts" across from Auntie's house give a glimpse of a larger picture that the privacy and security of walled homes is increasingly sought after, even in townships where resistance to apartheid once forged strong communal unity. In fact, the incident represents a national concern. About the Johannesburg township of Soweto, anthropologist Adam Ashforth observes:

> In the past, obscuring a house with high walls, even with hedges and trees, would have been considered an antisocial affront to the rest of the community. . . .

By the late 1990s, however, high brick walls with heavy steel gates had become commonplace in Soweto, . . . a matter no longer just of protecting oneself from strangers but also of exclusion of neighbors (2005:102).

Ashforth (among others) voices this decline in sense of community as a decline in the traditional, humanistic, South African concept of ubuntu.

Ubuntu entails a sense of community established through compassion, inclusion, solidarity, charity, and other such characteristics and actions. Interdependence and communalism are underlying themes, the antithesis being individualism. Mnyaka and Motlhabi (2005) sought to examine ubuntu's many definitions and to create a common understanding, concluding that ubuntu emphasizes an individual's worth while recognizing that choosing to act for the good of others is in the individual's best interest. Individualism, including competitiveness and seeking one's own interests damages others. People in East London summarized ubuntu in two ways. First, it means "bringing people together," such as when non-whites like Auntie felt physically and spiritually united against the white oppression. Second, it means "sharing," or implying a level of interaction. For example, "if you have an apple, sharing is [in] force under ubuntu because you do not eat an apple alone when there are people surrounding you not eating." Similarly, according to ubuntu, school children of different races might learn each other's languages and games.

Ubuntu is a spiritual matter, and as South Africa is a predominantly "Christian country" (as stated in one church), Christianity should logically reflect and transmit such values. Ellison and Levin (1998) argue that the "close-knit ties that flourish in religious settings tend to bolster the physical and mental health of those who attend church, temple, or synagogue on a regular basis" (cited by Krause 2002:126). Mnyaka and Motlhabi (2005) summarized:

Although there is no single definition of ubuntu, all the definitions cited imply that ubuntu is more than just a manifestation of individual acts. Rather, it is a spiritual foundation, an inner state, an orientation, and a good disposition that motivates, challenges and makes one perceive, feel, and act in a humane way towards others (218).

This they illustrate using religious-oriented examples from the lives of Steve Biko, L. Pato, and L.J. Sebidi. A Nobel Peace Prize winner, Desmond Tutu, believes ubuntu to be tied to Christianity is evident in Michael Battle's *Reconciliation* (1997) and in Tutu's own prominence in the Anglican Church.

Unfortunately, since apartheid ended, Western influence (possibly in the form of market capitalism) seems to have precipitated a decline in the prevalence of this value system. Correspondingly, one sees an increase in concern for ubuntu's promotion as a characteristic of all South Africans (see Mlambo-Ngcuka 2006). Then deputy, but now President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, said in her keynote address at the 2006 National Imbizo on Ubuntu and Nation-building in South Africa:

How do we describe the wave of individualism and obsession with material wealth above all else and abdication from social responsibility by even those

who have means to help? Where is the African family as we used to know? Can we still talk of a community and what has happened to the spirit of human solidarity and respect for elders? The whole notion of *umuntu wumuntu ngabantu* (ubuntu) seems to have been obliterated by modern developments and Western influence. Have we really become an uncaring and unforgiving society? Is that the dominant feature that defines who we are today? (21)

Individualism and Christianity

Critics might find in Phumzile's address a significant contradiction with my proposition of Catholic-promoted ubuntu. If Western influence has resulted in the increase in individualism, and Christianity is in general a Western institution, how could Christianity then promote communal ubuntu values? Would Christianity not, on the contrary, be individualistic as well? After all, individualism is the antithesis of ubuntu. The erroneous foundation of such confusion lies in the common claim that Christianity is wholly individualistic. On the other hand, literature arguing the communal, non-individualistic nature of Christianity is sparse, and tends to take either a historical approach (see Mayes 2004) or one of explaining church policy (see Scirghi 2007). Furthermore, there has been no consideration of the communal nature of Christianity considering the highly spiritual, yet highly communal, concept of ubuntu. I will first introduce the argument of Christian individualism and then show how the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church effectively promotes ubuntu, contrary to theories of Christian individualism.

Many argue that Christianity increases individualism (see Buss 2000; Bellah et al. 1985). For example, Joseph Murray (1995) criticizes Christianity as being "self-serving redemptionism." Also, Masayuki Ito (1998) argues that the dominating Buddhist, Shinto, and Confucian religions in Japan stand behind Japan's "failed" adoption of individualism, because such religions focus on complete negation of self. But Christianity, he says, has historically been individualistic; for example, the relationship between Jesus Christ and his disciples was not kinship, but symbolic of individual responsibility before a monotheistic God, which in itself reflects a focus on individuals (623). Ito's argument reflects a complete generalization of Christianity despite context or denomination, for the doctrines on deity and discipleship are subject to wide interpretation within Christianity itself. Ito goes so far as to suggest that all Christian fellowship is individualistic, which would probably surprise followers of a Christ who denied himself out of love for mankind. One interpretation cannot be assumed to represent all Christian denominations. Consider comments by Wendy Cadge about the individualistic nature occasionally present in American Buddhism, including a focus on solitary activities like meditation (2007). This suggests that it is not the religion itself but its overall cultural context that entails individualism's great hope for an ubuntu-seeking Christian South Africa. After all, individualism from modern division of labor coupled with that erroneously assigned to Christianity would leave little hope for promoting communal values in any Western context.

More properly, Christianity is capable of promoting communalism differently than Buddhism. As each denomination varies in focus on individual versus group, each lies somewhere along a spectrum. Despite critiques of Christian individuality, Immaculate Conception Catholic parish unifies communities through its emphasis on communal worship. And this occurs despite individual variations in musical preference, language, geography, or economic situation, proving the potential of Catholicism to promote communal ubuntu values.

Immaculate Conception Background

Prior to selecting Immaculate Conception as the primary setting for exploring the concept of ubuntu in the Christian setting, I attended gatherings of numerous other parishes and denominations. These included Baptists, Presbyterians, and three evangelical churches. I also attended mass at Catholic parishes in Duncan Village, Buffalo Flats, and Selborne (a "white" neighborhood near my home). However, the Immaculate Conception parish stood out strikingly as having not only the most diversity but the most interaction between racial groups as well; this I suspected to be influenced by ubuntu. The evangelical and other Catholic congregations were almost completely segregated (with at most a few individuals of another race), and I was informed that the downtown Anglican and Dutch Reformed congregations were quite segregated as well. The Baptist and Presbyterian congregations were more diverse than the others but far from Immaculate Conception. Thus, it is recognized that interracial congregations are not completely unique to Immaculate Conception; such congregations remain the exception and not the norm, and Immaculate Conception stands alone as somewhat of an ideal example.

The parish's unique ability to create an interracial community is rooted in history. My hosts, Cornelius and Kathy Thomas, published a history of East London's "north end," the neighborhood surrounding the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church (see Thomas 2008). In the early-1900s, German immigrants settled the area, along with Afrikaaners from a nearby Boer War camp. Then came coloureds, British whites, and immigrants from India. From about 1960 to 1973, North End enjoyed a "golden age" of interracial community. "North end was one big, happy family," (Thomas 2008:34), "children were everyone's children" (32), and Christian and Hindu holidays were shared publicly (44). In the mid-1970s, apartheid's Group Areas Act forced geographic segregation. First, coloureds in outlying suburbs were forced to move into the north end. Many whites moved out to take the abandoned houses, creating "white" suburbs that remain to this day predominantly white and wealthy. The coloureds were relocated out of the north end and into an undeveloped piece of land now called Buffalo Flats, where Auntie lives. The Indian population was moved to the suburb of Braelyn, abandoning their Hindu temple to government bulldozers. Blacks settled Duncan Village and were forced over fifteen kilometers outside of town to Mdantsane township. The north end's houses were bulldozed—but not Immaculate Conception—and commercial enterprises and media towers rose around it. Now, the church is surrounded by stores, factories, funeral homes, and other churches, as well as some above-store apart-

ments scattered throughout. Yet, people still come from neighborhoods and townships all over East London to worship at Immaculate Conception. As a book distributed by the diocese states, it "has come to represent a cross-section of South Africa's cultural diversity." In other words, the parish unites people in common worship no matter what geographic, racial, or linguistic background they come from as individuals.

Methodology and Limitations

Throughout my three-month study, I attended over thirty masses at Immaculate Conception Catholic parish, as well as weekly choir practice and other special meetings, utilizing traditional ethnographic methods of participant observation and interviews. Within each meeting, I recorded in detail the order and content of the liturgy (e.g., music, prayers, and recitations), the sermons, and the interactions of parishioners. Mass was held twice on Sunday and once on four other days of the week, I attended most Sundays and a variety of other times each week. Besides attending mass, I varied seating location and level of participation (e.g., choir or congregation). When not attending religious meetings, I observed East London's streets and schools to better understand East London's current social context.

Along with participant observation, interviews explored the concept of ubuntu within the church, individual perceptions of the parish's sense of community, or issues of Catholic culture in general, and otherwise supplemented observation notes. Interviews ranged in formality depending on context. First, interviews of key informants were highly structured but tailored to the specialty of the informant, including choir director, organist, and active participants of various "ministries," including the choir or liturgy committee. Second, average parish members were interviewed informally before and after mass or choir practice or during other social gatherings. Third, non-Catholics (such as Auntie) were interviewed for further insights into ubuntu or East London's post-apartheid cultural context.

Short-term ethnographic research is never without limitations. More interviews and observations would be ideal for solidifying the study's conclusions. While the sample of interviews includes key players in the parish, most interviews with parishioners were conducted per convenience, such as those present at choir practice. Thus, quotes reflect individual perspectives but not necessarily the general views of all parishioners. It is recognized that more quantitative methods, even the inclusion of surveys, could make these conclusions more generalizable. Furthermore, due to the multi-year liturgical cycle, it was impossible to get a complete picture of sermon themes, and discussion of ubuntu-related sermons cannot, perhaps, be considered typical of all months. More time would have also permitted increased participation in parish organizations beyond mass and choir and allowed for expanded consideration of their effects on parish solidarity. As will be seen, both interviews and observations substantially support that communal characteristics of ubuntu, as defined through interviews, are indeed possible in Catholicism. In this case, propelling the subjugation of prevalent individualistic and racial divisions and bringing people together into common, interactive worship.

Ubuntu Characteristic 1: Bringing People Together

Catholic Control

The interests of the Immaculate Conception parish are far from what John Watt outlined as characteristics of "individualism from a twentieth-century standpoint" (1989:1). The following are three examples of Watt's characteristics:

1) The appeal to universal natural individual rights as the basis for moral and social views, rather than to rights and responsibilities attached to group memberships and occupation of particular roles; 2) the drive to limit the scope of collective control in a variety of areas in order to enlarge the area for individual autonomy; and 3) the conviction that individual uniqueness, initiative, and autonomy are more important than group identity, conformity, and solidarity (1–2).

The opposite is the case at Immaculate Conception. While facing social diversity and individualistic interests, the parish has reemphasized a Vatican-inspired decree that worship be kept within the bounds of Church structure, in other words, unity and sameness wherever possible.

The Vatican II council convened in the sixties to rethink the way the Catholic Church ran things, from monasteries to liturgy ("public worship") (Abbott 1966:134). While "the age and condition of their people, their way of life, and degree of religious culture should be taken into account," the council made clear that any such variations should be kept within bounds (145). Some societies, for example, have musical traditions that are important to their social life; thus, "other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, *so long as* they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action" (172–73, emphasis added). It is also important that people understand texts and rites in the church; however, "notable differences between the rites in adjacent regions are to be carefully avoided" (147). Again,

popular devotions . . . are warmly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the church. . . . These devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some fashion derived from it, and lead the people to it, since the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them (143, also see 151).

This means that although the music can vary if needed, "the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument" (173). And, even if local languages are used, "steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin" (156), for Latin "may frequently be of great advantage to the people" (150).

Consider the unifying, however controlling, nature of those statements. Do they represent Watt's emphases on individual rights over group membership, individual autonomy over collective control, or individual uniqueness over group conformity? No. There is a clearly-voiced limit to the amount of individual variation possible. One Catholic parishioner said:

The church embraces diversity and is open to allow space and a bit of freedom for cultural differences and different expressions, but by and large I think that

almost everything is controlled, everything is structured and guided to a certain point, guided to the Eucharist.

Choir director Vernon says a church can adapt interpretation of symbols to their culture, but the culture should not change the liturgy to fit their culture.

Vernon introduced me to Walter Abbott's book (1966) containing these Vatican II documents, so I could learn upon what basis he was running the choir. His desire to follow the Vatican's council includes increasing the use of Latin for singing. I proposed to him that because most people understand at least some English, singing in English allows for the greatest unity, but he corrected me, saying, "Latin does." He continued:

I'm already trying to bring back in the Latin, teaching it to the choir; and before mass we teach it to the congregation. Latin is the Church's official language. English isn't everyone's language; [and] Latin doesn't exclude anyone.

Thus, as members of the congregation come from Afrikaans, Xhosa, English, and other language-speaking homes, Latin places all on equal grounds by being a second language for everyone. I asked a choir member what he thought about the use of Latin. He responded:

The thing with Latin is, it's really a common language, but I think the people are also a bit more hyped-up when we sing Latin. I don't know if you'd seen at this practice when we did that Latin two verses, that I just got this feeling that people just sort of learned quicker and maybe the language pulls the people together quickly.

It is, in fact, a dominant goal of the Vatican II council that this unity of worship creates communal unity in the Catholic Churches:

It is the goal of this most sacred Council to intensify the daily growth of Catholic in Christian living; to make more responsive to the requirements of our times those church observances which are open to adaptation; to nurture whatever can contribute to the unity of all who believe in Christ; and to strengthen those aspects of the church which can help summon all of mankind into her embrace. (137)

Through the liturgy people are to be inspired to "become of one heart in love" (142). If people are to have this true Christian spirit, "full and active participation by all" is necessary (144) in singing, actions, and even silences (148). "Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the church, which is the 'sacrament of unity,' namely, a holy people united and organized" (147). Communal worship is always preferred to individual worship (147–48). People should not experience mass "as strangers or silent spectators," but "through Christ the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever closer union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all" (154).

In fact, mass itself should establish a communal sense of ubuntu. "Efforts also must be made to encourage a sense of community within the parish, above all in the common celebration of the Sunday mass" (153). One of the main functions of holy music in the mass is to promote solidarity (171). Even a reformation scholar com-

menting on the Vatican II plan admitted that "if the constitution can be translated into action creatively and imaginatively . . . it will indeed, as the Council Fathers hope, 'contribute to the unity of all who believe in Christ'" (182). This goal of unity, solidarity, participative interaction, and community is just what concerned advocates of ubuntu in South Africa are asking for.

"You Cannot Break a Collection of Wood"

Speech within Immaculate Conception reflects these Vatican II ideals, being centered consistently on unity, love, community, and "being one." "We are working hard to make this a hospitable church for all people, where people can come in and be at home in our community," the priest says. Each mass is dedicated to someone in need or to be remembered. For three weeks in a row, special meetings were held during the week to promote the "unity and solidarity in the parish." All were asked to bring their friends and families to take part in the services. At the first meeting, the priest's extensive sermon explicitly addressed this topic. "You cannot break a collection of wood," he said:

> It is only when you begin to take one stick of wood . . . that [you are] able to break each stick. . . . With a theme that we have this evening—a people of unity, something that is very difficult to live up to but very easy to speak about—we speak about unity of Christians, we speak about unity of families, but perhaps today we have a day or a moment of reflecting together about this unity.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church, he cited article 161: "The Church is one because she has as her source an exemplar: the unity of the Trinity of persons in one God." It is through this symbolism that he explained the "bringing together" of people the parish desires. "First of all, in the Trinity, they are equal. In other words, they are of the same status. And so in the parish we, too—all of us—we are equal." The second and third points of his Trinity sermon will be relevant later; but first, the bringing of people together into joint prayers, recitations, and music reflects this God-like equality and unity.

Harmony through Liturgy

Prayers and recitations in the church project a sameness of worship in which people of different backgrounds come together. One parishioner said:

> Certainly it's very, you could almost say controlled, this communal worship, this sameness of belief. It's required of all of us. And in that sense maybe it's less individualistic than in the evangelical and certain Protestant churches.

It is in the very nature of coming together to worship, as opposed to worshiping at home, that the "public worship" definition of liturgy can be seen. Vernon, the choir director, said:

> Prayer in the church is supposed to be one praying for the rest, not everyone praying for themselves at the same time. If you want to pray for you, go home to your closet, but not at the church. That is for people coming together.

A later conversation with a Catholic couple clarified the communal nature of the liturgy. The husband said:

> Look, in the Catholic Church, they do believe that the church is one, they do believe in the communion of Saints, they do believe in common prayer, they do believe that all of us must profess the same creed of faith, and in that sense it's really communal. But, I don't know if that negates individuality or individualism in the Catholic Church.

His ending caution refers to the fact that individuals are distinct and unique; however, the rest of the conversation reveals the individual is insufficient without the parish context. Soon after, his wife said, "I would never read without going, because it's important to me that I am in communion, like this faith that we profess, that we are one." Her husband then added, as if in revelation, "That community thing, that communal thing, it's very important. It comes out here. You know, we pray together. We believe that it's better to worship together than to worship in private." His wife said, "If you chose to be a Catholic, then . . . ," and her husband finished:

> Then you must be part of the community, and the community of worship, and the communalism of the church. The Catholic Church doesn't allow for a lot of individualism. You can't be a Catholic and not go to church. Yeah, well, I pray at home, I worship at home—it's not going to be acceptable. The Catholic Church does not allow for that kind of individualism.

Contrary to Christian individualism arguments, these Catholics, at least, see their church not as an individual matter but as a communal one.

The fixed liturgical structure of frequent hymn singing also reflects "bringing people together" into a controlled "sameness" of worship. Consider the previously discussed Vatican II regulations on the use of vernacular or cultural variations in music being acceptable only when "they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some fashion derived from it, and lead the people to it, since the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them" (143). The leader of Immaculate Conception's rock band, which performs in the organ's place every other Sunday, said, "[We] find out on Wednesday what we're going to be playing but it also depends on the time of the year, it depends on the liturgy." Noticing that the musical selection differed between Saturday and Sunday mass, I also asked Rodney, the organist, how he chose the hymns to be sung. He said:

> [For the weekend] you have a theme, there's a theme for each week and you do your best to follow the theme and to select hymns accordingly. [For weekday mass,] we stick to pretty general hymns which most people know and can participate in.

Vernon chooses songs for Saturday masses, but they must also fit within the same theme as outlined by the worldwide Church liturgy. Across Immaculate Conception masses, even though instrumentation and singing style may vary, the theme remains constant and unified. Individual hymn choice is constrained by the institution. An-

other member said, "When it comes to certain religious feasts you must sing certain hymns. It's almost pre-decided."

The music also includes a unity of action in standing or sitting as a congregation. When I asked Rodney why specific moments in mass entail specific physical positions, he said:

> I don't know if I can really answer that, because this is how it's done in the Catholic Church; there are parts of the Eucharist where you kneel. This is our teaching, and this is how we've been taught—that you kneel when you're supposed to kneel. . . . It is a tradition.

Vernon believes that there should be even more structure to the musical liturgy than Rodney follows. He said:

> People enjoy what makes sense to them, and it makes sense that certain times you should sing and certain times you shouldn't. . . . You'll find people in Immaculate Conception from all over. . . . People will come from their churches in the townships because they want to have the right way of doing things.

He believes it is because the Church's liturgical regulations are followed that people come together from all over East London to worship in Immaculate Conception. When I suggested to a parishioner that the Duncan Village congregation seems to adhere less to liturgical structure, as they sing so much more often, he denied it, saying:

> [It is] within the structure of the sermon. . . . Between a specific structured event and the next event in that structure, they might have three songs or three hymns whereas we would have a short three minute one.

Although slight variation exists, liturgical worship is generally unified within the structural bounds set by the Vatican.

The Immaculate Conception parish places a heavy emphasis on promoting the "bringing together" aspect of ubuntu within not only their verbal teachings but also within the structured liturgy. The sermons and prayers heavily reflect this priority. The music reflects a doing-together activity characterized by sameness, outlined by the church in general to be consistent and unifying across both mass and parish lines. And it is the Catholic need for communal worship that negates individualism and promotes the need for others.

Concluding this section, I return to the special sermon on unity and solidarity, as the priest gives the second reason why the Trinity reflects the communal ideals of the parish. He said, "Secondly, the Trinity is made up of distinct persons. . . . You are all unique, you are all distinct, you all have something to contribute to the unity and the welfare of this parish." He recognized that the individual exists, but that his best interest is in contributing his part to the group. This is consistent with Desmond Tutu's concept of ubuntu. According to Battle (1997), whose book Tutu endorsed, Tutu saw that:

> Behind [apartheid] stood the clashing cultures of the Western and African worlds. Because of this impasse, Tutu sought to examine the bankrupt [individualistic]

elements of Western culture and the overly collectivistic elements of African culture in order to fashion an *ubuntu* theology (36,39).

Ubuntu does not imply identical twins acting in monotone; instead, it implies a group of people united by unanimous contribution and a common interest that takes precedence over individual desires. In other words, common worship is the unifying goal of the Immaculate Conception parish, without attempting to remove all variations in skin-tone, personality, or ethnic culture; and this is consistent with ubuntu. In fact, that "all have something to contribute" leads to the sharing and interaction of parishioners and the fulfillment of the second characteristic of ubuntu.

Ubuntu Characteristic 2: Sharing, Interaction, and Getting to Know Each Other
"A Theme of Complimenting Each Other"
> The priest teaches:
>
> Thirdly, one of the chief features of the Trinity is service. . . . Today as a community we have chosen a great theme, a theme of unity, a theme of uniting people, a theme of knowing each other, acknowledging each other, caring for each other, and complimenting each other.

In what stronger words could the parish verbally promote sharing and interaction between its people? In mass, attendants are commonly reminded of their opportunities to contribute to the charitable branches of the parish, such as the Catholic Woman's League and St. Vincent de Paul organizations.

> Support the SVP, support the CWL, not only just for the gifts that we can give, but also to give of our sacrifice, to give of our time; and that may just be what is needed. When we are unable to multiply the food, give what we can give, and let God multiply that food in the stomachs of those that we have given.

The parish promotes sharing, contributing, and interacting aspects of ubuntu. And this, too, can be seen beyond the pulpit.

Sharing and Interaction in the Liturgy
> Catholic prayers and recitations are interactive in their call and response nature. Pattillo-McCoy (1998) writes about Black churches in America, showing that the call and response nature of both words and music promotes solidarity. He says, "tools—primarily prayer, call-and-response interaction, and Christian imagery—invoke the collective orientation of Black Christianity" (768). Furthermore, "using call-and-response style, the preacher and the congregation, in musical and verbal cooperation, make the journey toward freedom as one body" (770). Consider, for example, the *Prayers of the Faithful* section of the mass. After each line of prayer, the congregation responds together with "Lord, graciously hear us." This prayer with "response" is not highly distinct from call-and-response structures inherent in traditional African music styles, in which one man or woman sings a lead part while the rest respond in unified chorus; this I witnessed many times while in East London, at events from daycare parties to funerals.

Call-and-response structure is one of the major interactive features of the music liturgy at Immaculate Conception. This is especially evident in three of the four musical styles used in their various masses. First, in Saturday evening mass, Vernon has brought back into the liturgy the use of the cantor, a man or woman who sing solo verses in sections of the mass such as the "responsorial psalm." The cantor creates a call-and-response interaction similar to the *Prayers of the Faithful* reader. When a cantor is used, he or she first sings the "response" to the congregation so as to demonstrate; then, he or she sings the lines of the first verse, following which the whole congregation responds with the given response. This is repeated for each verse. Sometimes, such as in "Coventry Gloria," the cantor and the congregation trade off almost every single line. In other masses, this responsorial psalm is sung by all. Every few weeks, the singing is in Xhosa, and a call-and-response structure is characteristic of every song. In that case, two or three women at the front of the choir balcony begin a song by singing the first line, following which everyone else stands and joins in. Throughout the Xhosa hymns, call-and-response sections recur often and sometimes last for several minutes, such as alternating repeatedly on only the word "Alleluia." Even where singing is in Xhosa, African choir members reassured me the words were identical to the English versions. Finally, when the band plays, they use call-and-response arrangements of their own, with the choir and congregation dividing themselves up arbitrarily to echo each phrase with one another.

The most interactive moment in the mass seems to be the "Our Father" singing and the "Peace" handshake. It is in the sung prayer of "Our Father"—in which the entire congregation holds hands, sometimes sways, and often harmonizes musically with each other—that people first tactically interact with one another in the mass. Pattillo-McCoy (1998) states:

> Practices such as holding hands during prayer, participating through antiphonal calls of agreement or dissent, and singing, clapping, and swaying to music all enact the collective goals expressed in the content of social action (770).

However, during "Our Father," people do not look at one another, so what of face-to-face interaction? Just after the prayer is sung, hands are dropped, and people turn to one another, shake their hand, usually look into their eyes, and say, "Peace be with you." For a minute or two, people leave their fixed seat-space, move down the bench, across the aisle, or around the balcony, and shake not only the hands of the people immediately around them but the hands of people three or four seats away. Whatever racial, age, economic, or personality differences people arrived with get lost at this moment in a collective of mutual acknowledgement and well wishes. As Rashakrishnan (2003) finally found, in her attempt to see unity in a South African multi-racial dance troupe, one performance containing that "rare euphoric moment of unity. For that stretch of time, the boundaries between [them] seemed to blur a little" (537).

A Sense for Community

While public worship of the mass reflects communal ubuntu values, further participation beyond the mass heavily augments the actual sense of community

felt by parishioners. Manuel Barrera (1986) suggested three characteristics a review of social support measures should consider: first, "*tangible* . . . help that is actually provided by social network members;" second, "*subjective* evaluations of supportive exchanges such as satisfaction with support;" and third, "*frequency* of contact with others" (as summarized in Krause 2002:128–29, emphasis added). The Vatican II and Immaculate Conception promotion of communal values as discussed to this point reflect the "tangible" efforts provided. While these aspects of mass suggest actual, visible manifestations of the promotion of ubuntu, the study would here be incomplete without considering to what extent people perceive these intentions to actually create such feelings. After all, the Vatican II council suggests leaders promote participation of all people in order to create not only unity but also a sense of community.

To some, coming to church and participating with others in the liturgy is enough for them to feel a sense of community; however, the feeling often depends on the level of communal participation. When I asked one choir member if he felt the church promoted a sense of community or togetherness, he responded:

> In some of the churches that I've been to, yes, definitely. But in some churches if the community doesn't want to take part in the singing actively then you don't get that bringing together of the community really.

Dje-Dje (1986), who studied Black American Gospel music, similarly found that "when everyone fully responds and participates in the service, it is regarded as a meaningful experience to all, and a sense of community is felt" (232).

In most cases, people definitely feel that they are a part of the church community. However, almost all attribute that sense of community to additional participation in non-mass activities, and not to mass alone. Welch and Leege (1988) concluded:

> Simple contact with the Catholic subculture (as measured by mass attendance) does not necessarily guarantee that Catholics will internalize the teachings and value orientations it transmits. Thus, attendance may not be an especially potent predictor of Catholics' sociopolitical attitudes (537).

One woman, for example, found that in only attending mass she did not get to know others enough. She said, "I used to go to mass, sit there, and leave without even noticing the person next to me." While Immaculate Conception visibly promotes solidarity (Barrera's first criteria), the actual perception of solidarity (his second criteria) hinges directly on frequency of attendance (his third criteria). In other words, the mass liturgy promotes ubuntu, but there needs to be more frequent interactive contact for efforts to really translate into a communal reality. If not, people "go back to their own neighborhoods" and spend more time where racial segregation and "rugby post" isolation pervade.

I asked one choir member if he thought church music contributed to ubuntu and the sense of community in the church. He replied:

> Yes, I think so, especially as people do things during the week, not just come to mass. Because people come here and leave and they don't know anyone. But

there used to be small groups that would go to people's houses during the week and pray for that family.

Immaculate Conception began to re-promote these Small Christian Communities in the final weeks of my research, holding special weeknight meetings dedicated to the idea.

The idea of meeting more frequently through small groups of believers is not unique to Catholicism. An evangelical woman told me:

A minister who was at my brother's birthday party yesterday always says that people get lost in a large crowd. I think it's in the cell groups (the equivalent of Small Christian Communities) that that essential 'getting to know each other' and 'building a community' happens.

Besides small Christian communities, participating in one or multiple "ministries" of the church promotes solidarity. Rodney, the organist, says, "A ministry would be an organist, a communion giver, an usher in the church—they're all ministries." I asked him, "Do you feel that in the mass itself you get to interact with people, or does interaction and getting to know people happen more outside of mass?" He responded, "I would say it's more outside, yes, not during mass." I asked him, then, when he has gotten to know people, since admitted he does feel like he is part of the community at Immaculate Conception. He responded, simply, "Before and after."

That an organist such as Rodney can feel part of the community is highly revealing. During several choir practices in which I participated, I was called upon to assist in playing the organ. Sitting at the 105 year-old pipe organ was like sitting in a cubicle. All periphery vision of other human beings is eliminated, and the organist sits in the balcony at the back of the chapel, facing south while everyone else faces north. The only other individual facing south is the priest, whose position in the front "sanctuary" at least faces the congregation. So, an organist must rely on the small mirror above his or her head to see either a distant priest or the scalps of a standing choir. But Rodney, as he suggested, can be seen mingling with other parishioners before and after mass, as well as during the "Peace" handshake. Indeed, many gather into small groups before and after mass, chatting with one another in the pews or outside of the building.

Participation in choir practice is one of the most community-building ministries. I asked one choir member, "In what circumstances within the church do you feel like you meet people and get to know them?" He said:

Because I take part in a few ministries in the church, you really get to know people. If you don't take part in ministries, like choir, reading, and the liturgy committee, then you don't really get close to the people. Although one can meet people at mass, it's with the other ministries that you really start getting connected to people.

In his case, choir is especially applicable:

We are closer together and we attend practices more regularly and all these things. . . . The other choir members that attend the other masses, they know

one another but I think we are little bit more closer linked at the [Saturday] mass because our members come to practice more regularly, and I think that also we don't want to disappoint one another by not attending.

The closest associations, the most enjoyable birthday celebrations, and the greatest laughs I experienced during my weekly participation in Immaculate Conception choir practice. While non-choir parishioners offered me rides or introduced themselves, it was in the choir that I received hugs from people I had never yet met, those who I would remember after leaving and who showed sorrow at my departure. While there is a "coming together" integration in mass, and interaction and sharing occurs in call-and-response practices or physical contact, the primary sense of ubuntu derives from more frequent participation in the form of small, Christian communities or ministries such as the choir.

In Conclusion: Post-Apartheid Implications

As races remain notoriously divided in post-apartheid South Africa, the potential for Christianity to promote ubuntu is significant especially in terms of unified interracial communities. Possibly because of its success in promoting ubuntu, the Immaculate Conception parish seems to have a unique head start. Compared to racially homogenous parishes in other areas, "Immaculate Conception parish is an anthropological phenomenon," as one member said. Whereas races remain heavily divided geographically, economically, and linguistically, the Immaculate Conception parish brings races together and promotes sharing and cooperation between them. Perhaps it is similar to America's Immaculate Conception National Shrine, designed to be a "perpetual chorus of peoples . . . where all the nationalities that made up the great melting pot would be represented" (Tweed 2000:6).

Most people consider South Africa's Catholic Church to have been immune from racial division even during apartheid. One woman said:

The Catholic Church has always embraced all races. We never had divisions. Other churches, like the Dutch Reformed Church, used to have particular churches for white people, black people, coloured people, where[as in] the Catholic Church we could always go to any church. It's always encouraged that. I think it's always tried very hard in doing that. And the influence of the nuns there has been very important because there—whatever ministries they have— they include all people, all colors, and they reach out to all kinds of people.

Interracial interaction, she says, was always present "on the church level." Another man said:

This could be a daring statement or a bold statement, but I think Catholic people are probably, possibly less racist than other people in South Africa. We've been taught tolerance. The Church is universal. That's what Catholic means. We have to embrace everyone. We are taught that from [the time we are] little.

Another man said simply, "I think the Catholic Church has never seen race. Its people, worship as people."

I noticed my first Sunday at Immaculate Conception that its integration level was unique, significant in that the coming together of races was accompanied by an interaction and sharing not found in most facets of society. After all, races come together in the street, but one could hardly call that communal. The benches, on the other hand, were speckled with a mixture of ethnicities, blacks, coloureds, whites, and Indians, seated intermixed and with no visible physical divisions. I stood in the back with dozens of other overflow individuals and families. As a band played in the balcony above, the time came to sing "Our Father." With the coloured priest, Father Peter, leading the way, the congregation of mixed skin-tones stood, took each other's hands, and stepping into the middle aisle they bridged one of the only physical divides the architecture created. My hand was taken by a middle-aged black man to my left. Just in front of me was a perfect interracial hand-holding chain: black man, Indian man, white man, coloured woman. Immediately after the singing, we offered to each other the "Sign of Peace" handshake; all bustled about to shake all hands around them. That day, I shook hands with, received smiles from, and looked into the eyes of blacks, Indians, coloureds, and whites. It truly was a phenomenon.

So we have considered the effectiveness of the Immaculate Conception parish in East London, South Africa, in creating a sense of ubuntu—communities characterized by a "coming together" and an interactive "sharing." The parish's practices have practical importance because anthropologists and politicians alike fear the communal values of ubuntu are declining, while divisions not only between racial groups but between individual neighbors are rising. The Immaculate Conception parish has been successful in promoting communal ubuntu values, despite arguments that Christianity is inherently individualistic. In its mass—including sermons, prayers, recitations, and hymns—the parish brings people together and in many ways causes interaction. The additional "bringing together" and interaction of extra-mass participation, in "ministries" such as the choir, solidifies the sense of community.

The North end was once known for interracial cooperation and sharing; and it now is once again. As Cornelius and Kathy Thomas, historians of the area, wrote:

> In the early twenty-first-century, . . . the former Indian, Coloured, white, Chinese, and African residents of north end and a host of new African and Asian immigrants were cemented into a rainbow of prayerful people. The [Immaculate Conception] church and its congregation is today truly a living monument of days gone by (Thomas 2008:46).

Perhaps this is true of some other Catholic parishes and Christian denominations and, if so, with large implications. South Africa, clearly continuing the struggle to recuperate from apartheid, surely holds many hidden gems of cooperation and unity, of ubuntu, both within the Christian context and without. These should be discovered, studied, and made known both to give hope for reconciliation and to give an understanding of how to achieve it. Then the "Rainbow Nation" may truly return to its ubuntu tradition.

References

Abbott, Walter M., ed., 1966 *The Documents of Vatican II: With Notes and Commentary by Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Authorities*. London: The America Press.

Ashforth, Adam, 2005 *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.

Battle, Michael, 1997 *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu theology of Desmond Tutu*. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press.

Bellah, R.N., et al., 1985 *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Barrera, Manuel, 1986 "Distinctions Between Social Support Concepts, Measures, and Models," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 14: 413–45.

Buss, Andreas, 2000 *The Evolution of Western Individualism*. Religion 31: 1–25.

Cadge, Wendy, 2007 "Reflection on Habits, Buddhism in America, and Religious Individualism," *Sociology of Religion* 68(2): 201–05

DjeDje, Jacqueline, 1986 "Change and Differentiation: The Adoption of Black American Gospel Music in the Catholic Church," *Ethnomusicology* 30(2): 223–52.

Ellison, Christopher G. and Jeffrey S. Levin., 1998 "The Religion-Health Connection: Evidence, Theory, and Future Directions," *Health Education & Behavior* 25: 700–20.

Ito, Masayuki, 1998 "The Status of the Individual in Japanese Religions: Implications for Japan's Collectivistic Social Values," *Social Compass* 45(4): 619–33.

Krause, Neal, 2002 "Exploring Race Differences in a Comprehensive Battery of Church-Based Social Support Measures," *Review of Religious Research* 44(2): 126–49.

Mlambo-Ngcuka, Phumzile, 2006 Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka's address at the National Imbizo on Ubuntu and Nation-building in South Africa, Botshabelo-Steve Tshwete Municipality, Mpumalanga. <http://www.nhc.org.za/?linkID=49&cid=29> (6 Feb 2009).

Mnyaka, Mluleki and Mokgeth Motlhabi, 2005 "The African concept of ubuntu/botho and its social-moral significance," *Black Theology: An International Journal* 3(2): 215–37.

Moyes, David, 2004 *Communal Christianity: The Life of a Peasant Vision in Early Modern Germany*. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers.

Murray, Joseph H., 1995 "Self-serving redemptionism: A Jewish-Christian lament," *Theology Today* 52(1): 108.

Pattillo-McCoy, Mary, 1998 "Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community," *American Sociological Review* 63(6): 767–84.

Rashakrishnan, Smitha, 2003 "'African Dream': The Imaginary of Nation, Race, and Gender in South African Intercultural Dance," *Feminist Studies* 29(3): 529–37.

Scirghi, Thomas J., 2007 "An Iconic View of Communal Worship," *Liturgy* 22(2): 9–16.

Thomas, Cornelius, and Kathy Thomas, 2008 *Dust in My Coffee*. East London, South Africa: Iqula Publishing.

Tweed, Thomas A., 2000 "Proclaiming Catholic Inclusiveness: Ethnic Diversity and Ecclesiastical Unity at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 18(1): 1–18.

Watt, John, 1989 *Individualism and Educational Theory*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Welch, Michael R, and David C. Leege, 1988 "Religious Predictors of Catholic Parishioners' Sociopolitical Attitudes: Devotional Style, Closeness to God, Imagery, and Agentic/Communal Religious Identity," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 27(4): 536–52.

Windmills and Walls: The Stabilizing Effect of Social Clubs in Brandenburg

by Taylor Merkley, sociocultural anthropology

I explore the post-socialist transition to capitalism in Eastern Germany as a change in the basis of solidarity that disrupted the social mechanics of East German life. The vocational solidarity of the socialist era was swept away in the tide of reforms in the early 1990s, which lead to a collapse of the social networks that grew dependent on it. In the years following reunification, Western newcomers moved into the rural town of Lütte and sought to revitalize the community. Their influence brought fresh ideas and an innovative spirit to the town through the instrumental use of the Verein "Altes Haus," *a social club. The Verein created a new environment for social relationships to flourish with less dependence on infrastructure. Positive changes in the town have diminished the stereotypical resentment toward Westerners and provided a new forum for social interaction that includes everyone. The Verein's activities have stirred residents into collective effort and active participation in forming the town's identity, instead of passively accepting the unfortunate repercussions of the reforms.*

Introduction

One quiet Saturday during lunch at the Meißner's in the small town of Lütte, Germany, Franz mentioned the old brick wall between our two yards had crumbled as he leaned on it. Suddenly, someone joked, "The wall is down!" The excitement bubbled as jokes turned to a serious idea, a *Wiedervereinigungsparty* (reunification party). Juliane nonchalantly commented that they and the Meißner family had considered taking down the wall anyway and joining the two yards. Soon the humorous suggestion turned into concrete plans. Rainer joked that we should throw the *Ossis* (Easterners) bananas from the west side and someone else suggested separating the actual Easterners and Westerners. Someone remarked, "Who's giving out the *Begrüßungsgeld* (greeting money)?"

The time for our party arrived and the wall stood there with a string of home-printed GDR flags strung across its ancient bricks. While we waited for Richard to commence smashing a hole, bananas flew from the West side of the wall and landed in the strawberry patch. The kids scrambled to grab and eat one. Juliane laughed at her son eating a banana and proclaimed, "He's a real Easterner!" Richard took a sledgehammer to the wall and broke a hole. When the wall was finally weak enough, the men on the "west" side pushed it over and into our strawberry patch. Gertrude opened the celebratory champagne and, as I sipped on juice, Juliane pointed her camera toward me and inquired, "And what does the anthropologist say?"

The anthropologist says the use of the wall between the two yards showed its power to be a symbol of separation. Tearing down the wall implies unity between East and West Germany and, though it was a small demonstration, its power to be a symbol of division and stagnation struck me. The Berlin Wall was a symbol of division, a forced divide, but when it was torn down, the imagery of the wall morphed into a metaphor. The phrase "the wall in our heads" is often used to refer to the cultural differences between the two people and, in many ways, a symbol of the perceived East German thought stagnation. This stagnation of thought stems from the "hegemony of the West convey[ing] a sense that they should be moving in a particular direction" (Berdahl 1999:181). The East Germans are facing new choices as the eastern states are steeped in Western expectations. Gries appropriately compared the state of Club Cola—a socialist substitute for Coca-Cola— to East Germans:

> [They] should be told that their Club Cola still exists, and that it hasn't adapted, just gotten better. That corresponds to the mental situation of many Eastern Germans who are grieving over their own culture (2004:196).

The town of Lütte exemplifies the lessons of Club Cola—they haven't adapted, they've just gotten better. The town where I did my research is remarkably modern for a town with such a low population but maintains a distinct sense of agrarian and rural identity in the midst of ongoing reunification. Though the town is still steeped in the expectations of the West, they have emerged with a new model that reconciles their past with a future of prospects and success. Marion related to me a Chinese proverb that captures the spirit of the town: "When the winds of change waft, some build walls and the rest build windmills." Instead of holding off the influence and stagnating progress, the town captures the energy of change and puts it to vital use. The energy stems from the club Verein, "Altes Haus" (VAH), which means "Old House Club," because the activities and goals of this social organization address the needs of the community and capitalize on what is available. Founded by women in the town of Lütte, the club enlists the help of everyone to lift the community as a whole, not just to get Easterners "up to speed." The influence from the Western-origin residents is not overpowering but empowering. Westerners are sometimes called *frische Luft* (fresh air), which applies perfectly to the proverb, and this influx of newcomers has powered the community and created amiable relationships across the metaphorical wall.

All this success stemmed from an organization that set out only to restore local homes that were falling to ruin. As the population died and emigrated, houses fell into disrepair and social relationships frayed. The primary goal of the organization is to promote social interaction and restore the old, historic corner in town. The club's efforts include fund-raising festivals that promote socializing. The club mulls over the details of their festivals to make sure the environment is perfect for conversing and enjoying Lütte's beautiful scenery.

Prior to the club's existence, many residents did not see the town as a valuable resource, but fresh eyes saw how to utilize what the town had in order to support

what was missing. Their efforts won the support of the original residents and brought the community together by instilling an identity and sense of history. VAH's success builds on the basis of solidarity that existed prior to reunification. The agriculture subsidy was the main source of employment in the town, and social relationships were built through the workplace. When the socialist infrastructure was dissolved, the subsidy lost its secure grip on employees, and soon, farmers moved away in search of better employment. As Westerners filled in empty homes and most found employment elsewhere, the primary mode of socializing was ineffective at keeping the community together. In this paper I argue that the stance of the circle, a development committee researched by De Soto (2003), does not account for how VAH effectively uses socialist mechanical solidarity to create identity, a sense of history, and social relationships in a rural East German community.

Literature Setting

Most post-socialist research conducted in European post-socialist nations focuses on the rifts and problematic nature of the shift from socialism to capitalism. Hermine De Soto's research has been particularly influential in my research since my preparatory stages, because Lütte is an agrarian town. Her article "Contested Landscapes" (2003) discussed the difficulties stemming from residents relinquishing control over their town's future to a committee called "the circle." The committee consisted of both Eastern and Western Germans and worked to "bundle together and coordinate initiatives, and apply these initiatives with reason to the development of the region Bitterfeld" (De Soto 2003:99). This development group, consisting of 117 members, competed with the Reformed Bauhaus when presenting its vision of post-socialist renewal. Part of the circle's strategy was cultural renewal and implied that Vereine (clubs) are the ideal transmitters of culture but that promoting regional identity through social history would hinder the process (De Soto 2003:102). This paper will specifically address this issue, because my research indicates that clubs can promote regional identity through social history without hindering progress.

Progress and East Germany's history do not often occur in the same sentence. East Germany's past is considered a stumbling block to modernization, reflected by the onslaught of reforms from the new government and the destruction of socialist monuments. The mass set of reforms in East Germany caused many problems for its residents, which has been noted in works from Dyke (2003) to Zapf (2002). The ramifications are widespread—political and economic—but the seemingly most difficult is the ripped social connections. Daphne Berdahl noted a joke that went: "What is the most difficult [adjustment] for the Ossis since the wall fell? Having to survive without connections" (1999). Most of socialist life revolved around connections due to the scarcity of resources and the isolation of rural life. Social connections were more than friendships; they were also a means of obtaining goods and services. The "second economy" is the informal exchange of goods through social networks, and it was alive and well during socialism. Family networks, friendships, and "groups of common ethnic or territorial origins" exchanged goods that were difficult to ob-

tain through the state (Berdahl 1999:116). As capitalism mostly erased the need for a second economy, the sense of community and common purpose consequently died out. This does not mean the emotional need for these connections has dissipated as well. Though these small towns were isolated, the globalized world superseded this isolation and fractured the community with a new economic structure. Some policy makers hold that retaining regional identity through social history is an obstacle to progress and full integration.

My work in East Germany confirms these modern problems but also discovers a strong counterattack to protect identity and a viable future. The mechanical solidarity from socialist times brought the community together into collective effort, which could revitalize the community by capitalizing on the available resources. Residents directed their energy toward re-imagining landscape and creative uses of the rich resources and heritage available to them. It has been noted that the economic structure of East Germany remains distinct from the exporting West (Spiegel 2009), and the residents in Lütte have created new avenues for social relationships to flourish in this environment. This paper shows the economic possibilities that also restore and add meaning to the community. Typically typecast as victims, the East Germans became active in preserving and transforming the town's identity and establishing its place in the future. They were not bystanders or on the sidelines; they actively harnessed economic power to sustain a community that could possibly die.

My research also adds to the discussion of the East-West German dialectic. I scarcely came across literature that showed welcomed change and positive interactions with Westerners in the East German setting. My work does not discount the prevalent evidence of antagonism, but it adds to the picture with an example of co-operation that can sustain the town well into the future. In the town of Lütte, Western influence was often met with skepticism, but it called for the cooperation and support of the *Ureinwohner* (original residents), and successfully received it. In the context of Lütte, the influence of Westerners has transformed the town into a community and provided the residents with the power to retain the town's identity.

Methodology

The basis of my research was observing and participating in Lütte's social life. My time in Lütte was short, about three months, which limited the friends I could make in a small town. Friendships took time, though the residents are generally friendly, and friends were made through acquaintances. I used an existing social network to meet informants and, though I limited my demographic through this, it made it easier to understand the existing networks, who was closely socially tied, and which social circles overlapped.

I met my informants and friends through my host family, who was well connected. Not all the informants were close friends of the family, but they were connected to them either through the club or friendships. The informants held a range of occupations and were from East and West Germany; they were generally the same age since my research was geared toward those more heavily involved in the club discussed

in the paper. I interviewed residents to understand their perspective, how they view social networks, and to learn more about local history. I mapped the town to determine the physical relationships between people and the landscape, which was important in a rural setting. I not only mapped the area and made note of physical locations, but an interviewee drew a map in an interview to illustrate social connections and relationships. I photographed the major events in the community during my stay and documented the location of various businesses and landmarks. The photographs are in archives for future reference for both the town and this project.

Setting

Lütte is a small, rural town with approximately five hundred residents in the state of Brandenburg between Potsdam and Magdeburg, which lies on a rural road called Chausseestraße. The road is an important link to nearby towns in the countryside, and bus lines run on the road throughout the day connecting smaller communities with Belzig, a municipality about ten kilometers away, separated by sweeping fields of grain or sunflowers with forests filling the gaps between. The nearby towns are several kilometers from Lütte and largely residential. Whether someone is from Schwanebeck, Fredersdorf, or Dippmannsdorf, the residents have social connections in these neighboring towns. Lütte differs significantly from these towns, because it has a defined business district and a kindergarten. It is a "street town," a town that straddles a main road. Though trucks, buses, and fast drivers drive by, the traffic is never so loud that it disturbs the idyllic quiet.

Early in the morning, one can hear the baker's shovel scraping the cobblestone as he shovels coal for his ovens. The ovens are soon fired up and a hazy, black smoke arises from the chimneys and dissipates into the air. Older women soon appear on their bikes with sacks to carry their daily bread. They park their bikes in the racks and chat as they enter the store. Church bells chime at the hour, and children are scuttled to kindergarten up the hill. Later in the morning, one can hear tractors rumble out of the LPG lot as they drive on Am Lütter Bach. The tractors are old and have a smooth, contoured look, much like automobiles from the 1960s. If you wave, the farmers will wave back. After all the tractors head out to the fields in the north, the quiet, tree-lined road is suddenly interrupted by the bray of a donkey or maybe with pigs causing a ruckus for no apparent reason. The houses along the road all have courtyards and the backyards extend into fields of grain. The day is still until the church bells play for ten minutes at noon and the tractors rumble back to the lot just in time for lunch.

The street was once "Bahnhofstraße" (train station street), a common and traditional street name, but it was changed to avoid confusion for the postal service. The street leads to the former train station, as the name suggests. It operated for a number of years as a local train line to connect rural towns, but it was shut down in 2006 for not being economically profitable. The train station was bought by a couple from Berlin and refurbished to be a home, but the clock and large letters reading "Lütte" remain on the outside wall. The train tracks and station, now overgrown with tall grasses, remain only as a reminder of their former use. The train commonly used

now is in Baitz, a ten-minute drive from town, and connects to Potsdam and Berlin as well as Belzig.

On my third day in town, I attend the *Obstblütenfest* (fruit blossoms festival). The festivals celebrates its namesake, the blossoming fruit trees along the north side of Am Lütter Bach (formerly Bahnhofstraße). The festival is held on the first weekend of May, because the blossoms are typically in full bloom then, and it falls on a holiday weekend. The events start at noon. Though the festival is fairly well known in the county, mostly residents, their friends, and their families attend. In front of a traditional *hof* (courtyard) style, volunteers sell inexpensive food for the guests as two men grill the meat. Coffee, wine, smoked fish, beer, and the famous Berliner Kindl are all available for purchase. They are all priced inexpensively, and attendees buy their food and sit at the tables, benches, and on the grass below the fruit blossoms. Around 2:00 P.M., the residents sing a choral performance in the local church on the street, and later in the afternoon, there is a performance by the kindergarten children. Otherwise, there is no music playing. There are also no vendors, but there are old wagons and other antique machinery to look at, and there is also a tent where children can churn butter, learn to spin yarn, and practice milking. The festival quietly buzzes with relaxing friends and neighbors through the afternoon until 4:00 or 5:00 P.M., and then the celebration ends with a party for the residents around 8:00 P.M. to finish the leftover alcohol and celebrate their success.

Social Relations in the Socialist Years

Lütte did not always have an Obstblütenfest or a Verein. The success of VAH since its founding in 2004 is based on East Germany's history and social change since reunification. The socialist years of the former East Germany were marked by a social dependence on the infrastructure. My findings reflect Daphne Berdahl's findings on social relationships in the border town of Kella; residents in the town became dependent on the infrastructure set up by the socialist government (1999). The dependence in Lütte was mainly through the Landproduktionsgenossenschaft (LPG), a collective farming subsidy. Adult residents created social connections through their occupation as farmers, and their social networks became dependent on their employment. The LPG placed rural farmers in a collective, and the frequent contact led to friendships. These friendships and social connections fostered the emergence of the second economy, when the system failed to meet their needs.

The LPG created solidarity through the communal function of the subsidy. The LPG was an agricultural subsidy in the GDR that usurped private land and redistributed it to hired farmers to work. The work was collective, and the LPG boss assigned the jobs to farmers and received a greater portion of the collective profit. Lütte was not the only town in the LPG—all private farmers in the area were required by the government to work for the LPG. The farmers from nearby towns were in the same situation, and the communal fate of the LPG created solidarity among the working farmers. This was apparent even during my time there when I spoke to former LPG farmers; I visited a woman in the neighboring town of Dippmannsdorf

who worked as a farmer with her husband until their retirement, and she knew many older residents in other towns, because they were all in the LPG. The collective work created a mechanical solidarity, since the farmers were interchangeable and working for the same goal. Because they depended on each other economically, both formally and informally, they kept close social ties to one another.

Solidarity in the Socialist System

This collective fate did not alter much for those who remained after the wall fell, since most agriculture had become industrialized. Socialist modes of production did not differ very much from capitalist modes of production, though ideology concealed this fact. While the ideology promoted a different agenda, the socialist modes of production mirrored the capitalist system almost perfectly, although it remained in the control of the Central Committee. There is an East German joke that pokes fun at this major discrepancy

> The teacher asks: "Fritzchen, what is the difference between capitalism and socialism?" Fritz replies: "Capitalism is the exploitation of man by man. Under socialism, it is the other way around" (Franke).

This discrepancy was evident in the local context of Lütte—informants told me that the current president of the new collective is the son of the LPG director. The socialist system was indisputably less efficient, as evidenced by chronic shortages, enormous debt, and stalled GDP growth in the 1980s (Jarausch 1994:97), but the economic base Marx so vehemently condemned was the hallmark of socialist pipe dreams. Though promised work security, workers faced the same drudgery of factory work or any work in a subsidy. Workers faced the same exploitation and alienation that made the theorist so famous, while the socialist ideology of "We Are the People" gave a false sense of communal welfare. After reunification, when it became apparent party leaders were privy to fancy hotels and private hunting lodges, the East German population became irate (Saxon 1994). Though the extravagances were small when compared to the capitalist world, the evidence showed the complete rift between the socialist ideal of an egalitarian society and the actual privilege of party leaders. At least in the case of the GDR, the socialist propaganda was the opiate of the masses.

Though the socialist system was a disguised capitalist economy, social relationships were not the same. Berdahl argued that theories of class formation in socialism were inadequate, because they failed to account for the economic/noneconomic dichotomy in social relationships (1999:112); she used Bourdieu's idea of capital to explore the social relationships based on access to goods and social capital. Because of socialism's chronic shortages, a second economy sprung up and informal exchange became a more efficient means of obtaining goods. Verdery wrote that "the second economy then, which provisioned a large part of consumer needs, was parasitic upon the state and inseparable from it" (1996:27). Goods were obtained by knowing those able to access them and gave social relationships a material basis. Job security was the basis of capital and social relationships in the socialist system, because employ-

ment defined what material capital was available to the person, which in turn created social capital. Berdahl quoted a woman who said, "You always remembered the Trabi repairman's birthday . . . so they would be there if you needed them" (1999:120). Gifts among friends were valuable, because they maintained connections, which could manifest favors. This did not cheapen relationships but added another dimension to their importance. Friends, or social capital, denoted the potential for material wealth, regardless of the connection.

The socialist agenda of guaranteed employment meant those in positions to access demanded goods did not fear being cut off from the resources or social connections at work. Work in a collective or a factory bore long-term friendships because of the prolonged social interaction. It reinforced the communal ethic and created a close relationship between work life and social life. In the case of agriculture, individual farmers who previously worked alone became colleagues. De Soto took note of this change in her own work. "The collectivization of work . . . radically restructured the social and cultural spheres of every day life for village women" (1995:184). Workplaces provided "an important space for daily contact among village women and for the dissemination of local gossip and shared knowledge," (Berdahl 1999:187) and Alexander Osang's vignettes on East German citizens highlight the social implications of work (1994). LPG farmers remain a socially tight-knit group due to the economic and social spheres of live being integrated through work. Jobs became an ambit of social and economic influence.

Employment was a positive social signal and, since the GDR pushed for full employment, it gave a sense of solidarity with the group. The socialist "We Are the People" propaganda emphasizes the equality of workers and social solidarity. Jobs became a basis of mechanical solidarity because of the focused and collective nature of the work. Workers need to "strengthen on another by giving mutual assurance that they are still in unison" (Durkheim 58). Their wills "spontaneously move[d] in one direction," because they had a collective fate in a secured job and a collective (Durkheim 60). Economic security in a socialist environment created social relationships by elongating the time they anticipated working together. With an ideology that promoted unity and an economy that begged for informal interdependence, the workers cast their fate as collective.

Reunification and Changes

The changes in 1989 reached far beyond physical reunification. Though the wall was easily overthrown, the so-called "wall in the head" became a real problem in creating a nation. The two nations, each based on different ideologies, began clashing and misunderstanding one another. The East Germans' quickness to undermine the power of their socialist government prevented politicians from effectively negotiating for East German interests during reunification (Jarausch 1994:113); though there was a movement to combine the capitalist and socialist systems, negotiations failed because of East Germany's lack of political clout and power. To those opposed to the socialist regime, like Konrad, the takeover was refreshing. He described the first

years of reunification as "an exciting time when all the changes happened . . . there was freedom!" However, it was not only a complete overhaul of governments but also of everyday life and relationships. Unification was comparable to colonization, since the new government immediately set to absorb East German institutions and subsidies; Berdahl wrote, [i]t was clearly up to East Germans to catch up with, adapt to, and later simply adopt this system" (1999:159). East Germans began to resent this; it placed them in the lesser position, looking to West Germans for guidance. At the same time the East Germans were frustrated with the change and their lack of knowledge, the West Germans began to move into East Germany.

New Faces in Town

In the years following reunification, West Germans moved into Lütte. Some of the population fled during the GDR years or after the border collapsed, and Westerners began filling vacancies. The newcomers were often those who had a secure job, career, and/or had young children. Several informants related that the town is a wonderful place to live when you have children. "It's quieter and safer for children to run around," one of them said. During this time, more houses were built because of the quickly expanding population. The town itself did not offer many employment opportunities, but many residents worked in nearby rehabilitation centers and hospitals or stores in Belzig, the nearby municipality; the bakery did remain in family operation, and there were small businesses along the main road of Chausseestraße. The area on Martinsberg, north of Chausseestraße, became the site of development, and rows of houses were built close to each other. This area was referred to as *die Siedlung* (the settlement), because they were not built on much land and were not in the traditional hof style. Konrad, among others, told me the residents who lived in "the settlement" were mostly commuters—people who lived in the town but worked in the city, which wasn't uncommon, but this was tinged with some animosity, because these residents did not associate much with others. "They want their *Ruhe* (peace)," Konrad said, and keep mostly to themselves. Move-ins did not always keep to themselves, but those on Martinsberg were characterized as isolated. This influx of Westerners in the town was not welcomed.

Newcomers also moved into the houses on Am Lütter Bach (formally Bahnhostraße) and began restoring the dilapidated houses. These homes are the traditional hof style often seen in rural villages. The new residents sometimes restored the barn back to its original purpose or renovated them to serve another purpose; in other cases, they were torn down. My host family moved into their home in 1999 and began restoring their house and barns. They added a *kibbutz*-style kitchen and restored the oven to serve communal functions, while they restored the barns for hobby farming and cultivated parts of the land for gardening. Other friends on the street tore down their barns in favor of open space, and in one case, one of the side barns was converted into a separate house so the son could live separately from his mother. Renovation was possible after reunification, because the resources that would have been scarce prior to 1990 were available to those who could afford it. The butcher, the

kindergarten, and Büricke's lawn equipment store and garage all went under renovation during this period.

The LPG Survives

Today, a strong solidarity still exists among LPG farmers despite the newcomers and economic change. Since reunification, the LPG has turned into a GmbH, a limited liability company, but the structure remains essentially the same—even the residents still refer to it as the LPG. Konrad, whose father was a farmer during GDR, remarked that the LPG industrialized agriculture and farming was still done collectively, "produced like glass or a car," as Konrad put it. Since the economic activity merely adapted its image to the capitalist system, the social ties remained intact. Many farmers' children decided against becoming farmers, which resulted in the younger generation moving away for better employment and a decreasing population. Many of the farmers retired and the newer generation of industrialized farmers was much smaller. Ten or twelve LPG farmers remained, and they were socially insular.

The solidarity in the LPG was so strong that it also discouraged its farmers from legally regaining their heritage lands. Konrad and Thilo were the few residents who appealed to the highest court in Germany to regain their fathers' lands. The land was taken back from the LPG, but it was not necessarily the traditional boundaries of the land prior to collectivization. Thilo, for example, received little triangles of land spread out across LPG fields despite the fact the heritage land was one large plot. Thilo and Konrad regained land that was taken away from the collective farmers, and they stopped working for the collective, which sparked social conflict. Konrad noted this in an interview and Thilo made mention of it as well. Social ties between both men and the collective farmers were diminished, if not cut entirely. Since the ties between work and social interaction were tightly bound in the fabric of GDR life, it did not come as a surprise that the loss of the former precipitated the loss of the latter.

The new residents did not move in to work for the LPG, which separated them from an already shrunken sphere of social interaction. New residents worked from home or commuted to work, which made Lütte a resting place instead of a workplace, which it had been both before and during socialism. There was no collective work and residents remained estranged from each other. The old world of Am Lütter Bach (Bahnhofstraße) was as metaphorically separated from Martinsberg ("the settlement") as it was in reality. VAH was founded in an effort to bridge these missed connections. Festivals were organized for social interaction, and the club itself was a way to become involved and make friends. The kindergarten also acted as a meeting place for parents with young children, limiting the effects to a certain demographic. VAH reached out to all residents and had a wider ambit of influence, because it replaced the meeting places that fell away with the wall.

Collapsed Networks and Disappearing Meeting Places

The unity of the workplace and social organizations crumbled with the Berlin Wall. As jobs were removed and the compulsory organizations, the JP and FDJ, dis-

missed, the environments that created mechanical solidarity vanished. The only survivor was the LPG. Though the LPG was now a GmbH (a limited liability company), the work remained collective, though jobs were not necessarily secure. Despite the LPG surviving reforms, many farmers left the LPG and moved elsewhere once the mechanical basis was destroyed. The forced solidarity of the workplace and compulsory organizations led to dissemination when the government pressure was off. The workplace and JP were meeting places that facilitated social relationships, and once they disappeared, little remained to sustain social networks. They were both dependent on the socialist infrastructure—job security and compulsory membership (as well as shortages)—making social relationships, in effect, dependent on infrastructure. "Going to work [gave] structure to the day, maintain[ed] a sense of purpose, and provide[d] opportunities for social interaction" (Frijters 2004). This opportunity was taken for granted until it vanished. Like the Mundurucú of Brazil and the American Iroquois, social relationships changed as the mode of production changed (Wolf 1997). As soon as the GDR imploded, all bases for social ties became irrelevant. This lead many people to move away for better opportunities while a few remained out of loyalty. Dissatisfaction with the quality of life remained symbiotic with social disconnectedness. The standard of living "not only depend[ed] on individual resources, but also on household context and social networks" (Zapf 2002:244). Ethnographies cited in this paper repeatedly emphasized the social isolation citizens felt. The disappearance of networks and connections formed under socialism contributed to a sense of decline in the community (Berdahl 1999:136).

The decline in community was not just the social isolation that accompanied collapsing social networks. De Soto's work in Saxony-Anhalt showed citizens with sentiments similar to those in Kella and Lütte:

> Both older and younger generations were embittered by the loss of their previous cultural meeting places, which formed an integral component of transmitting local identity (2003:106).

The loss of meeting places had a close tie to identity in these communities. Identity is polysemous and connects to history, affiliation, place, and ethnicity among other identifiers (Santino 2004; Geertz 2003). Researchers have noted the importance of work in transmitting identity, which became apparent in East Germany as the new states merged in the job market and unemployment rose (De Soto 2003, 1995; Berdahl 1999; Boyer 2000; Zapf 2002; Frijters 2004; Geertz 2004). Work served as an identity as well as a place to establish social identity through networks. Identity was also tied to social relationships because well-connected people were identified as such (Berdahl 1999) and had a social context in which to place their social identity.

Supporting Identity, History, and Social Networks

Clubs, much like The Circle in Saxony-Anhalt envision and transmit culture, but contrary to their expectations, it can also effectively harness history and identity at the same time. These concepts, as I outlined above, are all connected; jobs not only

provide social opportunities but also an identity of mechanical solidarity, of belonging. The compulsory organizations have the same effect as jobs, because the workplace and an organization are both meeting places. The clubs existing in Lütte are filling in the gaps left by the collapse of the socialist infrastructure and transmitting identity, history, culture, and social relations.

A Case Study: Verein Altes Haus

The Verein "Altes Haus" (VAH) was the primary focus of my research because of the clubs' effect on the social adaptability of the town. VAH was prominent in the community and the only obvious club besides the volunteer firemen. The club was organized, goal-oriented, but not a completely organic club like the church. It was the only club that exemplified what Schama called:

> a new way of looking; of rediscovering what we already have, but which somehow eludes our recognition and our appreciation. Instead of being yet another explanation of what we have lost, it is an exploration of what we might find [in landscapes] (De Soto 2003).

The Verein harnessed the available resources and successfully combined landscape, history, and identity into a forward mentality that allowed for change. De Soto's work in Saxony-Anhalt was the basis for my analysis on the social clubs' effect on the town's adaptation. She reported that the Circle, the development group in the region, promoted Vereine but neglected the promotion of regional identity through social history. However, VAH successfully combined regional identity through social history and provided insight into how the use of history and organized activity can propel a community in the future without leaving an empty space in history and identity.

VAH is the newest club in Lütte. It was founded in 2004 for the purpose of restoring the historic corner in town (that included a small house, smith workshop, and barn) and revitalizing social connections. Ully remarked that "towns often have the problem that when older people die, the houses become dilapidated" and three women from west sought to remedy this. These three women were Mrs. Meißner, Ms. Baaske, Mrs. Junghauß, who met up at a street festival, conversed, and decided to work together and restore the old corner. Mr. Junghauß joked that they used *Frauen-power* (female power) to get VAH started and get the men excited. The club currently has nine official members; the members must pay a membership fee and sign a contract saying that as a member you will contribute to the goals of the club and attend the biweekly meetings. While the number of official members was small, the club had far reaching influence over the town due to volunteers. Volunteers had no obligations to the club and were free to offer their time when it was available. They were a huge part of the success of the club, because without the volunteers and helpful neighbors in town, VAH could not organize the Obstblütenfest. The volunteers helped set up the stands, sell food, make food, perform, and clean up. As Ully put it, "everything comes from this town; everything is homemade, everything is preferred that way." VAH worked to improve the town and accomplish goals with the town's very own re-

sources, including labor. Since the festival was based entirely out of the town, a work force was needed to complete the tasks. Nine members could not run a festival—for several hundred people—on their own, and VAH's ability to recruit volunteers was the absolute key to its success and influence.

Obstblütenfest required volunteers to help prepare the festivities and also included more than the residents in the celebration. Family and friends came from quite a distance to visit and attend the festival, and the social connections reached outside the community. My host family had friends visiting from the far-eastern border of Germany and Berlin. Bikes were piled up against tree trunks as families rode to the festival, and the entire street was full of benches, tables, tents, and people sitting on quilts or the grass. The train station in Baitz was a thirty-minute bike ride from the town, but the ride, which I personally biked, was scenic with expansive fields, lush greenery, and a visible horizon. The area was flat and easy to bike, making it a great opportunity for friends or family to spend time together as they pedaled through scenic countryside. The festival was meant for residents, their extended family, and social networks. The setting was meant to be an ideal place to meet and converse with friends and family, and the planning reflects this.

The setting of Obstblütenfest was an integral part of both the festival and the fabric of the community. *Ländliche Charakter* (rural character) was often used to describe the town, and people I interviewed expressed a strong attachment to this characteristic. Agrarian and rural life was still very much a part of the modern existence in Lütte. Am Lütter Bach was the area that closely retained the rural character; people along this street mostly retained the traditional hof structure of farmhouses, and the festival projected an image of historic simplicity onto the street. In addition to the festival transforming the street, it projected a rural historical narrative onto the landscape with objects such as wagons, hand-cranked washed machines, and laundry lines put up for aesthetics. This projection was an important part of solidifying town identity with its rural character. Konrad said, "Lütte is losing its rural character . . . towns become *siedlungen* (settlements) because not everyone is a farmer anymore. A *dorf* (town) is where people worked the land and lived together." Though the younger generations forsook farming in search of better work, the town continued to hold on strongly to the agrarian imagery. Many residents along Am Lütter Bach farmed as a hobby, and in some cases as a side job, and although it did not achieve the same character, VAH projected this ethos and pathos in a context where residents were working together—in other words, Obstblütenfest.

Careful planning and strategic decisions made Obstblütenfest unique. The festival planned to have a beautiful backdrop, the flowering trees along Am Lütter Bach. This street had a rural charm with a large yellow church, farmhouses, blossoming fruit trees, a babbling brook, bakery, and light-colored wood benches. Old machines were set up along the street to bring a nostalgic, rustic sense of history. The sign bearing the name, place, and time of the festival was put on an old wagon, which was borrowed every year from a farmer in Dippmannsdorf. However, beautiful scenery was not the only thing that contributed to a friendly and timeless atmosphere. VAH

made sure all aspects contribute to enjoyment while reaching their goal to promote social relations and improve the town with its own resources. Any distracting factors were eliminated from the festival by the Verein. Ully emphasized to me that loud music was never played and vendors were not allowed to sell products there. Many festivals organized in the rural area include both of these things, but VAH realized loud music was not conducive to conversing. Music was not played during the day precisely so participants could easily converse with each other. Conversation was the point, and VAH was careful to not let music detract from this. There was a choral performance at the church in the afternoon, and the kindergarteners had a music program as well, but these were performances and not background music. The performances were to enhance the festival experience and background music would only diminished it. Vendors were another diminishing factor, because it would have drawn attention away from conversation and social relationships. These vendors would have supplanted VAH effort to use the town's resources, and selling beer, clothes, or food would have distracted from social interactions. The food and drink sold at the festival, prepared in the town by the volunteers, aided the socializing and were sold inexpensively. No detail was overlooked by VAH in planning the festival, and the club made sure the details contributed toward a pleasant social atmosphere.

However, the festival's purpose extended beyond socializing, because it also raised money for the restoration of the historic corner. The town hosted the festival with its own means as a way of raising money for its own ends. It's a self-sustained form of fund-raising, and the club utilized the town's resources to multiply the return. This year the festival raised 3,000 Euros to help pay for the restoration. VAH bought the historic corner but did not entirely fund the construction. The EU subsidized most of the costs of construction, but VAH had to pay a portion of the bill. The two goals of the Verein, increased socializing and restoring the corner, were not separate; the corner will also serve a social purpose. It will act as a meeting place, a location where residents can socially interact. The wooden frame house on the plot being renovated to act as a hostel for hikers will remain in its historic condition, with the exception of a modern bathroom attached to the side due to current building codes. The Verein continued to keep the spirit of self-sufficiency in the construction by reusing all the salvageable pieces from the home. Similarly, the construction jobs were a *mini job* (temporary work), and unemployed residents were the preferred beneficiaries. The Verein provided for the community in the short-term with possible long-term benefits.

The close tie between history and identity remained an important aspect of the Verein's goals, because it solidified the positive reinforcements the Verein provided the community. The festival paid homage to years past with old machinery and traditional chores turned into children's activities (e.g., churning butter). It hailed back to a time when Germans were honest, land-working folk living in peace, before the country was divided. This added to the charm of an idyllic festival and created unity through a shared historic narrative. Identity was created through the use of history, which remained a vital part of the town. The restored home will have displays that

show the origin of things and how life used to be, like "where cheese comes from," as Juliane said, and she emphasized the importance of remembering. It became apparent that origin and history have a particular significance, and the construction of the house deliberately paid homage to tradition and historic identity. Traditional construction techniques, with the help of modern machines, kept the traditional and historic sentiment during construction. Restoring the historic corner was restoring a part of Lütte's history while also making it relevant for modern times. The reinvention of the house kept a piece of past common history and created a landmark that will be a part of the future. VAH was not reinventing the wheel but giving it a modern function so that it remained relevant.

Obstblütenfest also kept local traditions relevant and vibrant. The primary goals were to raise money and provide an enjoyable social atmosphere, but the many decisions made reflected the multifaceted effects the festival has. The decision to create an enjoyable social atmosphere was a clear indication that VAH promoted social relations and did so by providing a meeting place for friends and family. Since the socialist infrastructure and the meeting places dependent on it collapsed, VAH stepped in and filled this void with opportunities for social interaction and collective work. Work gave purpose and social opportunities, which VAH mimics in a more relaxed manner. Both membership and volunteering fulfilled the need to connect and work together for a common purpose, though the latter was a lesser commitment. The volunteers were numerous, and after the festival was finished, VAH threw a pizza party in their honor, which provided more opportunities for social interaction. Obstblütenfest provided opportunities for both volunteers, VAH members, and visitors to make social connections and extend their networks.

The festival was a meeting place that also had ties to history and identity. Old machines, churning butter, and hanging laundry visually communicated the history and rural character of the town. The rural character was a part of the town's history, as well as its present, and an integral part of identity. Lütte's history was strongly rooted in agrarian tradition, even through the GDR and collectivization years. It remained a dorf, which is a name that conjures up images of sweeping fields, quiet roads, and farmers. Despite how modern Lütte became, the rural dorf character was visible and easily transmitted. A dorf was a place where people work and live together, and VAH preserved that identity through collective action, which in turn kept up the historic homes that projected the rural character.

Conclusion

In an area where many towns face extinction, they often expressed their hope for the future and were generally optimistic. When I asked what they would change about Lütte, they were hard pressed to think of anything in particular. They were generally satisfied with their lives there and did not express the uncertainty and pessimism I often read in ethnographies. I suspect this is connected to their general attitude toward their resources. VAH revitalized the ingenuity of the town and played on the strengths of both the socialist system and the town to fill in the gaps the GDR

collapse left. As Marion said, "When the winds of change waft, some build walls and the rest build windmills." VAH built windmills to capture the spirit of change and channel it into useful areas that would sustain the future and sense of community. Instead of overlooking the available resources, VAH capitalized on the rural beauty and charm of the town to bring in interest and money for needed projects. The rural character the residents cling to is reinvented by VAH's plans to restore the historic corner. The appearance is revamped, not altered, and the function is updated. Displays on the rural way of life in the house, which will serve as a hostel for hikers, will marry the significance of the past with the imminence of the future. Change is not the enemy, but a lack of vision threatens collapse. The far-reaching influence and social connections that come from VAH and Obstblütenfest clearly depicts how successful the integration of identity, history, and social connections has been.

NOTES
1. Name changed.
2. Name changed.
3. Jungpionere and Freie Deutsche Jugend, both socialist youth programs.

REFERENCES

Berdahl, Daphne. 1999. *Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boyer, Dominic C. 2000. "On the Sedimentation and Accreditation of Social Knowledges of Difference: Mass Media, Journalism, and the Reproduction of East/West Alterities in Unified Germany," *Cultural Anthropology* 15 (4): 459–91.

De Soto, Hermine G. 2003. "Contested Landscapes: Reconstructing Environment and Memory in Postsocialist Saxony-Anhalt" in *Altering States: Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Berdahl, Daphne, Matti Bunzl, and Martha Lampland. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press: 96–113.

De Soto, Hermine G. and Christel Panzig. "From Decollectivization to Poverty and Beyond: Women in Rural East Germany Before and After Unification," in *East Central European Communities: The Struggle for Balance in Turbulent Times*, ed. David A. Kideckel, 179–96. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

"Divided In The Crisis: East Germany Hit Less Hard than the West," *Der Spiegel*, 10 July 2009.

Durkheim, Émile. 1997. *The Division of Labor In Society*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Dyke, Elizabeth A. Ten. 2003. "Memory, History, and Rememberance Work in Dresden," in *Altering States: Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, eds Berdahl, Daphne, Matti Bunzl, and Martha Lampland. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press: 139–57.

Franke, Gesa. DDR Witz. <http:www.ddr-witz.de>

Frijters, Paul, John P. Haisken-DeNew, Michael A. Shield. 2004. "Investigating the Pattern and Determinants of Life Satisfaction in Germany Following Reunification," *The Journal of Human Resource* 39 (3): 649–74.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures:Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Gries, Rainer. 2004. "'Hurrah, I'm Still Alive!'*: East German Products Demonstrating East Germany Identities," in *Over The Wall/After the Fall: Post-Communist Cultures Through an East-West Gaze*, eds. Forrester, Sibelan, Magdalena J. Zaborowska, and Elena Gapova. Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 181–99.

Jarausch, Konrad H. 1994. *The Rush to German Unity*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Osang, Alexander. 1994. *Die stumpfe Ecke: Alltag in Deutschland 25 Porträts*. Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag.

Saxon, Wolfgang. (30 May 1994) "Erich Honecker Ruler of East Germany for Eighteen of Its Last Years, Dies In Exile at 81," *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/1994/05/30/obituaries/erich-honecker-ruler-east-germany-for-18-its-last-years-dies-exile-81.html

Santino, Jack. 2001. *Signs of War and Peace: Social Conflict and the Use of Symbols in Northern Ireland*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schama, Simon. 1995. *Landscape and Memory*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Verdery, Katherine. 1991. *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wolf, Eric. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zapf, Wolfgang, Roland Habich, Thomas Bulmahn, and Jan Delhey. 2002. "The Case of Germany: Transformation Through Unification, in *Structural Change and Modernization in Post-Socialist Societies*. Hamburg: Reinhold Krämer Verlag: 229–98.

Interactive Musical Activities in the Context of a Romanian Orphanage

by Branda Quintana, human development

The purpose of this case study was to examine how children with severe disabilities and/or institutionalized behaviors within an orphanage (i.e., the Saint Andrew Placement Center in Iaşi, Romania) would react and respond to interactive musical activities. The review of literature suggests three things 1) that singing and dancing may be therapeutic, because they are self-produced activities and allow an individual to communicate with the outer world; 2) that rhythmic activities may increase physical coordination; and 3) that musical activities may increase physical and emotional awareness. To investigate this issue, fourteen residents within a specific room of the orphanage received individual and group interaction in the form of adaptive musical activities, interactive singing, and interactive instrument playing for three months. This study was designed to include participant observation. Data was collected through field notes recording both individual and group activity sessions. The results of the study suggest that specific children within the Saint Andrew Placement Center with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Attachment Disorder, and/or institutionalized behaviors reacted to interactive singing, interactive instrument playing, and rhythmic activities, by demonstrating deeper emotional, social, and/or physical connections. These stronger connections were exemplified through increased interactivity, building a relationship with a caregiver, making eye contact, increased oral expression and/or communication, and motor movement responses.

Research Proposal

Children at the Saint Andrew Placement Center in Iaşi, Romania often do not receive the attention needed to foster cognitive and emotional growth and development. Many studies have shown that music can impact these types of development in a positive way. In order to observe the effect of music in an institutionalized setting, interactive musical activities were planned and carried out at Saint Andrew. The children's reactions were then analyzed into specific case studies.

Context

Before outlining the details of the project, a brief overview of Romania and the current state of orphanages needs to be examined in order to understand the context and environment in which I conducted my research. Romania has a harsh history and legacy including a period under a communist ruler, Nicolae Ceausescu. In order to accomplish his personal agenda, Ceausescu implemented a variety of communist methods, where women were ordered to have four or more children or be punished

by taxes (Heart to Heart International Association). Women were examined each month to make sure no abortions were being attempted, and birth control and contraceptives were banned. All of these things, combined with economic hardships of the country meant, in many instances, that families were unable to care for their children. This left many Romanian orphanages overpopulated and the children inside them undernourished.

Since Ceausescu's death, the country has strived to repair and improve their orphanages. However, the impact of institutions in general and the impact of Ceausescu's rule that left these institutions overpopulated are still seen in the children residing within these orphanages. In this institutionalized setting, the rooms at Saint Andrew contain many children and few caregivers. Children do not have an early mother-infant relationship or secure attachment to a caregiver.

Sutton described the importance of the early mother-infant relationship in learning to play and thereby being creative and discovering one's self (2002). Furthermore, the early mother-infant relationship has been linked to "more complex communication, social cognition, and language development" (as cited in Kim, Wigram, & Gold, 2009, p. 391). As Winnicott stated:

> Any interferences in the earliest stage of caregiving are experienced by the infant as a dangerous interruption of his or her sense of going-on-being. He or she is left with a 'threat of annihilation' and fears of falling apart (as cited in Sutton, 2002, p. 139).

For the children at Saint Andrew in Iaşi, play is often hindered, since there is no mother-infant relationship and children are often left in cribs, tied in their chairs, or left to play on their own. In many instances, children in these institutions do not receive the one-on-one attention and stimulation needed to foster cognitive, physical, and emotional growth and development. Different studies have shown that music can impact these types of development in a positive way (i.e., stimulate physical and cognitive functioning and help emotional functions such as stress, relaxation, and motivation) (American Music Therapy Association, 1999).

Purpose

Since different studies have demonstrated music can have a positive effect on cognitive, emotional, and physical processes, interactive musical activities were planned out for orphaned children at the placement center. To analyze whether music could have the same type of impact on children within an institutionalized setting, I worked as an intern at Saint Andrew and participated in interactive musical activities with the children and then observed their reactions. These case studies were meant to analyze interactive musical activities for specific children with severe disabilities and/or institutionalized behaviors at the Saint Andrew. For the purposes of this study, interactive musical activities will be generally defined as adaptive musical games/rhythmic activities, interactive singing, and interactive instrument playing.

Literature Review

Music is processed in both hemispheres of the brain and provides concrete auditory, visual, and tactile multisensory stimulation (American Music Therapy Association, 1999). Thus, according to the American Music Therapy Association (1999), music can stimulate cognitive functioning that may be used for remediation of some speech/language skills, sensory-motor skills, perceptual-motor skills, and gross and fine motor skills. Jennifer Burk and Cheryl Fox (2009) explain that music can be highly motivating, have a calming and relaxing effect, make children feel better about themselves, and help children manage pain and stressful situations. Music can also help encourage socialization, self-expression, communication, and motor development (Burk & Fox, 2009).

Music Therapy

As music and rhythm have been proven to effect the development of the fetus, infants, children, adolescents, and adults, music therapy has become increasingly popular as a means of helping different ailments and/or impairments in these populations. According to the American Music Therapy Association, music therapy entails a relationship between a therapist and a patient in order to attend to physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals (1999). A Music Therapist attends to these needs by assessing the strengths and needs of each client followed by providing singing, moving to, creating, and/or listening to music (American Music Therapy Association, 1999).

Through replication throughout different providers and populations, children who have special education needs and have undergone music therapy have exhibited positive outcomes that include "increased attention improved behavior, decreased self-stimulation, and enhanced auditory processing" (American Music Therapy Association). The American Music Therapy Association (1999) also states that students who have undergone music therapy experience "improved cognitive functioning, decreased agitation, increased socialization, improved receptive/ expressive language, successful and safe self-expression, and enhanced sensory-motor skills."

Singing

A wide range of therapists have examined the therapeutic effect that singing can have on the emotional and cognitive responses of the body and brain. According to Uhlig (2008), the voice is our closest instrument and gives us the opportunity to make contact with ourselves and our environment by giving us the ability to express how we feel through primary sounds like a spontaneous outburst of laughter, cry, scream, shout, or any other free sound of the human voice. According to Newham (1999):

> Since the voice is so intimately connected to the expression of feelings and ideas and is a primary channel through which we communicate who we are, voicework is often innately therapeutic (p. 16).

Burk and Fox (2009) stated that "music is a special language that often expresses feelings more intimately than words," and because of this, rhythm and melody can be used to help parents, caregivers, or clinicians establish relationships with the children they work with. Thus, even hearing one sing can be beneficial for nonverbal children and can help them form trusting relationships.

Playing an Instrument

Aside from singing, researchers across different fields and studies have also analyzed how playing an instrument can create improvements in the cognitive performances of the brain and physical coordination of the body. In one study performed by Stanford University, two training groups of nonmusician children were used: one group participated in musical training, while another group participated in painting. It was found that musical training improved reading skills and influenced the amplitude of specific components of the brain elicited in speech tasks (Moreno, Marques, Santos, Santos, Castro, & Besson, 2009). Finally, other studies show that musical training improves basic auditory analysis, sound segmentation and blending (Lamb & Gregory, 1993), and writing performance in children with and without developmental dyslexia (Kast, Meyer, Vogeli, Gross, & Jancke, 2007).

According to Wigram, Pedersen, and Blonde (2002), the appreciation and performance of music requires usage of the auditory system, visual system, somatic motor and sensory systems, and memory.

> For example, auditory imagery, the ability to hear with one's 'inner ear' the music you want to play or compose, is highly developed in musicians. Memory is also well developed, and you cannot undertake a simple musical task without using memory. The enjoyment of any listener in hearing a piece of music is conditioned by his/her memories of similar melodic and harmonic passages. Sensory motor and visual memories are particularly necessary for performance (Wigram et al., 2002, p. 53).

Playing an instrument also requires physical coordination, and each instrument can zone in on different coordination skills. For example, playing a guitar requires fine motor skills and controlling of finger and hand movements. Hitting a drum requires gross motor skills in order to extend the arm. Playing an instrument can encourage others to improve and/or use their physical skills.

Interactive Singing and Instrument Playing

Most studies have combined interactive instrument playing and interactive singing to stimulate children and enhance their learning. In several different studies analyzed by Ronna Kaplan (2005), music therapists used interactive instrument playing and interactive singing to promote social interaction and communication between themselves and the clients who had an autism spectrum disorder or between these clients and their peers. In these same studies, instrument and singing instruction were given by music therapists to their clients in order to improve cognitive skills. Afterward, surveys with open-ended

questions were given to parents/caregivers of the clients and comments included reference to "increased confidence," "increased bilateral coordination," and "improved auditory attention, greatly improving expressive ability" (Kaplan, 2005). The combined effects of playing an instrument and singing may be utilized to enhance the positive cognitive and emotional results of music.

Rhythm

Simply listening to music and/or feeling rhythms have also been analyzed throughout different studies. "In a physical way, music causes pressure waves that are felt bodily" (Wigram et al., 2002, p. 57). Many different studies have been performed to analyze the relationships between rhythm in songs and the rhythms of the body. This relationship includes "changes in pulse rate, respiration, galvanic skin responses, and muscle activity in response to a variety of musical and nonmusical stimuli" (Sutton, 2002, p. 42). In one study conducted by Harrer and Harrer (as cited in Sutton, 2002), it was noted that changes in speed of a piece of music could act as a pacemaker on the pulse rate, but even more important than changes in speed was the emotional involvement in the music.

Studies indicate rhythm is felt in the womb and it affects pre-natal development. About thirty weeks into pregnancy, babies give consistent responses to different types of sounds, respond to familiar sounds, and hear patterns in sounds. If a sound is repeated over and over, it will be recognized, and the fetus will be calmed (Burk & Fox, 2009). According to Burk and Fox (2009), babies hear their mother's heartbeat for nine months while in the womb, and there is evidence that shows babies have a central rhythm when they're born. The young embryo "hears the maternal heartbeat, blood circulation, and other nearby sounds, creating a high level of sound with a predominant rhythmic wooshing" (Bunt, 1994, p. 76). Studies show that children who are exposed to a lot of prenatal musical stimulation go on to develop highly organized and articulate speech (Bunt, 1994). Therefore, awareness of tempo variation and rhythm seem to be an integral part of the life of an infant.

Infants also have physiological responses to lullabies, a female's voice, and live musical presentations in the forms of "heart rate, hemoglobin oxygen saturation in red blood cells, caloric intake, respiration rate, and weight gain following birth (greater daily gain when exposed to musical stimulation, in both male and female, premature and full-term babies)" (Schneck & Berger, 2006, p. 242). Since rhythm and tempo are such a natural part of the human life cycle, certain rhythmic patterns can drive or excite the motor cortex to coordinate movement and thereby help those who suffer from Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, or other related diseases (Devinsky, Schachter, & Pacia, 2005).

Methodology

My research methods were based around the literature review, which analyzed three active parts of music therapy: singing, playing an instrument, and rhythm. While working as an intern at Saint Andrew, I interacted with the children through

interactive singing, interactive music playing, and interactive musical games. I observed their reactions to these activities and examined the effects they had on the children. I wanted to see whether the basic musical skills I had could be used to help the individual children I worked with at the orphanage.

I spent time with each child doing interactive singing, interactive instrument playing, and playing musical games/activities for about an hour daily. Since giving of choices and working collaboratively can help empower children and make them feel as though they are in a safe environment (Sutton, 2002), the methods were very flexible and depended on the needs of the children and the specific musical activities they enjoyed. This was done in large part because the children did not get to make very many of their own choices. We would sometimes end up singing, dancing to a children's song, playing an instrument, or doing any interactive musical activity the child wished to explore. However, I tried to focus the activity on the needs of each child and my own prior experience with them.

Interactive Singing

For the interactive singing portion, songs were sung that highlight frequently addressed concepts in early childhood curriculums. These include up-down concepts, rhyming, numbers, body parts, and animals (Goossens', Crain, & Elder, 1992). For example, there are children's songs that focus on up-down concepts such as *Itsy Bitsy Spider* and *I'm a Little Teapot*. There are also songs that incorporate numbers like *Five Little Ducks* and songs that help illustrate different visual concepts such as *Old MacDonald*. However, I used Romanian children's songs that had concepts similar to those in English. These songs were gathered from the Internet, previous interns who had worked in Romania, a Romanian language professor, and native Romanians. For example, there is a Romanian children's song entitled *Un Elefantii*, which is similar to *Five Little Ducks* in that it focuses on incorporating numbers. *Cap, Umeri, Genunci, si Degete,* focuses on up down concepts and body parts. If the child was nonverbal, then another form of interactive musical activity would be chosen; I would sing to the child, or vocalization activities using pitch and rhythm (rather than actual words) would be implemented.

Interactive Instrument Playing

For the interactive instrument playing activities, I took my guitar and played it with the children. During this time, I would either encourage the child to play and/or strum the guitar with me, or I would have the child play different toy instruments while I played the guitar (i.e., maracas, tambourine, etc). I strove to teach the children some musical skills such as following a rhythm, playing in synch with another instrument, and so forth.

Musical Games

For the musical activities/games, we used flash cards (in place of song boards), dancing, and games with rhythm, etc. Flash cards involved symbols to heighten student involvement and to allow children who are functionally nonspeaking to

participate actively in sing-a-long (Goossens' et al., 1992). When using the flash cards as substitutes for song boards, the child would see a picture that correlated to the words of a song and would be encouraged to grab the flashcard when the words of the song talked about the picture contained on the flashcard. Activities that incorporate rhythm included dancing to a song, clapping to fast or slow songs, playing copycat games such as *Do as I'm Doing* and so forth. The musical games/ activities with the children were meant to be flexible; if the child did not enjoy or was incapable of singing/playing an instrument, another activity that incorporated music could be utilized.

Analysis of Case Studies

While carrying out these activities with the children, I observed their reactions. My notes were meant to explore and observe the effects of interactive musical activities on the children. I observed their responses to the music by analyzing body language, eye contact, interaction, language-use, and any other actions I perceived. I took notes of my interactions with the children on a daily basis and kept these expanded notes on locked, password-protected files in my computer. At the end of my internship experience, I did a qualitative analysis of my notes and combined my analyses into specific case studies.

There are many limitations to my research. The largest limitation is that I am not a music therapist but simply have musical experience. Another major limitation is that many of the children have more than one disability. Many, if not all, of the children exhibit some type of attachment disorder, along with several other physiological, cognitive, social, and/or emotional impairments. Also, since there are many children who do not receive quality time with caregivers, the effects of the interactive musical activities may be linked with the one-on-one attention and care that is given to them, rather than a response to music. Other major variables include language barriers and the time I was away from the children.

Case Studies Results

At the onset of my experience within the orphanage, I simply observed the children in order to better understand their strengths and weaknesses and the activities I should implement. Around my fifth week working with the children, I began to introduce interactive musical activities. Depending on the conditions in the room (i.e., number of children, number of workers, children who needed more attention on a particular day, etc), I would work with the children individually in a separate room or do group sessions in the main room. Responses to interactive singing, interactive instrument playing, and rhythmic activities demonstrated deeper emotional, social, and/or physical connections. Stronger engagement in the children was exemplified in the following case studies through increased interactivity, building a relationship with a caregiver, making eye contact, increased oral expression and/or communication, and motor movement responses. The names of the children have been changed in order to maintain confidentiality.

Increased Interactivity

One of the children illustrated a deeper social connection through increased interactivity. Gheorghe had autism, and like many children with autism spectrum disorders, he had a hard time readily engaging with others in social situations (Kim et al., 2009). At random moments he would come up to me and hug me, climb in my lap, or grab my hand, but this contact would last but a moment and Gheorghe would go back to his usual behaviors. He did not make eye-contact very often, and he would often rock himself back and forth while sitting on the floor, or chew on toys. Gheorghe could not speak and hardly ever made sounds, except when crying. However, Gheorghe thoroughly loved the guitar. When I would play the guitar with him, his actions usually consisted of two things. He would either dance back and forth in rhythmic motions, or he would smile, come up, and run his fingers along the guitar as if he was strumming it.

The greatest change came when I would do vocal exchanges with Gheorghe. Whenever I had the chance, I would sing different vowel sounds or noises with Gheorghe and exaggerate the shape of my mouth. I would sing ah-ah-ah, o-o-o, ee-ee-ee, and so forth, and he would get a big smile on his face. He would get excited when I did this, and in many instances he would mimic the sounds and shapes that I made with my mouth. Not only would Gheorghe respond with eye-contact and by smiling or laughing, but he would also join in and initiate further interaction. As found by Kim et al., in cases with children with autism, Gheorghe increased his affective facial expressions, compliant response (complying with my initiation of interaction), and interactivity during shared music making (2009).

Building a Relationship with a Caregiver

Another child exemplified a stronger social connection by forming a relationship with a caregiver and minimizing hostile behavior. When I first began working with Andrea, she was very hostile. She would bite me every chance she got, throw toys at me and other children, punch or hit me, steal my hair ties, or pull my hair. She exhibited extreme institutionalized behaviors and would act out constantly. She was very reluctant to speak, and could not do so without extreme difficulty. We both struggled in our relationships with one another. One day I went up to Andrea *before* she had exhibited hostile or aggressive behaviors and began singing to her. I sang, "Andrea, Andrea, *te iubesc* Andrea" (Andrea, Andrea, I love you Andrea), after which I would kiss her cheek. I repeated this song several times, and each time I would follow it with a kiss. The rest of the day she came up to me, and rather than acting out, she would say, "Andrea" and then point to her cheek several times to indicate she wanted me to sing the song to her once again. To my surprise, when I next saw her, and as time went on, Andrea continued to remember that song and would run up to me and say "Andrea" and point to her cheek. Over time, she also stopped biting, hitting, and acting out toward me (although she continued to do this to other children). Interactive singing helped Andrea learn to recognize and remember me and helped Andrea and I form a relationship with one another. These things ultimately led to the discontinuance in Andrea's hostile behaviors toward me.

Increased Oral Expression/Communication

Cognitive and social responses were also illustrated through increased verbalization. Dora would only verbalize a handful of words when I first met her. She could understand everything the orphanage workers told her, but she was almost completely nonverbal. She would only say "Ana," "capul," "nasul," and "Alex." However, even though she knew these words, she would hardly ever say them, and she would not repeat new words I tried to teach her (such as numbers or body parts). It was difficult to get her to come out of her shell and speak at all. I decided to focus on playing the guitar with her and try to get her to sing along in order to get her to utilize more sounds and to vocalize.

I took Dora into a side room in the orphanage where I would play the guitar and sing with her one-on-one almost every day. As I played, I would try to get her to sing words or vowel sounds along with me. However, she was very resistant; she would take the guitar from me and strum it, or look at the flash cards with the numbers or pictures we were singing about. I continued to play and sing with her daily. As time went on, she began singing "do" from the song, *Do Re Mi*, when I would touch her mouth and ask her to sing with her "gura" (mouth) as we played the guitar. The last couple of weeks I worked with Dora, she truly began to blossom and express herself orally. She completely surprised me one day when she began singing, "Ba Ba Bamba" as I played *La Bamba* on the guitar. She would sing the words/sounds "Ba Ba Bamba" all of the time without even being asked to sing. Also, I was playing guitar chords with her, and she began singing, "ah-ah-ah, ee-ee-ee, o-o-o" all on her own without my asking her. The last day I saw her, she counted to five aloud (with my help). Dora went from rarely vocalizing any noises or words to singing the chorus of a song, singing three vowel sounds, and counting out loud to five.

Physical Responses

Stronger connections were also manifest through physical indicators. Florica had epilepsy and cerebral palsy. She was extremely stiff and would always have her arms curled up at the elbows and pulled up close to her body. I would often try to hold her hands and gently pull on them in order to get Florica to stretch. However, she would resist, and I did not want to hurt her, so I would stop. One day I discovered that if I would hold her and dance with her along to the music that was playing in the room, I could get her to stretch her arms out with greater ease. I would hold both of her hands and then slowly get her to stretch them out by swinging them back and forth to the music in rhythmic motions. I would do this every chance I got. Although I never got her to completely straighten out her arms, I was able to get her to stretch them out much farther when I would try and "dance" with her or try and get her to do it in a rhythmic motion.

Conclusion

Numerous studies have shown that singing and dancing can be therapeutic, because they come from the inside and connect with the outer world, thereby helping

expression (sometimes when words cannot). Reviews of literature demonstrate that playing an instrument can help speech tasks and physical coordination. Also, some research suggests rhythmic activities can increase physical and emotional awareness. Specific research performed at the Saint Andrew Placement Center in Iaşi, Romania, suggests that children with disabilities and/or institutionalized behaviors reacted to interactive singing, interactive instrument playing, and rhythmic activities such as dancing, by forming stronger emotional, social, and physical connections. These deeper forms of engagement seemed to be exemplified through increased interactivity, forming a relationship with a caregiver, increased oral expression and communication, and motor movement responses.

REFERENCES

American Music Therapy Association. (1999). "Autism Spectrum Disorders: Music Therapy research and evidence-based practice support," retrieved 9 January 2009, from www.musictherapy.org

Bunt, L. (1994). *MusicTherapy: An art beyond words*. New York: Routledge.

Burk, J., & Fox C. (2009, April). "Building relationships through music," paper presented at the Conference on Communication Disorders, Las Cruces, NM.

Devinsky, O., Schachter, S., & Pacia, S. (2005). *Complementary and Alternative Therapies for Epilepsy*. New York: Demos Medical Publishing.

Goossens', C., Crain, S. S., & Elder, P. (1992). *Engineering the classroom environment for interactive symbolic communication: Eighteen months to five years developmentally*. Birmingham, AL: Southeast Augmentative Communication Conference Publications.

Heart to Heart International Association. "A brief history of Romania," retrieved 20 February 2009, from http://www.heart2heartint.org/index.php?page=rohistory&menu=romania

Kaplan, R. S. (2005). "An analysis of music therapy program goals & outcomes for clients with diagnoses on the autism spectrum," *Journal of Music Therapy*, 42, 2–19.

Kast, M., Meyer, M., Vogeli, C., Gross, M., & Jancke, L. (2007). "Computer-based multisensory learning in children with developmental dyslexia," *Restorative Neurology and Neuroscience*, 25, 355–69.

Kim, J., Wigram, T., & Gold, C. (2009). "Emotional, motivational and interpersonal responsiveness of children with autism in improvisational music therapy," *Autism*, 13(4), 389–409.

Lamb, S. J., & Gregory, A. H. (1993). "The relationship between music and reading in beginning readers," *Educational Psychology*, 13, 13–27

Moreno, S., Marques, C., Santos, A., Santos, M., Castro, S. L., & Besson, M. (2009). "Musical training influences linguistic abilities in eight-year-old children: more evidence for brain plasticity," *Cerebral Cortex*, 19(3), 712–23.

Newham, P. (1999). *Using voice and movement in therapy*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Schneck, D. J., & Berger, D. S. (2006). *The music effect: Music physiology and clinical applications*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Sutton, J. P. (2002). *Music, music therapy and trauma: International perspectives*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Uhlig, S. (2008). "Aesthetic experience and transformation in music therapy," *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 8(3).

Wigram, T., Pedersen, I. N., & Blonde, L. O. (2002). *A comprehensive guide to music therapy: Theory, clinical practice, research and training*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Uniform of Hope: Reciprocity and Volunteerism in East London's High Transmission Area Project

by Amy Smart, public health education

South Africa currently has more HIV-positive individuals than any other country in the world (Eastern Cape Department of Health 2001). High Transmission Area Project (HTA) is an NGO in the Eastern Cape currently working to alleviate this severe health burden. HTA utilizes volunteers or peer health educators to educate the community on the importance of HIV prevention. The purpose of this research is to evaluate HTA's reciprocal relationship with their peer educators to determine if HTA could recruit more volunteers. An ethnographic study was conducted, using observation and in-depth interviews, to collect data with HTA's peer educators in Duncan Village. I found the peer educator's motives for volunteering extended beyond their monthly stipend. In fact, many peer educators were willing to continue working for less or no pay at all, enabling HTA to recruit and retain more volunteers.

Introduction

This research was conducted in East London, located in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, where an estimated one-in-five people of reproductive age are infected with HIV/AIDS. There is growing concern about the disappointing outcomes of many HIV/AIDS management projects in South Africa. One reason offered for these disappointments is that many projects are imposed by outside professionals and experts onto passive communities, failing to resonate with the world views and perceived needs and interests of their "targets" (Campbell et al. 2004).

Within this context there is a growing emphasis on the role of community health volunteers in running prevention programs, providing home-based care, and increasing access and adherence to antiretroviral therapy, especially where there is a dramatic scarcity of health workers (Campbell et al. 2008).

This research focused on the East London High Transmission Area Project (HTA) and their volunteers who educate the community about HIV and the problems surrounding the disease. The organization is centered in the township of Duncan Village that has extremely high rates of infection and disease transmission. Despite the confirmed success of HTA's outreaches in Duncan Village, the organization continues to struggle for funding and is limited on the number of volunteers they can recruit.

In the study reported in this paper, the theory of reciprocal exchange was applied to understand how reciprocity influences volunteer involvement among HTA's peer educators. Using observations and in-depth interviews to collect data with peer educators in Duncan Village, I found the peer educator's motives for volunteering extend beyond their monthly stipend and many are willing to continue working for

less or no pay at all. The study provides empirical data that can be used to increase volunteer recruitment and perhaps extend HTA outreaches to additional areas of high-transmission throughout the Eastern Cape, thereby improving health and socio-economic outcomes for families, communities, and the people of South Africa.

Background

HTA has been successful in increasing knowledge and condom use in areas with a high rate of new sexual partnership formation. Given the name "high-transmission areas," these areas contain sites such as bars or taxi stands, where people with high rates of partner acquisition meet to form new sexual partnerships. A new sexual partnership is an important event contributing to the continuation of the epidemic, because a newly infected individual is highly infectious and more likely to spread the virus to another person. HTA identifies these sites where intervention is most needed. This program is unique in that it goes beyond the stigmatizing approach of focusing on high-risk groups and clinic-based populations to encompass all determinants of risk, including poverty, unemployment, alcohol consumption, high population mobility, urbanization, high male/female ratio, and lack of health care services.

The identification of specific clusters of sites results in effective interventions within high-transmission areas. After identifying these sites, HTA allocates peer health educators and prevention materials toward these clusters of sites. The objectives of the intervention are to improve education about HIV, increase awareness about STI treatment, and improve condom availability and distribution in areas where new sexual partnerships are formed. The peer educators carried out a total of thirty-five outreach sessions per week in Duncan Village and were responsible for both education and condom distribution.

Duncan Village, a township located in the city of East London, was established in the early 1950s to serve as a residential area for black people under, what was at the time, the Republic of South Africa's racial segregation policies. During that time, housing consisted of small, four-roomed, "matchbox" houses; the conditions of poverty, overcrowding, high mobility, and high levels of unemployment associated with the township environment have been associated with a higher risk of HIV transmission (Anderson 2003).

Duncan village is a sprawling township with a population well over 100,000. Informal shacks greatly outnumber the original matchbox houses. Occupants of the informal shacks are either from the overcrowded four-roomed formal housing structures or have come from the rural areas of Transkei in search of work and a better life.

According to HTA, the prevalence of HIV may be highest in Duncan Village in the East London area. Therefore, Duncan Village is considered a strategic area for preventing further transmission of HIV and STIs. The rate of unemployment in Duncan Village is very high, estimated at more than 50 percent. Poverty is rampant and, as a consequence, crime rates are very high. Streets are crowded with people, including those seeking *shebeens*, a high-transmission area where alcoholic beverages are sold

out of households. Young children often play in the streets during times when they are supposed to be at school.

A large percentage of the population in Duncan Village consists of children, teenagers, and young adults. These young age groups will be the most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS in the coming years. Therefore, due to these factors, HTA focuses on educating men and women in Duncan village about the dangers of unsafe sexual practices in hopes of reducing the transmission of the virus from Duncan Village to other areas.

Through innovative techniques such as singing, role-playing, and outreach visits, peer educators spread messages about using condoms, getting frequent STI check-ups, and reducing the number of sexual partners one has. Twelve peer educators recruited from the community comprise the main component of the intervention in Duncan Village.

Most outreach sessions began by peer educators walking throughout the township looking for a group of at least three people outside, waiting in line at the clinic, or at a shebeen. After finding a small group of people, the peer educators begin singing educational songs they have written themselves on topics such as prevention, transmission, stigmas, or related diseases. The singing is very effective for attracting more Duncan Village residents from nearby areas. After the group grows to about ten people, the peer educators begin the outreach by introducing HTA and their purpose in the community.

Throughout the outreach, each peer educator has a specific job and then rotates jobs for each outreach. After one peer educator introduces the group, three others perform a role-play depicting common reactions among families or friends when someone is tested HIV positive or diagnosed with an STI. The role-play portrays stigmas and other problems associated with the disease. Quickly following the role-play, another peer educator begins the discussion with the audience by asking questions about the role-play. When observing these discussions, it is easy to see that oftentimes the audience does not understand the situation that had been depicted, or they miss the educational aspect of it.

The discussion continues with a series of questions and answers from both sides, but it is necessary for the peer educator facilitating the discussion to wrap it up with what was taught using only facts about the disease; that way the audience leaves knowing the truth behind HIV. After the discussion, the peer educators continue singing and then proceed with a condom demonstration done by another peer educator. This peer educator demonstrates the proper use of a female condom using a rubber model of a vagina while explaining the significance the condom has in HIV prevention. Lastly, the peer educators distribute both male and female condoms throughout the audience and then move on to the next area in Duncan Village to perform another outreach.

Many areas in East London outside of Duncan Village are considered high-transmission areas and could greatly benefit from HTA's peer health education program. However, the number of HTA peer educators is limited due to its lack of funding. Currently, HTA is struggling to sustain their supporters. This has been a consistent concern since the organization began in 2001. Project Support Group (PSG) of

South Africa provided funds for HTA uniforms since HTA began in 2001, but in 2008 PSG was unable to continue providing these funds. Uniforms consist of polo shirts with the HTA logo and HIV ribbon, jeans, shoes, as well as jackets and sweaters also with the HTA logo. In addition to PSG funding, HTA had been receiving funding from the South African LOTTO, that paid for staff salaries, office rental, stationary, furniture, a car, and other necessary office materials. These funds have also been dwindling or absent in recent months. Fortunately, the Eastern Cape Province Department of Health continues to pay a monthly stipend to each of the peer health educators.

Proper funding is a problem for many NGOs across the Eastern Cape. These organizations are forced to compete for support, and many do not survive. While HTA is still receiving funds from the Eastern Cape Province Department of Health, they have set the limit of only fifty-five peer educators covering four townships in East London. With a total of four site coordinators and three zone leaders, there are about twelve peer educators in each township, with Duncan Village being their primary focus. HTA's site coordinators and zone leaders are being paid the same stipend as the other peer educators even though they oversee other peer educators and work closely with the HTA staff. They receive a monthly stipend of R750 each month, roughly equivalent to $95.

Peer educators begin work at eight in the morning, stopping their community outreaches at about two in the afternoon when they sit down together to perform self-evaluations for the day. Many times they work six to seven days a week performing duties beyond what is required of them. The meager stipend is less than a sufficient amount to live off of each month; therefore, the peer educators are considered volunteers. While the stipend is the only form of income most peer educators have, many are willing to work for less or even no pay at all.

The Study

In this study, the theory of reciprocal exchange was applied to understand how reciprocity influences volunteer involvement among HTA's peer educators. The concept of reciprocity has been viewed as being particularly useful for explaining relationships between clients and health visitors, between family members and friends, and within informal helping networks. However, reciprocity has been viewed as being less important for explaining voluntary helping as opposed to informal helping. Therefore, the concept of "give and take," or reciprocity, for aiding the understanding of voluntary helping is an under-explored area (Merrell 2000).

In a place such as East London, with such high rates of unemployment and poverty, one might wonder what would motivate a volunteer to keep working without sufficient income. In the study "You Don't Do it for Nothing: Women's Experiences of Volunteering in Two Well Woman Clinics," the author explored volunteers' experience of working together with paid workers in direct client care. Their data revealed that participants described their experiences of working at the clinics not only in terms of what they gave but also in terms of what they gained (Merrell 2000).

Volunteer work is most commonly viewed as virtuous, only performed by those who have a selfless concern for others or an altruistic drive. However, altruistic mo-

tives may be over-reported because of the social desirability bias (Smith 1981). Altruistic motives for being involved in voluntary work are viewed more favorably by society than egotistical motives, such as furthering one's career or gaining skills. Personal development gains include acquiring knowledge and skills, raising self-esteem, acquiring a self-identity, and gaining confidence (Merrell 2000). There is no evidence to justify a belief in some "absolute" form of human altruism, where the motivation for an action is without any form of selfishness. Only "relative" altruism exists.

To explain further, no matter how altruistic an act appears, there is invariably, so far as is known, some important degree of psychic reward or intrinsic satisfaction derived for one's self from the performance or anticipated performance of the act (Harman 1982).

This concept of relative altruism notably coincides with generalized reciprocity, taken from Sahlins' (1965) spectrum of reciprocities, and is made up of generalized, balanced, and negative reciprocity. When combining the spectrum of reciprocities with Wentowski's (1981) concepts of immediate and deferred balanced reciprocity, a model is developed such as the one depicted below:

Generalized Reciprocity	Balanced Reciprocity		Negative Reciprocity
	Immediate	Deferred	

Generalized Reciprocity

Generalized reciprocity refers to transactions that are assumed altruistic, transactions on the line of assistance are given, and if possible and necessary, assistance is returned. This is a one-sided exchange, where there is a lack of expectation of a direct material return. A counter-obligation can still exist, but the counter is not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality; the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite (Sahlins 1965).

Balanced Reciprocity

Balanced reciprocity refers to a direct exchange, where the reciprocation is the customary equivalent of the thing received without delay. Much of what is considered gift-exchange, payments, or trade belong to the genre of balanced reciprocity. The material side of the transaction is at least as critical as the social; there is more or less precise reckoning, as the things given must be covered within some short term (Sahlins 1965). Exchange is a two-way flow.

If goods or services are inappropriately or inadequately reciprocated, this may lead to dissatisfaction with the relationships between the participants. Unless a kind of balance is achieved between giving and taking, this can adversely affect the experience of volunteering from a volunteer's perspective. At its extreme this may lead to volunteers no longer sustaining their involvement with the facilities (Merrell 2000).

Wentowski (1981) makes a distinction in relation to the time period for exchange. He explains that unlike balanced or immediate reciprocity, individuals can indicate a desire to expand involvement by using the deferred exchange strategy, where there is no stipulation as to the amount and time period when reciprocation is expected. Deferred reciprocity invites further commitment and compels the participants to trust one another. At certain times, individuals may put more into the system than they are receiving, and at other times may withdraw more than they are contributing. However, individuals can assess each other's potential as long-term helpers by the kind of behavior demonstrated during deferred exchanges. If one side of a relationship invests and receives inappropriately small returns, that person may come to feel that the relationship provides poor future potential as a dependable source of help.

Negative Reciprocity

Negative reciprocity is the attempt to get something for nothing without any form of punishment. This is also a one-sided exchange and a matter of self-interest, where reciprocation is dependent upon pressure or guile. Negative reciprocity is the most impersonal sort of exchange. The participants confront each other as opposed interests, each looking to gain at the other's expense. An example of negative reciprocity come from a study mentioned earlier in this review (Merrell 2000), where their data showed that there was a feeling that some volunteers "used" the clinics, or in other words, some volunteers gained more from the clinics than the clinics gained from them. Feelings of disappointment were expressed when volunteers completed the training and then either did not volunteer at the clinics at all or only volunteered at the clinics for a few sessions.

Data Collection

Following the model of Sahlins' (1965) spectrum of reciprocities when colleting data and analyzing results provided a reciprocal basis for the study. For example, an interview question such as, "Tell me about the relationships you have formed with other volunteers or staff within the organization" illustrates deferred balanced reciprocal exchange within the organization. By discovering and analyzing reciprocal exchange between HTA and their peer educators, it was my hope to determine if HTA's peer educator's motives extend beyond their monthly stipend, therefore enabling HTA to recruit and retain more volunteers.

Interviews with HTA's peer educators took place in HTA's training buildings in Duncan Village. These interviews focused on motivations for volunteering in accordance with Sahlins' (1965) spectrum of reciprocities. As the primary researcher for this study, I also accompanied the peer educators during outreaches and worked with the HTA program director in the office. Field notes were used to document these observations. Invaluable data obtained from observation were used primarily to illuminate data collected from interviews and give a better understanding of reciprocity between HTA staff and their peer health educators.

Data Analysis

Data analysis identified multiple themes among HTA's peer health educators that explain why their reciprocal relationship with HTA as an organization motivates them to continue with their volunteer work. Four main themes emerged from the research: financial benefits, knowledge, relationships, and an overall drive to help their peers in the community.

Every peer health educator who was interviewed mentioned a form of financial benefit they received from HTA through volunteering. All of HTA's peer educators are from the townships and are living in poverty themselves. HTA does a good job of reciprocating volunteer work through as many incentives as funding will allow. Peer educators enjoy small food vouchers at the end of the year and sharing vegetables from a garden that was planted next to HTA's training buildings in Duncan Village. My interviews also revealed how the peer educators benefit from working within walking distance from their homes, since it saves on taxi-fare each day.

The free uniform given to each peer educator appeared to be one of the biggest financial incentives. Made up of an HTA polo shirt, jeans, and shoes, the peer educators have a full outfit they can wear each day. The uniforms are especially beneficial to those peer educators who do not have enough money to afford proper clothes. When money needs to go to more important expenses, the uniform gives the peer educator confidence and a sense of purpose. One peer educator said when answering the question of why she wanted to volunteer with HTA:

> I saw peer educators in the community, and I didn't know about the rewards. I wanted to do what they were doing in the community. It was enough to see the peer health educators wearing the uniform, because they were looking very good and neat, so I wanted to wear that uniform.

Apart from financial benefits the peer educators received from HTA, many volunteers were grateful for the amount of knowledge they received. While becoming a peer educator, they are required to undergo free training. Here the peer educators learn the truth about HIV and other opportunistic infections. One peer educator said:

> I didn't know much about HIV, but when I did the training, I understood the dangers of HIV and also the transmission. Now I know HIV is not transmitted by having sex only, and I know about other things like touching the blood and breastfeeding. I took the information I learned in the training back to the community.

In addition to educating the community, peer educators teach their friends and family who are also at risk of becoming infected or spreading HIV. Another peer educator reported in an interview that he had a change of behavior after the training. "Before the training with HTA, I would point fingers at people with HIV and suspect people who might be sick. Then I stopped that and my friends did, too."

Through their volunteer work and performing outreaches in Duncan Village, these young people learn skills such as talking in front of others and leading a discussion with a group. After each outreach, the peer educators sit down together and practice the evaluation process by discussing how the day's discussions went. Some

peer educators begin working with HTA when they are illiterate. HTA staff and other peer educators help these individuals learn how to write their name and sign log sheets that must be filled out daily. In addition, these skills and the experience of working with HTA teaches the peer educators important job skills such as respect, discipline, and punctuality. The HTA staff is also helpful in writing recommendations and supporting peer educators if they choose to get another job.

Relationships among HTA peer educators and staff were strong. In many interviews, the peer educators said HTA is like their family. "HTA is my home. Other peer educators are my brothers and sisters. The staff [are] our parents. We joke around and have a good relationship." Another peer educator said, "There is no gossip. We support each other, because we are close friends, and we know how to keep information to ourselves." I also witnessed the close relationship between peer educators and staff at HTA. It was easy to see from the beginning that they all relied on each other and treated one another as family. Another peer educator said in an interview:

> Here we are brothers and sisters, because we have friendships where we invest our money. We share our money with a group of other peer educators like R200, and then we take rounds for when we get money back. We call it *umkulelo*. That's how we trust each other and make our friendships.

This form of trust is very important in reciprocal exchange. According to Sahlins, relationships between two reciprocal parties falls in the category of deferred balanced exchange. Without trust and a sense of belonging, the reciprocal relationship does not exist, and that leads to dissatisfaction on one or both sides.

Lastly, and possibly most significantly, is that there was not a single peer educator that was without an overall drive to help their peers in the community. When asking in interviews why they decided to become a peer educator, almost every volunteer referred to wanting to help people in their community. In an interview, one volunteer said:

> Now that HTA was introduced in Duncan Village to me, I decided to be a peer educator not only because there was a lack of jobs, and it gave me something to do every day, but I like to educate the community about HIV and AIDS.

Another volunteer said:

> I didn't know HTA was doing these prevention programs before I joined, but I saw HTA around my area where I stay in Duncan Village and then I saw them working and helping the community and that's why I decided to join.

Simply wanting to serve the community is considered generalized reciprocity where it can easily be assumed altruistic. However, while there is a lack of expectation of a direct material return, peer educators can see the benefits of helping those around them. One peer educator said:

> I have two sisters who died of HIV. I need to stay here, so I can teach my family and the community about the dangers and prevention of HIV. I want to see the drop of HIV prevalence in my own community and see the statistics of AIDS and STI's drop, too.

Similarly, another peer educator lost family members and wants to prevent the same thing from happening to others.

> I decided to be a peer educator, because my peers are dying of HIV. I have had family members die of HIV, so it affects me, and there are many people in my area that I want to educate about HIV and other related diseases.

The data gives insights into reciprocity and exchange between HTA and the peer educators. However, the study was not without limitations. First, the fact that volunteers were recruited from only one NGO in East London, South Africa, means the experiences of volunteers working in other organizations or settings were not captured. An exploration of the experiences of volunteers in other settings might offer more insight into reciprocal exchange between volunteers and their associated organizations. Second, only experiences relating to reciprocity and motivation among volunteers are explored in this paper.

The study extends knowledge on motivation and reciprocal exchange among volunteers in general and provides new insight on reciprocity among peer educators working for East London's High Transmission Area Project in South Africa. Consistent with Merrell's (2000) theory, volunteers often describe their experiences of working with organizations not only in terms of what they give but also in terms of what they get in return.

Currently, HTA is receiving funds from the Eastern Cape Province Department of Health that provides the monthly stipend for each of the peer educators. However, HTA's other supporters have been unable to sustain their funds. While it is fortunate that HTA is still receiving the monthly stipend, they are limited to only fifty-five peer educators responsible for covering four townships in East London.

In addition to being limited on the number of peer educators the Department of Health will pay for, they could also decide to discontinue paying the monthly stipend at any time. While this is unlikely considering HTA's enormous success in educating the community and slowing the spread of HIV to other areas, it is important to establish more sustainable means of retaining volunteers and recruiting more to reach larger populations.

The findings from this study reveal HTA's balanced reciprocal exchange between their peer educators is sufficient enough that many peer educators will work for less pay each month or with no pay at all. One volunteer said:

> I would stay, because I stayed for a year without a stipend, and I stayed because I know that HIV and other related diseases are killing people in the community, and they need HTA.

However, HTA must at least maintain or enhance their side of the exchange (incentives, training, etc.) in order to maintain balance if the stipend is lowered. Therefore, if each of the fifty-five peer educators was paid less or not at all, HTA must be able to recruit and retain more volunteers solely based on balanced reciprocal exchange.

However, due to extreme levels of poverty in East London, for some peer educators the monthly stipend obtained from working with HTA is the only form of income

for the peer educator and their family. HTA will need to consider these situations and accordingly decide what measures to take.

Conclusion

Without giving it much thought, it is clear HTA peer educators see themselves in a win-win situation. Not only do they have an opportunity to better themselves, but they also take satisfaction in knowing that to the extent each is able, they work to stop the spread of HIV. "I was motivated by my family, because they said one day I would achieve something. So, I told myself that I would achieve something even if there was no stipend."

Growing up undereducated and in extreme poverty, these volunteers still clearly see their society realistically. They are well aware that life could be better, and for much of the world life is better. Despite the crime, joblessness, and disease that surrounds them, each finds a reason to get up and get moving each day. They are at present their community's best defense.

REFERENCES

Anderson, R. (2003) "Transmission dynamics of sexually transmitted infections," in Holmes, K., et al. eds. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. Third ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Boyle, J.S. (1994) "Styles of ethnography," in *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods* (158–85) (Morse, J.M. ed.), Sage, London.

Campbell, C., Foulis, C.A. (2004) "Creating contexts for effective home-based care of people dying of AIDS in South Africa," *Curationis*, 27 (3), 5–14.

Campbell, C., Gibbs, A., Maimane, S., Nair, Y. (2008) "Hearing community voices: grassroots perceptions of an intervention to support health volunteers in South Africa," *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS* 5(4), 162–77.

Eastern Cape Department of Health (2001) National HIV and syphilis sero-positive survey in South Africa. Retrieved on 28 July 2009 from www.doh.gov.za.

Harman, J. (1982) *Volunteerism in the Eighties*. University Press of America, Inc. U.S.

Merrell, J. (2000) "You Don't Do it for Nothing: Women's Experiences of Volunteering in Two Community Well Woman Clinics," *Health and Social Care in the Community* 8 (1): 31–9.

Sahlins, M.B. (1965) "On the sociology of primitive exchange," in: Banton, M. (ed.) *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology*. A.S.A Monograph, No 1. Tavistock, London.

Smith, D.H. (1981) "Altruism, volunteers, and volunteerism," *Journal of Voluntary Action Research* 10, 21–36.

Wentowski, G.J. (1981) "Reciprocity and the coping strategies of older people: cultural dimensions of network building," *The Gerontologist* 21 (6), 600–09.