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REDEMOCRATIZING AMERICA:
A Comparative Case Study Analysis of Two East Tennessee
Community Organizations

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Rebecca Lynn Rader

December 1992

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Jim and Janet Rader, whose efforts made it possible for me to attend graduate school, to my husband, Jeffrey Price, who has changed my life, and to Dr. Sherry Cable who has been not only my academic advisor, but also a treasured friend.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the research and writing of this thesis, I received encouragement, advise, and guidance from many people. First, I wish to thank, Dr. John Gaventa, the chair of my thesis, whose guidance and patience were invaluable to me in completing the research project. Second, Dr. Sherry Cable, who served as the unofficial co-chair of my thesis, played an essential role as editor and motivator. Third, I wish to thank Dr. Donald Clelland, a committee member, for his valuable comments.

I would like to thank my friends and family for their support and encouragement. I also express my gratitude to the members of both organizations in the case study for their openness and willingness to work with me on this research project.

I would also like to recognize the Department of Sociology for its financial support which made this research project possible.

ABSTRACT

There is a wide spread and growing movement across the country to redemocratize the United States by encouraging citizens to become actively involved in the political system. Instead of working through the existing political structure, this movement is taking place at a grassroots, community level. Communities are organizing to address community concerns and to affect social change. The underlying theme of the organizations is to increase citizen participation in the political process.

The literature addressing community organizing implies that there is one method to grassroots organizing. Yet, in east Tennessee there are two such groups, Alliance for a Better Tomorrow and Save Our Cumberland Mountains, which are perceived by each other and others as being radically different in their organizing styles.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify what the styles of organizing are that these organizations employ and to determine if the two approaches are significantly different. A comparative analysis is achieved by utilizing a multiple-case study research design. A combination of participant observation, interviews, and document analysis provided a comprehensive view of the two groups.

The study revealed that ABT and SOCM do employ significantly different styles of community organizing.

These differences are not solely based on organizational structure or preferred strategies and tactics. Instead, these particular choices reflect the ideological differences in the organizations. The real difference between the groups then is due to ABT and SOCM's varying concepts of social change. Their definitions and implementations of strategies to affect social change --- empowering the individual or creating a powerful organization, consequently reveal their emphasis on democratic participation. This thesis provides an unique case study of grassroots organizing and empowerment in this region and argues for more effort in this area by social scientists.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

In the 1960's observers in the United States witnessed the births of a number of important social movements, including the peace, the civil rights, the environmental, the women's, and the student movement. These movements had a common goal of working toward a more just and democratic political system for their constituency (Evans and Boyte, 1986).

Since the turn of the century with increased urbanization and bureaucratization of government, citizen involvement in the political system has gradually shifted from the community to an impersonal state and national government (Evans and Boyte, 1986; and Greider, 1992).

In reaction to this alienation from politics, many citizens disenfranchised with the system have developed community organizations in order to change local situations. This represents a new broader movement which has its roots in the social movements of the 1960's and incorporates the special interest focus of the movements into a broader goal of redemocratizing the United States political system. Boggs (1986) also has identified these widespread social change community organizations as "new" social movements because they are not founded predominately on labor issues (such as pre-1960's movements) nor do they seem to be

isolated events. Rather, they form part of a larger movement of political transformation.

Instead of relying on the government to solve social problems, citizens are organizing at the grassroots, community level in order to reform or change the system. Although this trend is not limited to the United States - it can be observed in various types of political systems in developing as well as industrialized countries (Krauss, 1989) - I will limit the discussion in this thesis to the movement within the United States.

In Western nations the trend toward grassroots social change organizations has been attributed to various factors. Boggs (1986) and Touraine (1981) argue that the growth of these grassroots groups is due to the "crisis of industrial culture". Similarly, Miller points to the concentration of wealth and power "in the hands of too few people" (1986:132). Others like Delgado (1986) believe the growth is due to the conservative swing in the government during the 1980's. Underlying all of the reasons for the growth in community organizations, however, seems to be the loss of belief that the government is working in the community's best interest.

Citizens have realized that the most powerful people and groups are the ones that are "best organized" (Kahn, 1982:3). They are finding power in broad based, multi-issue community organizations. To many, single issue organizing

is no longer viewed as the appropriate approach to organizing. In order to survive wins and losses and to affect real social change, community organizers have learned that multi-issue organizing is preferable (Biklen, 1983; IAF 50 Years Organizing for Change, 1990; and Pierce, 1984).

There are two such multi-issue community organizations within the east Tennessee area that I have chosen to study: Alliance for a Better Tomorrow (ABT), a post-Alinsky group, and Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM). ABT is part of the 52 year old national network of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) which targets urban areas for organizing while SOCM is a 20 year old rural east Tennessee based group.

In part because of the eclectic nature of the redemocratization movement, there is no single theory to community organizing. The organizations develop around diverse issues such as: community and economic development, environmental protection, education reform, social and economic justice, and neighborhood preservation issues. In addition, they may be: conflict or consensus oriented; proactive or reactive; radical, liberal or conservative. Their membership base and structural choices vary also. Consequently, approaches and strategies to organizing are specific to each community.

Due to this diversity, it has been difficult for researchers to devise a comprehensive theory of organizing

for social change. Some have tried to categorize types of community organizing, but each is lacking in some way. The literature concerning organizing usually fits into one of four categories: single case studies which focus on one organization's internal style of organizing, yet do not provide enough comparative information to generalize; typologies of styles of organizing which are generally independent of other typologies; general literature concerning new populism, community politics, and the history of social movements and community organizing; or the instructional organizing literature which seems to focus greatly on Alinskism or the IAF style. I integrated this literature in order to describe, explain, and analyze two approaches to local community organizing.

After reviewing some community organizing literature one might come to the conclusion that any successful organization (defined in terms of surviving more than a few years and are referred to as successful in the public sector and within the field of community organizing) would employ the same basic principles of community organizing. Yet, this is not entirely the case. ABT and SOCM are perceived by each other and by others in the area as employing radically different organizing styles.

In this study I compare the ABT and SOCM to explore and distinguish if in fact these two styles are substantially different. I answer the question: Are these differences a

choice of the organizational structure or membership base of the organization, or are they significant ideological differences? In addition, I identify strengths and weaknesses of both models which may provide a new perspective for members within ABT and SOCM as well as others interested in the field of community organizing.

In the second chapter, I review the diverse set of literature concerning community organizing. In the process I set up a framework for analyzing differences in ABT's and SOCM's styles of organizing. The third chapter describes the thesis research design and specifies the variables used in analysis.

The following two chapters, four and five, are the case studies of ABT and SOCM respectively. Chapter six contains an analysis of the two styles of organizing which addresses the questions: 1) What are the styles of organizing that these groups employ? 2) Are the two styles of organizing significantly different or are the perceived differences simply superficial differences in location, strategies, and history?

The final chapter summarizes the study and illustrates the relevance of the study within the larger body of community organizing literature. Suggestions for further research are also discussed.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review a diverse body of literature concerning community organizing. No single, comprehensive theory of organizing has been developed which explains the many approaches and strategies of community organizing. Although the literature disagrees on what constitutes true community organizing and which particular organizing strategies should be employed to induce social change, it does center around one main theme. Grassroots, community organizing is identified as the best means to increase citizens' participation in the political system and achieve social change in the country's least politically and economically powerful communities.

A number of authors within the community organizing field have focussed their research not on the theories of organizing, but on identifying and categorizing approaches to organizing and types of organizations. Perlman and Fisher have concentrated much of their work on this categorization.

Janice Perlman (1976) conducted a study of 60 grassroots organizations across the states. She collected data on the, "origins, goals, issues, tactics, constituency, size, organizational structure (formal and informal), enemies and allies, victories and defeats, ideology, and

prospects for the future" (6). The data was collected by interviewing some members, the leaders, the staff, and the organizers. Perlman substantiated her findings with secondary data such as newspaper articles and newsletters.

From this study, Perlman developed a typology of grassroots organizations. The two main types of organizations were direct-action/pressure groups and the electoral focused groups. A final miscellaneous category was include for "alternative institutions." This included Community Development Corporations (CDC) which are largely funded by federal and foundation monies and are focused on community services and economic development.

Perlman's study is often cited in community organizing literature and may be helpful in distinguishing the focus of an organization. However, illustrating differences in social change strategies such as an emphasis on direct action, voting and lobbying, or economic development does not necessarily help in distinguishing different styles of grassroots organizing within the direct action group or groups which use a combination of strategies.

Robert Fisher (1984b) contends that we are still in the second wave of neighborhood organizing which was launched during the 1960's in response to an urban crisis. The first began in the early part of the century in response to the growth of the urban industrialized community. In studying these two periods in history, Fisher has also developed a

typology of community organizing. He placed organizations into three categories: social work, political activist, and neighborhood maintenance. These categories are formed on the basis of how each approach applies seven concepts: the concept of community, the community's problem, the socio-economic composition of the group, the role of the organizer, the role of the citizens of the community or members in the organization, the strategy for change, and the goals (1984a).

The first approach is social work which is similar to structural functionalism. The community is seen as a disorganized social organism. The outside organizer's job is to gain support from institutions and help the lower class residents regain community pride. Fisher notes that this type of organizing is usually not successful in promoting grassroots democracy because of the recipient status of the members in the organization.

The second approach, political activism, similar to conflict theory. In this model, the community is in conflict with the power-holding institutions. The organizer's job is to help the lower working class residents identify the power inequities and mobilize to gain power and create alternative institutions. Because of the more active role that the members play in the organization, Fisher believes that this model is the key to democratic participation.

The third approach is neighborhood maintenance. In this model, the residents of a middle to upper class neighborhood form their own organization and develop their own organizer in order to maintain or revitalize their community. The main goal is to maintain the status quo and improve property values (1984b). Fisher's three approaches, however, are not mutually exclusive. An organization may not conform exactly to Fisher's typologies.

Piven and Cloward (1977) are concerned with the transformation of social change movements into social change organizations. Through a historical analysis of four social movements, the Unemployed Workers', the Industrial Workers', the Civil Rights, and the Welfare Rights, they identify the movements' successes and mistakes in affecting social change. Taking a conflict perspective on the social change, Piven and Cloward (1977) equate the social change protester with the lower working class who are fighting to change conditions which oppress them. Unlike, much of the literature, they view the organizer as a factor in the failure of these groups to affect real change. Instead of serving to further mobilize the group of protesting citizens, the organizer often killed the movement's momentum and caused people to lose interest by concentrating on building an organization. Piven and Cloward contend that the organizer may have even help indirectly to maintain the status quo:

...organizers tended to work against disruption because, in their search for resources to maintain their organizations, they were driven inexorably to elites, and to the tangible and symbolic supports that elites could provide. Elites conferred these resources because they understood that it was organization-building, not disruption, that organizers were about (1977:xxii).

Consequently, for a social change organization to survive, the group must become less dependent on the elites for funding and support, and become more critical of them.

According to Piven and Cloward (1977), power does not come from poor people's organizations, but the power to change existing situations develops from the action of mass protests. Although individual leaders and organizers of formal citizens' organizations may gain some access to address the power elites, only the disruption to the system caused by mass protest affects real change in the system.

Krauss (1989) attempts to combine critical political theory at the macro level of analysis and analysis of the community at the micro level. Krauss discusses the role that the state plays in grassroots struggles. She explains that the liberal democratic state has developed a conflict of interests in that it promotes economic growth and private enterprise while at the same time it also assumes the responsibility of maintaining a democratic state. Because the state in the 1930's increased its involvement in the economy, it offset this by increasing its role in maintaining the public good. In this way the government could maintain its neutral appearance. Krauss explains that

through a number of processes the state is able to maintain this conflicting agenda by institutionally decreasing active democratic participation by limiting voting to certain time periods, increasing bureaucratization, and professionalizing the political system. Krauss writes, "The state becomes more and more an arena of political struggle, which threatens its legitimacy, as ordinary citizens begin to see the ways in which the state favors the needs of the private economy over the needs of the private citizen" (1989:232).

Through this process the citizen gains an increasingly critical approach to the analysis of his situation and finally begins to make a connection between his own personal experience and the broader application. To Krauss this important process of consciousness raising is the microanalytic level that must be linked to the structural macroanalysis. Krauss contends that this conflict in political participation is important to the continued democratic government.

Boyte (1984, 1989), Boyte, Booth, and Max (1986) and Heskin (1991) concentrate their discussion on the concept of community within the new populism movement. Boyte, Booth, and Max explain that "The key to our future lies in new forms of social organization" (1986:26). These new forms of organization can be achieved through the democratic citizens movement sweeping through the country. The challenge to this progressive populist movement is finding common ground

to bring diverse groups of people together based on shared values and interests. Although a number of organizations are mentioned as part of this new movement, the authors devote particular attention to the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the Citizen Action models of organizing. Both are viewed as being especially successful at aiding in the restoration of the democratic vision through direct action organizing and in the case of Citizen Action, electoral tactics.

Heskin (1991) frames his discussion of community around a case study of a community development corporation (CDC) in Santa Monica, California. The government bought houses in a low income community in order to build a freeway, but later the project failed. The CDC developed in reaction to the failure. The citizens that had previously inhabited the housing felt that they should have the first chance at buying the property. The local governments decided that they should have no such privilege.

From the case study Heskin (1991) begins to develop a typology of different approaches to organizing by identifying three primary groups in the CDC which vie for control. Heskin illuminates the groups' differences in ideologies which motivate their actions. The three primary groups he identifies are the populists, the pluralists, and the clientelist. The three groups are compared on their views and approach to power, change, ethnicity, race,

gender, and class.

The populist leadership viewed power as a tool to create a space for open, public discussion. Empowerment was then achieved through freedom from the oppression of the dominant class which was represented by the government. The pluralist's goal, however, was to acquire some of power that the government controlled. This class struggle was an ongoing battle to have their views represented in the decision making process. The clientelist's view of power to create change was largely based on a traditional Latin American patron system. Their goal was to secure enough resources to improve their quality of life. Changing an oppressive class system or having their concerns represented in government was not a consideration.

Greider (1992) examines the role of democracy in our current political system. He believes that there is a discrepancy between the real and ideal culture in our country pertaining to democracy. The United States is held up to the world as the great democratic state, yet in reality our government does not always embrace the concept of democratic participation by its citizens. In fact, participation by citizens is commonly seen as impractical in today's society. Greider, believes that to save the United States from the destructive course in which it is headed, we must bridge the gap between individual citizens and the larger political system.

The vehicle for change is grassroots citizens organizations. Greider writes:

A democratic insurgency does not begin with ideas, as intellectuals presume, or even with great political leaders who seize the moment. It originates among the ordinary people who find the will to engage themselves with their surrounding reality and to question the conflict between what they are told and what they see and experience (1992:410).

He portrays the IAF affiliate organizations as a model for this democratic insurgency. The IAF model is idealized as the "democratic promise." The key to the formation of the IAF democratic citizen's organizations is that they build on the concept of developing public relationships at the community level. Instead of relying on electoral politics, citizens help determine the political agenda in their communities by bringing community concerns into an arena of public debate. Greider believes these organizations are the vehicle for political social change at the national level as well as the local level. Nationally he envisions the independent IAF organizations collectively confronting the existing government by bringing concerns of "real people" into public debate instead of "abstract policies" (1992:238).

Biklen (1983) attempted to write a comprehensive book on "community organizing theory and practice." In it he addresses the concept of power, and examines the differences between community organizing, charity, professionalism, and self-help groups. Although Biklen provides a great deal of

information on differences and similarities in the social change models and explains specific organizing strategies such as lobbying and action research, it is unclear what he does consider community organizing. For instance, Biklen categorizes Perlman's (1976) grassroots organizations into the same broad self-help category that he places Alcoholics Anonymous. It is implicitly implied that there are different styles of community organizing, yet the reader remains unclear as to what they are and on what basis one determines these styles.

According to most of these typologies of community organizing, ABT and SOCM would be classified together, yet they are viewed by each other and others as two distinct models of organizing. Much of this has to do with the organizations' theoretical roots.

Two of the most influential theorists within community organizing are Saul Alinsky (1972) and Si Kahn (1970, 1982). Alinsky has provided a guide for urban community organizing while Kahn has provided a guide for rural community organizing.

Alinsky

To Alinsky (1972) the world is composed of: the Haves, the elites; the Have-a-Little, Want Mores, the middle-class; and the Have-Nots, the poor and powerless. Alinsky does not

specifically address where his constituency is to come from. His approach to community organizing assumes a disgruntled proportion of society. These are the Have-Nots of society. Implicit in his model is an already existing constituency; therefore, all that is required of the organizer is to organize.

The ultimate goal is to organize the Have-Nots in order for them to gain power, which Alinsky defines as the "...ability, whether physical, mental, or moral, to act..." (Alinsky, 1972:50). According to Alinsky (1972), when people believe that they have no power to make changes, they do not think about how they can make changes. With organization comes power and with power comes the ability to define issues and propose solutions. Alinsky was affected by Clifford Shaw's model which held that:

...communities held within themselves the resources and capacities to solve problems like juvenile delinquency: the professional's appropriate role was more of a catalyst and facilitator than problem solver. Thus Shaw sought to create efforts based on local groups and leadership rather than outside case workers (Boyte, 1989:55).

Although Alinsky deemed Shaw's concept of citizen based control appropriate in community organizing, he stressed that the organizer was "the key actor" (Horwitt, 1989). Alinsky believed in radical means by which to correct unjust situations which were threatening American democracy. His revolution began within the existing political system. He writes:

We will start with the system because there is no other place to start from except political lunacy. It is most important for those of us who want revolutionary change to understand that revolution must be preceded by reformation. To assume that a political revolution can survive without the supporting base of a popular reformation is to ask for the impossible in politics (1972:xxi).

Alinsky did not advocate interaction with the power structure. He advised organizers to develop a stance on an issue and then promote it as the only morally correct way to view the situation, while at the same time promoting the opposition's view as corrupt and immoral (Betten and Austin, 1990). Alinsky contended that "The job of the organizer is to maneuver and bait the establishment so that it will publicly attack him [the organizer] as the 'dangerous enemy'" (1972:100). With this manipulative move, the organizer aligns him/herself with the community of Have-Nots.

Alinsky (1972) maintained that ideologies are the basis of all revolutions, yet he did not promote an ideological base for social change. Belief in an ideology can lead to reliance on a dogma. Dogmas inevitably limit creativity, freedom, and change. Therefore, ideologies should be broad in order not to fall into the dogma trap. The way the group decides to achieve its goals is dependent not only on the particular situation, but also on the group.

Choosing strategies to achieve goals ultimately leads to the question of ethics. Concerning this choice, Alinsky explains, "[the person making the choice] asks of ends only

whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of means, only whether they will work" (1972:24). To Alinsky each situation had to be evaluated individually. There were no strict rules about how far an organizer should go to achieve the organization's goals. Even though he did present eleven guidelines of ethics concerning strategies, he ended the discussion by asking the organizer to him/herself, "Does this particular end justify this particular means?" (Alinsky, 1972:47). Therefore any means can ultimately be justified in an effort to achieve ones goals and to gain power.

Industrial Areas Foundation

The Industrial Areas Foundation was founded in 1940 by Saul Alinsky in an effort to promote community organizing. However, after Alinsky's death the IAF was transformed into a post-Alinsky organization because of its departure from some of Alinsky's beliefs.

According to the IAF model, the organizer is to use existing organized groups to build a community-wide organization. These groups are primarily churches along with some unions and neighborhood associations. Building a political organization using a church based value system and an inter-racial membership base, is a unique model in community organizing (Horwitt, 1989). Most organizational

structures rely on the community's homogeneity for solidarity, but the IAF model tries to achieve heterogeneous solidarity.

The IAF follows a populist model of organizing which contends that, "a few elite institutions, mainly corporations, have the dominant power in communities; politicians (and to some extent other professionals) occupy intermediate 'power positions'; and most citizens have little voice or say" (Boyte, 1989:136). However, Boyte (1989) explains that unlike other models, the IAF sees power as being relational. There are no powerless people. The power wielder can be affected by the way that the people react to the power wielder's actions. People always have some means or resources to use and therefore have power. The IAF has incorporated the idea of developing the local leadership into their style of organizing. Although winning the issue is still important, getting the citizens involved in the action and learning from it has become an important goal of the IAF network.

With the growth of the centralization of wealth and power into the hands of the corporate elite and the Reagan administration cutbacks in the 1980's, white, middle-class citizens began getting involved in these community organizations. Organizing for power was no longer limited to the poor and working class. Also at this time the IAF began to view self-financing as important to the staying

power of the organization --- the people needed to feel ownership in their organization. This was accomplished by having the groups that joined the organization pay dues as well as the traditional local fund-raising projects (Boyte, 1989).

After Ed Chambers became the IAF executive director in 1972 a number of policy changes were made (Boyte, 1989). First, "...IAF groups shifted from simply protest organizations to the assumption of some responsibility for policy initiation and what they call 'governance'" (Boyte, 1989:99). Second, although Alinsky had believed that women could not be organizers, Chambers encouraged the involvement and advancement of women within the IAF network. Third, Chambers tried to change the organizer's role into a secure, well-paying occupation. Other new policies included researching every issue, practicing for the actions or meetings, and the development of the value-based organizing approach and schools of public life. These schools are a fundamental part of IAF organizing.

It not only teaches people specific political details about legislation, issues, and the skills to cooperate and act together effectively, it also adds a dynamic intellectual life involving a practical theory of action, employing and constantly developing concepts like power, mediating institutions, public life, the meaning and management of time, judgment, imagination, and self-interest. Such concepts, in turn, are tied to discussion of the democratic and religious values and traditions which inform and frame their efforts---justice, concern for the poor, the dignity of the person, diversity, participation, heritage (Boyte, 1989:82).

IAF organizers are to follow the "iron rule of organizing" which is "Never do anything for people that they can do for themselves" (Boyte, 1989:92,140). Consequently, the role of the organizer is to be a catalyst. He/she is responsible for, "encouraging others to take on increasing responsibility for getting people to meetings, planning strategy, doing research, and training itself" (Boyte, 1989:91).

Delgado makes an important distinction between organizations and movements as viewed by the IAF.

In the IAF lexicon, 'organization' is everything, while 'movement' is almost a bad word. As Ed Chambers explains it, a movement relies on charismatic leaders, other people's money, indiscriminate recruitment, amateur devotion, and 'Flash, image, consciousness raising.' An organization is built on dues, collective leadership, army-like regularity, systematic daily work, professionalism, and playing to win. Movements are ideological. In the Alinsky model of an organization, people act democratically in their own self-interest, and ideology is irrelevant" (1986:32).

Critiquing Alinsky-style organizing, Boyte (1989) explains that there are four main limits to IAF organizing. First, in the initial stages of development there is dependence on highly trained organizers. Second, the organizations are most successful when they have built a strong religious network. Third, because of the confrontational style and time commitment, these groups have problems attracting suburbanites. Forth, key issues to IAF

organizing have been housing, education, and drugs. Other important issues have not been emphasized, such as AIDS, environmental issues, comparable worth, child care, disability rights, and foreign policy issues

Kahn

Kahn (1970) defines community not as a certain geographical unit, but as the group of people that the organizer is working with personally. This may be because his focus of organizing is on poor southern rural people. According to Kahn, there are logistic problems in rural organizing, both in travel and contact. However, the advantage to rural organizing is that there tends to be a stronger sense of tradition to build on and people are less "distracted" by other events than people in the city (1982: 15).

The trained organizer comes from outside the community. It is the organizer who believes that there is a problem and so decides to go into the community. He/she sees the problem as power inequities within the community. According to Kahn, the cause of these inequities ultimately stems from economic development decisions. It is the organizer's goal then to gain power for the poor as a group. Even though the organizer identifies the problem before he/she comes into the community, Kahn stresses communication with the people

to establish a rapport and to gain an understanding of their view of the problem. Kahn writes, "An organizer's own goal should be to help people in the community achieve the things they see as important to their own lives" (1970:22).

According to Kahn, "knowing your enemy" is just as vital to being able to effectively plan strategies as well as to gain tolerance within the power structure (1970:7).

Kahn stresses the importance of learning and developing organizing skills within the group. The people must help plan, strategize, and make decisions in the organization for it to be effective. Eventually the organizer will leave the community. It should be his/her intent to develop leadership within the community group and to teach the organizing skills to the leaders in the group. The principal goal of organizing then is participation. According to Kahn, the organizer attempts to engage people who risk little by becoming involved and the people whose income is not dependent on the power structure for potential leaders in the group. Therefore, the organizer's job is both to broaden the power structure so that it will include the otherwise powerless and also to "consolidat[e] the power of the poor within their community" (1970:39). Kahn explains:

Today, it is understood that significant economic and political influence by the poor is an absolute necessity if their lives are to be changed for the better in any measurable degree. To achieve this kind of power, the organizer must work towards

developing broadly based poor people's organizations....in which leadership is widely shared, and in which the organizer plays as small a role as possible (1970:33-34).

Kahn utilizes a method similar to urban block organizing as a strategy for organizing in rural areas. He believes that it is easier for people to get involved when they are in a small meeting as compared to a large meeting. Kahn also stresses that the organizer should assess each situation and develop a unique plan of action for each community. It is important not to become dependent on a specific set of tenets.

Although Kahn does maintain that it will be different in the future, he writes, "...only in a very few rural areas are organizing efforts going on that are directed at political coalitions between blacks and poor whites or between Chicanos and poor whites, or other coalitions of minority groups" (1970, 82).

Southern Empowerment Project

Although, not directly affiliated with Si Kahn, Southern Empowerment Project follows in the same tradition of rural community organizing. Through the efforts of SOCM, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC), Tennessee Valley Energy Coalition (TVEC), Solutions of Issues of Concern to Knoxvilleians (SICK), and the Charlotte Organizing Project

(CHOP) from North Carolina, SEP was created in 1987. The purpose of SEP was to "recruit and train community organizers" (White, 1991:4). There was a need to develop an organizing training center regionally based in the south. SEP not only represents these groups' philosophy of organizing, but also serves as a network and resource base for the independent citizen's organizations to share organizing strategies and experiences, and to work on common issues. SEP describes their style of training:

While we recognize the importance of other approaches to social change we focus on this one.

There's a variety of training styles, but the use of discussion, problem solving and role plays is heavily encouraged. Ours is not a lecture based program.

As a result, the training sessions are very participatory and non-authoritarian; we believe that everyone has some experience and ideas to contribute. That participation helps give interns a feeling of ownership ("Southern Empowerment Project's Educational Philosophy & Practice," n.d.).

This participatory style of training is reflective of the style of organizing SEP promotes. Organizers are taught how to identify social problem and develop them into workable issues in which direct action strategies are employed. However, it is stressed that members always have the decision making authority. It is the organizers job to teach members these skills in analyzing problems and selecting strategies to challenge the status quo. Yet, members live in the community and therefore are the ones that know the most appropriate approach to change.

Ultimately, the organizer serves to ask key questions to help stimulate discussion and analysis of the situation. But, "There is a delicate balance between knowing who makes the decisions, [and]...still asking challenging questions so members understand the implications of their choices" ("Southern Empowerment Project's Educational Philosophy & Practice," n.d.).

SEP trainings are six weeks long. During that time, trainees travel to three different states: Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The school takes advantage of incorporating their member organizations into the training. Part of the training includes a week internship with one of the organizations where the trainees work directly with organizers and receive first-hand experience. The strategy of hosting sections of the six week training at different member organizations provides real-life models of organizing to the trainees. In addition: "...the trainees...learn that although the landscape may differ, the issues and the battle plans are the same" (Wilkinson, March 8, 1990).

Organizational Variables

After reviewing the literature and making some initial observations of both organizations, I identified a set of organizational variables. These variables are used to

compare and analyze the two organizations. The variables are subdivided into two groups depending upon their emphasis on either organizational structure (structural variables) or organizational strategies (strategical variables).

The structural variables include: 1) geographic location: Does a rural or urban location make a significant difference in the organization's style of organizing? 2) membership base: How is the membership base formed, by recruiting individuals, forming chapters, or organizing existing institutions? 3) membership roles: What role does the organizer play in relation to the members? What positions do the members hold in the organization? Who has the decision making authority? 4) funding: How does the organization raise funds, through foundation grants, dues, or internal fundraising? 5) socioeconomic composition: Is the organization predominately homogeneous or heterogenous especially gender, race, and age? and 6) networks: Is the organization affiliated with any other organizations on a temporary or permanent basis? Why does the organization choose to work with or not to work with other groups?

Similarly, the strategical variables include: 1) goals: What is the purpose of organizing? Is the organization trying to create broad social change or is the social change issue based? 2) strategies: Does the organization employ confrontational, negotiating, lobbying, or direct action strategies? What is the difference between the

organization's internal development strategies and its external development strategies? 3) issues: How and on what basis are issues chosen? 4) focus of social change: Does the organization focus on changing situations locally, in the state, regionally, or nationally? 5) reaction to social problems: Does the organization take a proactive or reactive stance on problems in the community? and 6) image: What is the organization's self-image? What image does the organization portray to the public?

With this organizational framework, I am able to identify pattern in the variables which may indicate differences in styles of organizing.

Chapter III

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to achieve a comprehensive view of the two organizations, ABT and SOCM, a qualitative research approach was used. The field research methods employed for the comparative multiple-case study consisted of participant observation, interviews, and document research. The construct validity of the case studies was improved through triangulation in which multiple sources of data from different time periods are utilized (Denzin, 1977; Dooley, 1990; Yin, 1989). Triangulation both decreased the chance of bias and increased the reliability of the study.

My case studies are both descriptive and exploratory (Yin, 1989). Because little has been published on either organization it is important to explain how each functions. These descriptions then set the stage for an analysis of how the organizations differ in their styles of organizing.

Participant Observation

Most data were collected through participant observation. Participant observation consists of gathering data through close observation of the daily lives of people. The object is to gain access as an insider, enabling the researcher to understand the group's own unique perspective

and to acquire information that would otherwise be inaccessible to an outsider (Becker, 1958; Jorgensen, 1989; and Whyte, 1984).

The researcher's role as participant varies, however, according to the subject studied. The researcher chooses the most appropriate role of participant observer which will allow her to acquire the most information with the least researcher influence. These roles follow a continuum from a covert nature to an overt and actively participating nature. From this continuum Gold (1969) created a typology of four different observer roles. They range from the complete participant where the researcher covertly assumes the role of an active member, to the complete observer where the researcher covertly assumes the role of an unintrusive bystander. Between these two extremes, Gold identifies two roles where the researcher's identity is known to the group, participant-as-observer and observer-as-participant respectively. Researchers disagree as to which role is the most ethical and productive.

In this study, I assumed a relatively informal, passive role (Schwartz and Schwartz, 1955) or, as Gold (1969) refers to it, a participant-as-observer role. I chose this role for three reasons. First, both organizations were accessible to the general public so there was no need to operate covertly. Second, I believed that I would obtain more information about the organizations if members were

aware of my role. They could inform me about unscheduled meetings, changes in time or place of meetings, or other such unpublicized events or information. Third, the majority of the meetings in both organizations were small enough that a non-participating outsider would be obvious and a hinderance to the natural course of events. This decision is supported by other researchers such as Burgess who wrote, "This dual role of outsider and insider gives the participant observer greater opportunity of being able to 'step in and out' of the setting under study; to participate and to reflect on the data that is gathered during participation" (Burgess, 1982:48).

Many of the organizations' members did know that I was doing research and in many cases I was encouraged to participate in activities. However, in order to decrease my influence on group processes and reduce any potential conflict between the two groups being studied, I avoided actively participating in either organization.

Participant observation refers not only to the role of the researcher, but also to the type of data collected. Field notes are a unique part of the participant observation technique. They contain descriptions of specific actions, informal interviews in the field, and the time and place of the observation, as well as inferences, impressions, questions, and interpretations made by the researcher (Babbie, 1989; Burgess, 1982). The goal is to obtain as

much detailed information of the event as possible. This provides the researcher with data to support her theoretical propositions and to develop new theoretical propositions suggested by the data.

I began my participant observations in the Fall of 1990 and continued through the Spring of 1992. I collected field notes at numerous meetings, workshops, public hearings, and protest marches (see Appendix A). While in the field, I was usually able to take notes at the site. However, in some situations it was impractical for me to carry a note pad and in other situations I was advised by one of my key informants that taking notes during the meeting might make people uncomfortable. In those situations I sat down after the event and wrote down as much information as possible about it. All field notes were later recorded and elaborated upon in a computer file.

Interviews

Another source of information was personal interviews, in which the researcher engages in a verbal exchange with a person in order to obtain information and opinions (Maccoby and Maccoby, 1954). I interviewed both staff and members with differing roles in the two organizations. As Becker explains, "...an individual's statements and descriptions of events are made from a perspective which is a function of

his position in the group...." (1958:655). Therefore, by acquiring different perspectives on the organization and events, I strengthened the validity of my case study.

Initially, I used a key informant in each group to gain access to potential interviewees. The interviewees then suggested other members that I should meet. I also acquired interviews by becoming familiar with active members through my frequent attendance at meetings. Consequently, those interviewed are the members most actively involved in the organizations.

The interview guide (see Appendix B) used for both organizations promoted a focused interview while still allowing the respondent to expound more fully on topics of interest and/or expertise. The interviews lasted from an hour to an hour and a half. Because of the length of the interviews and the open-ended nature of the responses, I recorded the interviews unless the participant did not feel comfortable with it. Later the interviews were transcribed and coded for general areas of interest or categories of research variables.

Document Research

Document research was my third method of data collection. Yin states, "For case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment

evidence from other sources" (1989:86). However, both Yin (1989) and Kidder and Judd (1986) warn the researcher to be aware that the purposes and objectives of the documents were other than those of the researcher's study. Therefore the researcher must remain aware of the document's intended function while analyzing the information.

The documents obtained in this study included: newsletters, handouts/flyers, academic papers, unpublished manuscripts, previously video taped interviews, and newspaper articles. The type of documents I used differed for the two organizations. For example, SOCM has a monthly newsletter and receives relatively little media attention, while ABT does not have a newsletter but their activities are often covered in the local newspaper.

Through my key informants I was also able to obtain materials such as SOCM board meeting packets which give background information about the topics to be discussed and voted upon and working issue research papers. Both organizations employ the strategy of researching social problems that may be developed into issues. The research commonly takes the form of an academic type research paper. All such materials were examined for relevant information and coded accordingly.

Analysis

Based both on concepts from the community organizing literature and personal observations, I have identified a set of organizational variables which are the basis of my comparative analysis. These variables are subdivided into two categories: structural variables and strategical variables. The structural variables I distinguish are: geographic location, membership base, membership roles, funding, socio-economic composition, and network affiliations. The strategical variables I distinguish are: goals, external and internal; organizational strategies, external and internal; issues selection; focus of social change (local, regional, state, national, international); reaction to social problems (reactive, proactive); and image, self and public.

Through identifying these variables in interviews, field notes, and documents I was able to see patterns within the data. This laid the groundwork for the comparative analysis of the two styles of organizing.

Summary of Research Design

The research strategy I utilized was a qualitative multiple-case study. Three methods of collecting data were incorporated into the design: participant observation,

interviews, and document analysis. Each method has weaknesses and strengths, but the strengths of each serves to check the biases of the other methods. Therefore, employing multiple methodologies in collecting the research data significantly strengthened both the validity and reliability of the study.

The two most difficult problems in my study regarding data collection were the conflicting schedules of the two organizations and the competition between them. The first problem was the most frustrating. Many times SOCM and ABT both had meetings or events scheduled for the same evening. Within SOCM itself, because of its chapter structure, there were schedule conflicts. Due to the distance between the meeting sites, I was often forced to choose between them.

The second problem was less serious, but had the potential to develop into a more serious one. After I had interacted with people in both organizations, I was frequently asked to compare the organizations regarding specific issues or strategies. Almost always, the question posed was based on the assumption that there were radical differences between the organizations. Members of each group thought their strategies were more appropriate or superior. I felt pressured to agree, but I tried to stay as neutral as possible. If I agreed with one group's position, the information may have gotten back to the other group whose members would then have viewed me as being biased.

Such a situation could have affected the quality of information that I received. On the other hand, if I disagreed with their position, I could have placed a barrier between me and a key informant which could also have affected the quality of information that I received. However, in order to maintain a relationship with the informant, I could not avoid the question posed. Therefore, I answered such questions as vaguely and as neutral as possible, sometimes using the excuse that I had not yet formed an opinion on the topic.

This potential for conflict was increased by the perceived ideological preference that I had for one group above the other. One organizer revealed to me "...I thought that you came with a prejudice because of your professor." This comment referred to the fact that the director of my thesis had been involved with one of the groups during its formation.

Case studies are known to be difficult in generalizing because of they are nonrandom and specific. The researcher cannot be assured or prove that ABT is a typical case of an IAF affiliate. Therefore, she cannot generalize the ABT case study to all IAF affiliates. Likewise, the researcher cannot be sure that the SOCM case study is representative of any other style of organizing which can be generalized to a larger population of grassroots community based organizations.

However, this study can be used to make analytic generalizations (Yin, 1989). Its purpose is to identify broad theoretical issues in community organizing such as role of the organizer, democratic participation, the socio-economic composition of the members, and the role of funding. The discussion of these issues within the context of the ABT and SOCM case studies may serve as an impetus for further research into possible differences in the ABT/IAF style of organizing and the SOCM/SEP style of organizing.

Chapter IV

ABT CASE STUDY

In late 1986 a group of churches, community associations and workers unions formed a sponsoring committee in an effort to raise money and support for a diverse coalition of Knox County community leaders and organizations. This coalition based on Judeo-Christian values of social justice would later be called the Alliance For a Better Tomorrow (ABT).

While working as assistant Southern director of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) in Knoxville, Tennessee, Jonathan Lange went to Brooklyn, New York to train with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and learn a different philosophy of organizing. It was an attempt by the union to broaden its area of concern into the community and thereby strengthen it.

Lange was already a professional organizer before moving to Knoxville in 1984. He was raised in Arizona, attended college in Minnesota, then attended graduate school in Arizona. In 1978 he moved to North Carolina and began organizing for the Brown Lung Association. After the mill workers won a settlement, Lange went to work for ACTWU in rural Virginia (Davis, Dec. 26, 1989).

ABT's first general assembly was held on May 16, 1988 at Clinton Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. Representatives of

twenty-two institutions attended, mostly churches and unions. The main purpose of the assembly was to publicly define ABT and discuss its goals for the future. One member stated, "That was the founding convention...we were officially ABT."

Structural Variables

ABT is a coalition of 25 member institutions from the Knoxville area. Individuals do not join ABT. Rather, institutions, organizations, and associations comprise the membership base. An individual may be recruited because he has been identified as a leader or potential leader in the community. However, the potential is not necessarily in the individual, but in the possibility that the person will bring in a new membership unit to ABT. The organizer explained, "We teach and I subscribe to the feeling that you really can only meet with leaders or potential leaders" which by his definition is, "someone who has followers." Therefore the hope is that the individual will promote ABT to his group which will eventually become a new member institution.

ABT is divided into two main working groups, the strategy team and the policy team. The purpose of the strategy team (the smaller of the two groups which usually consists of about fifteen to twenty members) is to take

perceived problems in the community and develop them into issues and campaigns for ABT. They then take their proposals to the policy team. Each member institution is represented on the ABT policy team which is similar to an executive board. This team has the authority to ratify strategy team proposals, form committees, propose budgets, and hire and fire organizers. Three people from each member institution attend the policy team meetings, but each institution receives only one vote. There are also four elected officers: two co-chairs, a secretary, and a treasurer. The co-chairs preside over the meetings, sign documents, and are the official spokespersons for ABT.

ABT's general assembly may convene twice a year, near the end of their fall and spring campaigns. The general assembly serves as a forum for the organization's general elections, ratification of policies or action plans, and budgets and bylaws proposed by the policy team, as well as serving as a organizational rally. However, the two seasonal assemblies differ in their emphases. The fall assembly is a public action in which ABT reports the accomplishments of their fall campaign and then describes what the spring campaign agenda will be. The spring assembly is different in that it is used to "wrap up" the year since ABT tends to be less active in the summer. They report the success of their campaign, vote for new officers, announce any grants they have received, and summarize the

status of ABT's other, secondary issue campaigns. In essence, the general assembly serves to publicly announce ABT's accomplishments and to pressure leaders and officials of the community to publicly support the group's agenda.

Another important component of ABT is its professional organizer. He or she is a person who is professionally trained by the IAF, organizes as a career, and is paid enough to support a family. Lange became the full time organizer of ABT in January of 1990. His duties include: planning meetings; evaluating meetings and actions; analyzing issues, strategies, and power in Knox County; assisting in fundraising; assisting with work on issues and actions; leading training sessions for members; and recruiting new member institutions. The organizer also acts as an official spokesperson for the group. However, the duty that both the organizer and members stress most often is the organizer's task of seeking out leaders in the community in order to recruit new member institutions. After recruiting the institution, his principle duty becomes the training of leaders in the ABT (based upon the IAF) philosophy of community organizing.

The organization is now in somewhat of a transition while Jonathan Lange prepares to step down as the ABT organizer. He is moving to organize another IAF affiliate group. Pat Bing, a very active church affiliated member and former officer will take over the role of organizer by

September. She attended an IAF ten day training and has worked closely with Lange to prepare for the change in roles from member to organizer.

In order to finance and form the initial base of the organization, the ABT sponsoring committee was able to raise approximately \$250,000. Since the formation of the organization, operating funds have been acquired both through membership dues and grants. However, unlike many organizations, individual members do not pay dues. Instead, ABT requires their member institutions to pay dues of 1% of their annual budget, but no more than a thousand dollars. In addition ABT receives grants from foundations, member churches and the associated national missions boards of those churches.

Although it is stressed that local people must pay for their own organization because it is the only way in which the members will take ownership in the organization, ABT to date has held no fundraising activities. Therefore, their internal funding or "hard" money is dependant upon the member institutions. In addition, ABT relies on grants or "soft" money to help support its organizing efforts in the community. This, however is seen as a weakness in the organization for three reasons. First, they believe that the members do not have the power in the organization if they do not bring the money to the organization. Second, the members do not truly control the organization's agenda

if they are reliant upon outside funding and therefore approval. Third, there is no guarantee of funding in the future. Consequently, their goal is to "build a base of institutions with an adequate dues base large enough that it can sustain the organization once the soft money is gone."

ABT's diversity in its socio-economic composition is unique in south east Tennessee. It has successfully joined together churches and unions, men and women, and blacks and whites in a coalition. Initially the union locals were a very strong influence in ABT, in part because Lange was associated with the ACTWU. This association strengthened ABT's base, but also caused difficulties in building the coalition. One member explained:

...actually, it would have been easier to start one in Knoxville in a lot of ways, had it been strictly the church. And had churches initiated it. Probably there would have been a lot more churches that would have gotten on board more quickly. But there's a lot of anti-union feeling in Knoxville, so people...in churches were reluctant to do something with the union. So that was a real factor in our early development. I don't think that it's as much of a factor now.

One reason that union association might not be as much of a factor right now is that the founding unions' participation in ABT has decreased since its inception. The decrease in participation may be due to the move of the ACTWU regional office from Knoxville to Atlanta and, in general, the poor economy which has caused a loss of jobs which forced the unions to focus internally.

While ABT was built around the concept of diversity of

its membership units and is committed to diversity, the organization now struggles to keep the union locals active and to recruit predominantly black institutions. The dominant force in the operations of the organization has become the primarily white churches. Commenting on weaknesses of ABT, one member said that it should, "Get the black culture churches. Because we just have two. And more communities."

Another area in which ABT lacks its desired diversity is in its age composition. ABT is largely composed of older adults, from approximately 40 to 60 years of age. Not only is there a strong stratum of older adults, but youth involvement in the organization is conspicuously absent from the organization's activities. Although youth may be present during general assemblies and large actions, they are not actively participating in organizational campaigns.

ABT is part of a network of thirty-five similar community organizations in Texas, Maryland, California, New York, New Jersey, Arizona, and Tennessee. All are affiliated with the 52 year old IAF. In exchange for dues and commitment to the IAF philosophy of organizing, ABT leaders are able to attend national IAF training workshops and are linked to a network of IAF professional organizers for advice and potential new organizers. In addition, in states where there are two or more IAF affiliates, the network provides the opportunity to work together on state

wide issues.

Though ABT has worked in temporary coalitions, the organization discourages working with other organizations.

A member explains:

One of the reasons we don't tend to do a lot of that is when you're working in a coalition you can't hold the other parties accountable. ...In states where the IAF has a number of organizations they've worked on state wide issues and in Tennessee there are two other groups besides ABT forming or at some stage of formation at Memphis and Nashville. So we will be working on some state wide issues as...all the groups get stronger.

They will be accountable to us. And we will be accountable to them. There is that kind of accountability and trust with those other organizations because they've been built just like ours.

Strategical Variables

The goals of ABT are as diverse as its member base. ABT's organizer asserted that "ABT is organized for power" and that the "Purpose for organizing is for power." Other members would include: building community; training leaders; promoting participation in public life; holding public officials accountable; becoming "one of the players at the table that helps to shape...the major decisions that are made in the community....;" and "[en]franchis[ing] the un[en]franchisable."

The diversity of the organization's goals becomes in essence, a strategy to keep the organization alive. One member commented, "ABT was organized with the intent of...not having a specific goal, because if we do that, then

as soon as that goal is achieved, there'd be no reason for our existence." Therefore, the diversity of goals guarantees that the organization can never adequately meet all of them and thus insures that ABT will continue.

However, one can look at ABT's diverse goals in terms of the emphasis of either internal or external development. ABT's internal goals center around development of the organization and development of its leaders. The focus of ABT's external goals are to win issue campaigns and build the power of the organization. Consequently, the group hopes to become one of the decision makers in Knox County.

In order to achieve these goals, ABT employs organizational strategies which focus on either the internal or external development of the organization. Yet, many of the strategies have a dual purpose in being both external and internal strategies. The external organizing strategies include the house meeting, individual meeting, the general assembly, using the church base, and action strategies.

The house meeting is a strategy used to learn of community concerns by sponsoring small group discussions in people's homes, in churches, and various other places. In addition to being a tool for learning about community concerns from citizens, the house meeting is also used to identify leaders in potential member institutions. The idea is to recruit leaders and then the leaders are to recruit others within their organizations. In this way, the

organizer has to meet with less people in order to achieve the same effect. One way in which these leaders are recruited after being identified at a house meeting is by setting up an individual meeting.

One member described the individual meeting by saying, "This is really our radical tool...." The member went on to say, "it's a time to establish a relationship with a person, a public relationship...." Meetings are set up with leaders in the community, both prospective members and public officials, to evaluate the person's views on community concerns and to inform the person of ABT's views on them. Through these meetings ABT gains information about potential allies on current issues or future campaigns. The strategy is built around the IAF belief in public relationships.

The general assembly is a formal part of the organizational structure of ABT, but it also functions as an external organizing strategy. The main purpose of the general assembly is to demonstrate power. Weeks before the assembly, quotas are taken by each membership unit in an effort to get a large number of people to attend the assembly. The organizer explained, "You're trying to exercise and leverage your relationships to demonstrate power and then you try and use that power to focus it." It is an attempt to publicly demonstrate how many people support ABT, to inform the public of the issues and success of the organization, and if possible, to have the public

officials involved in the issue to commit publicly to the ABT agenda. This achieves two aims: it forces public officials to take ABT seriously and it gains media attention which may attract new member institutions.

Although the general assembly is open to the public, an open discussion of issues during the assembly is not permitted. A member stated, "...it's an open meeting for anyone who wants to attend. It's not an open...forum...." The general assembly is a very formal event. The agenda is set by the policy team in advance. The audience is there to demonstrate the number of people that support ABT not to participate actively in the assembly. The only interplay between the audience and the floor is during role call or at the time member institutions vote for ABT's agenda or nominated officers.

The church base is a vital part of ABT's external organizing strategy. The IAF model encourages recruiting large churches in order to form large segments of the organization. One member remarked, "Once you get that church, you'd be surprised who's in that church." Not only does the organization gain power in numbers, but it also potentially gains influential leaders in the community with whom ABT can develop a public relationship.

The second benefit of recruiting churches is that they tend to be respected institutions, especially in Knoxville. When asked what was different about ABT's style of

organizing, a member explained that with, "...the reverends, the bishops, the churches, you get more respect from [the] mayor...." It is much more difficult, politically, to discredit or label a group as deviants if the organization is composed of area churches rather than merely a group of activists. So the reverence of the church as an institution also becomes a strategic benefit.

ABT's action strategies are less confrontational than one might expect given the organization's roots in Alinsky's philosophy of organizing. Yet, ABT wants "a place at the table" of the decision makers in the community. Although they employ direct action strategies such as attending and speaking at public hearings and protest marching, the organization is not exceptionally confrontational. They usually do not carry protest signs except at their general assemblies. And although they organized a protest march as their first action as an organization, I was not aware of any in the year and a half that I observed the organization.

The internal development strategies include strategies both for the development of leaders and for the development of the organization. ABT has three main internal development strategies that focus on the development of leaders in the organization: the ten day training, ABT trainings, and evaluations.

The ten day training is sponsored by the IAF twice a

year. Leaders and organizers from IAF affiliates meet to learn about the IAF philosophy of organizing. The IAF uses it to recruit new organizers while ABT uses it to train their top leaders. Not everyone in the organization attends. Although the cost of attending the conference is covered by ABT dues to the IAF, members must pay their own transportation and lodging costs. This cost is usually covered by the person's member institution. However, members from the larger institutions with greater resources are more likely to attend the IAF trainings. With the credentials of attending the ten day training, a leader gains more influence and usually takes on more active roles in the organization. The strategy is to learn the IAF philosophy of organizing while attending the ten day training, then to go back to one's organization and practice the skills learned. But, since the organizations with the greatest resources tend to be white and middle class, attendance at the IAF training has had a stratifying influence in the leadership of ABT.

ABT also sponsors its own internal trainings. Some of the leaders that have attended the IAF training may participate, but for the most part, the organizer leads trainings. Most of the time, these trainings are incorporated into a policy or strategy team meeting where specific issues and strategies are being discussed. During this time there is little interaction between the members

and the organizer. The style of these trainings resembles a lecture.

Similar to these internal trainings is ABT's evaluation meetings. These usually follow actions, general assemblies, and meetings. The evaluation meeting is used as a learning tool about what to do or not to do or say the next time. Individuals as well as the event are evaluated. The goal of the evaluation is to develop stronger leaders in the organization, but it also serves to reinforce the IAF philosophy of organizing.

There are also three primary internal development strategies that focus on the development of the organization: strengthening member institutions, creating a clergy caucus, and rotating organizers. One of the unique strategies that ABT employs is strengthening its member institutions. This task is usually performed by the organizer. The Emerald Avenue United Methodist Church youth program, which had outgrown the ability of the adult congregation to adequately support it, is an example of this effort. Through efforts by the ABT organizer:

Now there's a community council that's made up of the community leaders outside the church as well as inside the church that help with programming for the children and youth program and raise funding from all over the community.... Then...another thing that's happened here is that our organizer has taught citizenship lessons....

Another example of this strategy is when the organizer assisted an ABT member in a campaign to become the Western

Heights Tenants Association president. This strategy attempts to strengthen ABT's member institutions in an effort to strengthen and expand its own organizational base. In addition, it provides the member institutions a rationale to remain a member of ABT instead of resigning to attend to its internal affairs.

The clergy caucus serves as an advisory board. They give feedback to the organizer on how to approach an issue and which direction ABT should go in the future. A member explains that the importance of the caucus is "...to keep within the concept of the good, basic religious beliefs that help your fellow man." The caucus gives recommendations based on religious values, but they also serve to keep the member institutions, namely the churches, involved in ABT.

The IAF strategy of rotating organizers is employed by ABT. The organization views rotating organizers as a means to both strengthen the organization and develop the organizer's skills. The organizer maintained that it is important to change organizers, "...because otherwise the organization can be completely built around the personality of the organizer. ...most people do move every few years so that you get a different person with different gifts and talents who then makes a difference to the organization...." The next organizer is either recruited from another IAF affiliate or a member within the organization is trained to become the organizer. The IAF is a career ladder as well as

a system for developing the affiliates and the organizers. Currently ABT is going through this process.

ABT is a multi-issue community organization. In fact one member asserted, "We were not built around any issue. We had no issue when we came together initially. The Judeo-Christian values that the churches have and other religious institutions have and just the values of democratic government, those are the values that pull us together." ABT members feel that one of their strengths is that they are not reliant upon an issue, but that many issues can fit into ABT's agenda. In this manner, if the organization wins the campaign on their issue, the organization still has a purpose in existing and can move on to the next issue.

Issues for ABT campaigns initially come from citizens of many different communities within Knox County. Trained leaders hold house meetings in which approximately eight to fourteen people are brought together to talk informally about the issues that concern them in their community. These meetings serve as a survey of concerns of Knox County citizens. The participants of the house meetings are not limited to actively participating members of ABT. At the meeting, someone from ABT records the group's comments. The comments are then taken to an ABT meeting where they are sorted into broad categories including education, housing, jobs and economic development, drugs and youth, and clean up and law enforcement in neighborhoods. These were ABT's

first broad issue categories that were identified after the first one hundred house meetings.

From these broad areas of concern, the strategy team then chooses which community problem is the most important one for ABT to address and develop into an issue. The strategy team researches the issue and then suggests a plan of action to the policy team. The strategy team bases its recommendation for action on a particular issue based, not only on the broad areas of concern identified by the community and by the team's own research, but also on how a set of specific questions are answered. These questions are asked about each potential issue:

1. Does it build ABT? Will ABT benefit from taking on this issue? Does it bring recognition, people, and resources to ABT?
2. Is it specific?
3. Does it have broad-based concern within the community?
4. Is the issue urgent?
5. Is it winnable?
6. Does it evoke feelings amongst a broad group of people?
7. Are there specific people who are in position of authority to negotiate with?

The answers to these questions then become the real determinants of a community concern becoming an ABT issue.

One member remarked:

...generally speaking, we would not ever get involved in an issue unless it had very broad consensus within the organization because there's a sense that in which building the organization is more important than any issue so if it's going to divide us instead of unite us, we're probably not going to work on it.

Most community organizations would probably agree with the

end of the statement, but what makes ABT different is its emphasis on the building of the organization over and above any specific issue.

As of now, the focus of ABT's campaigns has been in Knox County. Although they have considered addressing job loss and the increase in temporary jobs in the area which also may be addressed at the state or federal level, ABT has not worked in that way. There may be at least two reasons for this. First, the organization is still young and is trying not to over extend itself. Second, since ABT does not like to work in coalitions with non-IAF organizations on issues, it may be hard to work on issues of broader focus. However, this does seem to be a goal for the future.

Because of the way in which ABT defines and selects its issues, it is much more proactive than many community organizations tend to be. A member explained the difference, "...we're really proactive instead of reactive. We don't wait until something happens in the news and then react to it. Well, sometimes we might, but our style is more proactive where we do our homework and take a position on something and then try to get it done...."

Image plays a substantial role in ABT both internally and externally. Members and the organizer promote the idea that ABT is radically different in many ways from other non-IAF community organizations. Although only rarely is a specific organization mentioned, a dichotomy of

organizational styles is promoted. I observed comparisons such as:

...the level of accountability is much higher [in ABT]....we are more concerned about training and leadership development....

We have people who have taken ownership of this thing [ABT]....And as you start to look at other organizations, you'll discover that's very uncommon.

We take dues and local fundraising more seriously than anybody else.

...currently, no other national...organizing networks...are really as serious about developing a long term strategic plan for changing the country....

This ideology fosters the belief that ABT should not work in non-IAF coalitions and indirectly encourages the view that there is really only one correct way to organize.

ABT's image is also important in another way. In order for ABT to build the organization, it must take every public opportunity to promote its image. Issue campaigns are usually planned due to ABT's emphasis on proactive organizing. Thus, the organization can more effectively utilize the media to promote itself and the campaign. Members are always given ABT name tags at any public action and whenever an ABT member speaks to the media, the person first identifies himself as an ABT member. Moreover, the organizer also often makes statements to the press and at public events.

Successful Organizing

ABT's greatest achievement has been that it has successfully formed and developed an organization of such a diverse group of people. One member was quoted as saying, "Many said, 'Can't be done, won't work. You can't unify such a mix of people'" (Cornelius, May n.d. 1988). It is fairly uncommon to have churches and unions, and African-Americans and whites working together in any private, long-term coalition in Knoxville, much less a coalition to affect social change. However, ABT has also been successful in achieving some of their goals and winning issues that are important to them.

In the late fall of 1989, ABT began one of its ongoing campaigns for economic development in Knox County. There was a movement by some individuals to change the zoning along the Pellissippi Parkway Technology Corridor from high-tech businesses to incorporate other types of developments. As part of its platform to improve the job market in Knox County, ABT joined other groups in opposing the change in zoning. By the spring of 1990, due largely to the efforts of ABT and others, the Tennessee Technology Foundation Development Authority voted against changing the zoning (Bond, April 10, 1990).

During this time, ABT also worked on other community concerns. In the fall of 1989, ABT pushed the city to clean

up a northeast Knoxville neighborhood. Problems included: "...clogged sewage drains, uncut brush blocking sidewalks and poorly paved streets...." (Mcrae, Oct. 9, 1989). Later, during the first of the year, ABT was instrumental in prompting KCDC to introduce a policy which informs renters of governmental subsidized housing of the average cost to heat the unit during the winter months.

The summer of 1990 was an active time for ABT. They worked on two issues. The organization successfully put pressure both on inner-city grocery stores to clean up and on city inspectors to enforce codes. In addition, as part of ABT's goal to increase citizen participation in the political process, they launched the "Sign Up and Take Charge" campaign. In this effort, they were able to register 1,400 new voters. The organization has also been instrumental in the organizing the new Western Heights Tenants Association in a local government housing project.

The campaign that I most closely observed, however, was ABT's education campaign. In the fall of 1990 the organization began its campaign to cut the Knox County School budget by \$3 million in order to put more money back into the classroom. The problems in the school system had been identified by citizens during ABT house meetings. "Reform of education was the top issue at over 80% of these meetings" ("Report to Knox County: A Proposal for Our Schools and Our Children," 1991). Some of the specific

education problems included: inadequate textbooks and supplies for all children, a high student/teacher ratio in the classroom, and inequalities in schools due to the inability of the inner-city neighborhoods to supplement school board funding. After talking to parents, teachers, custodians, maintenance workers, and some administrators, ABT devised a general proposal to cut the \$3 million during their fall general assembly. School board officials, county commissioners, and the superintendent were invited to attend. The attending officials were formally asked during the meeting if they would work with ABT in reallocating funds back into the classroom.

ABT engaged in a number of education action during this campaign. They held numerous interactive workshops in which members explained the school budget. In the internally held workshops, the organizer would follow the explanation with lesson on power analysis and campaign strategy. Three primary research actions were performed by the organization. Two of them took the form of testimony hearings where individual spoke about their involvement with the school and the problems in the existing system. The first hearing however, was more of a media event than a true research action, since much of the testimony given at the hearing had been presented previously to ABT. In fact some of the speakers had also been speakers at the general assembly four months earlier. The third action involved going to the

central office of the Knox County Schools to attain job descriptions and salaries of the central office staff. The organizer and members also met with all the county commissioners, school board officials, and the superintendent in individual meetings. This strategy was used to assess the person's stance on the issue and to try gain support for the ABT proposal.

From this information and other literature on education and teachers' tenure laws, ABT drafted a specific proposal for the school board and county commission. The proposal specified reappropriating monies from the budget in four specific ways: 1) canceling the contract with ServiceMaster which only adds four extra custodial and maintenance administrators and provides ineffective training, 2) reducing the secretarial staff at the central office of the Knox County Schools, 3) reducing the number of attendance officers, and 4) reassigning 25 tenured administrators from the central office to special teaching positions which would utilize their experience. The savings could then be used in the classrooms. The tenured administrators could move to supervisor teaching positions at a proposed University High School. This school would function as a teaching lab school and would work with the universities and colleges around the area.

There was much resistance from officials during ABT's campaign. Near the end of the campaign, officials felt even

more pressure when it was learned that the total budget would have to be cut due to shortfalls of \$9.5 million in state and local funds (O'Mara, July 18, 1991). After much work, the organization won some of their points. The ServiceMaster contract was cut by over \$200,000 and six positions in the central office were cut. Administrators received a decrease in their salaries due to a reduction in contract days. Some attendance officers were also cut. Although, ABT did not have all parts of their proposal fully implemented, the outcome of the campaign was interpreted as a success. The members generally feel that without their input, shortfalls in funding would have resulted in more cuts in the classroom and less in the administration and central office. No cuts were made in textbook and supplies.

During ABT's spring general assembly this year, the organization gained public support from the school superintendent candidates to work with ABT in a continuing effort to improve the school system in Knox County.

Chapter V

SOCM CASE STUDY

This year Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM) will celebrate its 20th anniversary. It was founded in 1972 by a group of citizens of rural east Tennessee that were concerned about the effects of the strip mining of coal in their communities. Citizen's of the coal communities began to realize this common concern after working with a group of students from the Student Health Coalition of Vanderbilt University.

In the late 1960's in an effort to improve the health care of citizens in rural communities, citizen's worked with the Vanderbilt students to sponsor health fairs. These fairs provided both health education and health care for people who lived in communities without medical facilities or who would otherwise not be able to afford it. Something else also came out of this cooperative effort; people began to question why they did not have the health care facilities that they needed. This question and the answer, a lack of money, caused the students to conduct a study analyzing the property tax base of the communities. Their findings showed that even though the coal companies were excavating huge amounts of coal from the communities every day, the companies were paying an extremely small amount in property taxes (Allen, forthcoming). Thus the companies were

effectively reducing the tax base needed to provide basic social services to the communities.

As the Vanderbilt students worked with the people of rural east Tennessee involving their health needs, they began to realize that the people had common concerns in other areas. Initially, the citizens' principal concern centered around the mining companies located in their communities. Although the mining companies were extracting huge amounts of coal out of the region, locally the citizens saw little of the profits. The roads were in poor condition and the local tax base was over represented by the citizens (Gaventa, Ormond, Thompson, 1971).

In reaction to these problems, Heleny Cook was recruited to help organize the communities following the Vanderbilt students' return to school in the fall. Later Jane Sampson was also recruited to assist in organizing. Both Cook and Sampson were from outside the communities, however, they were especially instrumental in the formation of SOCM.

SOCM's first action as an organization was the law suit against the out-of state mine owners concerning fair taxation. Cook and Sampson assumed the roles of community organizers for the group (Cook, 1973; and Allen, forthcoming). SOCM's organizing methods were not heavily based on any particular theory or philosophy of organizing. Instead, they assumed a trial and error method of

organizing. Organizational meetings were not held in a central location. In order to make the meetings accessible to members, locations varied from community to community. Because SOCM subscribed to a popular vote of members for decision making and the members attending varied from one meeting to another, the organization had problems with consistent decision making. It was not until the early 1980's that the organization restructured itself and adopted the chapter, board and committee structure that it now has.

Structural Variables

SOCM is different from what one would typically think of as a community based organization in that it is rural. One usually envisions an urban or suburban area; a clearly defined community such as a neighborhood where people live in close proximity to each other. SOCM however is not only organizing in rural areas, but is spread over approximately 15 counties in east Tennessee. Members may drive for up to two hours to attend a board meeting and staff persons commonly drive between one to two hours to staff chapter meetings, committee meetings, or other events.

Currently SOCM has five main organizational structural components: individual members, chapters, committees (internal and issue), the board, and the staff. SOCM's membership is comprised both of individual memberships and

family memberships. In an effort to encourage an entire family to become active members of SOCM, there are no additional dues assessed for a family membership as compared to an individual membership. Although SOCM is considered a chapter based organization, some individual and family memberships are not affiliated with a chapter. In fact SOCM has avoided establishing chapters in urban areas such as Knoxville even though they have enough members to form a chapter.

A group may form a chapter with the approval of SOCM if they can gather twenty dues paying families. Each chapter is relatively autonomous, determining its own issues and strategies for action. However, the chapter must agree to actively support both organizational fund raising and organizational issues in addition to their own chapter issues.

Chapters usually are formed due to citizen concern about a perceived problem in their community such as a proposed out-of-state landfill. Citizens either contact SOCM for help or SOCM becomes aware of their efforts and sends a staff person to tell them more about SOCM. If the organization is interested in forming a chapter in a community, the staff performs a two week feasibility study. A staff member explains the study:

...[we] make some contacts, to see the lay of the land, and to talk to more people to see if there's an interest....

...the organization isn't just going to jump

in and do something without there being people in that area who want to do something about it....looking for an area to form a chapter is on the condition that all of the conditions are there that you need to have a viable chapter: people [who] care deeply about some of the problems, believe in forming an organization to work on them, [and] believe in affiliating with the kind of organization that SOCM is....

All of the SOCM chapters developed around a need to solve a particular problem in the in the community until the Rhea county chapter. This experimental chapter is unique in that it was not formed reactively around a "burning issue" (based on a perceived problem in the community that people feel strongly about and is viewed as needing an immediate solution). SOCM wanted to see if they could start and sustain a chapter without having a "burning issue" in the community. Although SOCM has been successful at developing and maintaining this chapter until a "burning issue" in the community surfaced, the majority of the chapters are formed in reaction to problems in the community.

Individual members and members from the chapters also form committees. There are six internal committees: the northern (east Tennessee) fundraising, the southern (east Tennessee) fundraising, the personnel, the planning, the finance, and the growth. There are also seven issue committees: the strip mine, the oil and gas, the economic, the surface rights, the mineral taxation, the toxics, and the legislative. The purpose of these committees is to keep abreast of any local developments or new legislation

concerning their particular issue. Based on legislative or other developments, the committee forms plans of action for organizational-wide issues. These plans are presented to the board for approval in the form of a recommendations. The committees also plan issue education workshops/trainings to inform and discuss with members organizational-wide issues. These trainings are offered as individual workshops or within the chapters which may be less familiar with the issues.

The board has organizational decision making authority. It is comprised of: one representative from each chapter; the four officers elected by the entire organization (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary); three at large delegates, also elected by the entire organization; and the immediate past-president of the organization. No person is allowed to serve more than two, one year terms in a particular office or as a particular representative to ensure that leadership positions are shared.

The Board also has two committees: the executive and the nominating. The executive committee is empowered for making emergency decisions between the times that the board meets and is composed of the four officers, and one elected member of the Board. The nominating committee includes the chair of each of SOCM's committees. It is hoped that this will ensure that some of the most skilled and knowledgeable members are involved with the nominating of the elected

board officers.

Every two months on Saturday, the board meets at the Crossville library. The meetings are usually an all day event held from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm. At least a week before the meeting an agenda and detailed information concerning the issues to be voted on are sent to the board members. This is done in an effort to better prepare the board members for debating the issues during the board meeting and also with people from their chapters before the meeting. The board members make decisions concerning proposals that the committees and possibly the staff have made. These decisions pertain to the position of SOCM on a certain organizational-wide issue, organizational time and attention that should be devoted to an issue.

Each January the board meets to set SOCM's agenda for the year. At this time proposals from all of the chapters and committees are reviewed. The proposals contain requests for staff time to assist in working on specific issues and requests for chapter or committee issues to become organization-wide issues. This usually means lobbying at a state or national level to change laws.

Currently, SOCM's staff consists of: seven full time organizers, an office clerk, a fundraiser, and a half-time youth director sponsored by Youth Action. In a continuing tradition of involvement with the Vanderbilt University, each summer the university provides interns to help SOCM

(and other groups) with their environmental work through a program called Student Training for Environmental Progress (STEP).

SOCM organizers (referred to as staff) are recruited both from within the organization and nationally. Applicants are evaluated on past organizing experience and must most importantly, must subscribe to the belief that members must control the agenda and make the decisions in the organization. It is not required that applicants have attended a particular organizing training. However, all staff go through SEP's six week training before they begin working with members.

A staff member is assigned to each chapter, each committee, and the board. The staff is active at all levels of the organization, but their main focus is to organize new chapters and research new issues. They have no formal decision making authority and can not vote and do not play an active role in decision making during the meetings. Their duties include: advising members of information that they have found, contributing opinions based on their research and experience, training members in research techniques and organizing strategies, assisting members with trainings, and assisting members in developing meeting agendas. One member explained that the staff provides support and information, but "we have to do [the work] ourselves".

However, the staff person has a more influential and powerful position in the organization than it might seem. The staff frequently has more experience and more information at their disposal than some of the members. Since the role of the staff person is to advise the members of past decisions and gather additional information on the issue, it is possible for the staff person to influence the decision of the members. This may be an even greater probability when the staff person has been actively involved in the organization longer than the member. Similarly, the long-time staff person may build a public relationship with legislators while lobbying at the state and national levels. Because, it is more difficult for working members to lobby during the week and due to the varying groups of member over time that lobby, it is also possible that experienced staff may be more influential than members. Consequently, the staff may inadvertently assume a more active leadership role within the organization.

SOCM is supported by both internal fund raising and external fund raising. SOCM raises approximately 35-45% of their budget internally and 55-65% externally through grants. Their goal is to increase the amount of funds raised internally, thus decreasing their dependence on foundations and grants. Internally, yearly dues of \$10 are collected from family and individual members. There are also two internal fund raising committees, one for the

northern counties and one for the southern counties of east Tennessee. Both committees meet once a year to plan the events then they break down into subcommittees to work on the details of a particular fund raising event. At this time other members that were not a part of the original north or south fundraising committee may be recruited to help with the planning and preparation of the event. All the details of the fund raising event are left up to the committee members, however a staff person may advise them of successful or unsuccessful past events. The board does not "approve" the event, it only allocates staff time to the committees.

The fundraising committees plan fund raising events such as walk-a-thons, concerts/dances, cookbook sales, and car washes. One of the ongoing methods of raising money for the organization is the selling of T-shirts and sweatshirts that have SOCM's name on them. Each SOCM Sentinel, the organization's newsletter, ends with an advertisement for SOCM t-shirt and sweatshirts. The shirts are also present at the annual picnic, and occasionally at board meetings and other events. In addition there are organizational fund raising campaigns where members and other possible supporters are contacted and asked to give a donation to the organization.

SOCM now has approximately 1500 families as members of the organization. However, not all of the members are

actively involved in the organization. Some of the members support the organization only financially or through more passive actions such as letter writing campaigns. Although the 1500 families that represent SOCM's members may be a diverse group in their socio-economic composition, the core of active participants are fairly homogeneous.

The most significant way in which SOCM is homogeneous is that it is overwhelmingly white. In fact, in the year and a half that I observed SOCM meetings and events, I only observed one African-American other than visiting members or staff from other organizations such as Just Organized Neighborhoods Area Headquarters (JONAH). I did observe one person participating actively at a protest march in Rockwood, Tennessee. Later, I learned that although he appeared as a leader, he was not a member of SOCM, but a concerned citizen of the community that participated in the protest.

The reason commonly given for SOCM's lack of racial diversity is that rural eastern Tennessee has a low population of African-Americans and other racial/ethnic minorities. It is true that in the rural areas in which SOCM is most active, racial diversity is low. According to the 1990 census, in the 15 counties that are represented by SOCM chapters, the percent of the black population ranges from less than 1% to over 6% and even fewer other racial/ethnic groups are represented. However, African-

Americans are not adequately represented within the organization even in these small percentages.

When asked about the lack of minority involvement in the SOCM organization, one chapter member commented that it was not a problem, because "there were not many minorities in the area, only a few blacks." The member went on to explain that the black communities seemed to be segregated from and not interested in the same issues as the white communities. However, other people in SOCM have defined this as a weakness. Consequentially, SOCM as an organization has begun taking steps to address this issue. One member explained:

That is a real problem that we're trying to work on....it is a weakness because I think that you're less powerful....if people would only work together, then they'd be so much more powerful.

Another member commented, "That's something...we want to do is to work in more of a racially balanced situation and a lot of that desire to do that comes from certain key people...." Yet the action taken on this issue has not been to strengthen the diversity within the organization by recruiting more African-Americans in their chapters. Instead, efforts have focused on building a stronger alliance with JONAH, a similarly structured, predominately African-American community organization in west Tennessee. JONAH and SOCM now hold joint leadership retreats each year, work as allies on legislative issues such as a Tennessee fair taxation campaign, and joint youth events such as the

annual youth encampment.

Positions within the organization are held fairly evenly between the two genders at all levels of the organization. A staff person described the conscious effort that is made to ensure equal representation:

In terms of some real obstacles in local, rural organizing...there certainly are places where there is a traditional sense of the role of women and the role of men. And therefore [there] has to be a very conscious effort on [the] organizer's part and other experienced members' part to make sure that...women are incorporated into the local group as much as men in leadership positions.

This effort has been a successful. Approximately half of the SOCM presidents have been women.

Both liberals and conservatives are represented within the organization. Although SOCM members have been labeled as "radicals" for their strong stance on issues such as the abolition of strip mining in its earlier days, members would typically not consider themselves as such. Most of them did not grow up in homes where activism was promoted. A staff member describes SOCM's members:

Most of the members of SOCM are not joiners....Often besides the church or in some cases, like the old coal mining communities where people belong[ed] to the union, this is the first organization that they've ever been a part of.

They may be considered radical in the sense that they challenge who has the power in the community, but they are not necessarily radical people in other respects. At a grassroots lobbying day in Nashville, one staff person explained that she had a difficult time persuading members

to carry protest signs during protest marches.

Although SOCM also has an image of being composed of poor rural working class people, the educational backgrounds of the SOCM members vary greatly. Some of the members have received a PhD, while others seem to have very little formal education. I have noticed that the most educated members of the chapters seem to be the ones that are most likely to take-on additional formal leadership roles in the organization such as a board or committee member. This may be due to two factors. First, in general, people with more formal education tend to feel more comfortable voicing their opinions publicly. Secondly, after involvement in the organization members may feel more confident about continuing their formal education.

The majority of the SOCM members that are most involved (on committees, the board, hold office positions, or actively participate in SOCM events) are approximately 30 years old or older with the majority being 40 years old or older. Youth, teenage and college age, members are conspicuously absent from many of the organizational activities. However, year ago, with the help of Youth Action of Washington DC, a special staff person and program was added to the organization for the purpose of involving youth (16-18) in SOCM. This program however, has not been integrated into the adult meetings and events. The youth are kept separate from the rest of the organization. Much

of the focus up to this point has been sponsoring JONAH/SOCM youth events such as the youth encampment. This does seem to be changing however. For example, at the annual grassroots lobbying day in Nashville, two youths joined staff and members.

SOCM is an independent group, but they do see the value in working with other citizen groups on specific campaigns or issues of common interest. Representing most of the many members' opinions, one member wrote:

We should continually guard against turning inward, against assuming we already have the best answers, against dismissing opportunities to interact with members of other organizations. We should more aggressively seek out those opportunities, as well design training within our groups that connects our issues with other peoples' issues and values the historical context of our work (White, 1990:12).

The strategy of working with other organizations is especially effective when they are lobbying for more stringent regulations on water quality, land reclamation, changes in the tax structure, or temporary workers' rights. SOCM believes that the more citizens the organization can say that it represents when lobbying, the more the representatives at the state or national level will listen to them.

On a more permanent basis SOCM has been affiliated with: the Citizen's Coal Council (CCC) at a national level; the Tennessee Environmental Council in Nashville; the Tennessee Industrial Renewal Network; Tennesseans for Fair

Taxation; the Appalachian Alliance at the regional level; JONAH; and the Southern Empowerment Project. Members of SOCM sit on the board of SEP. One week of the SEP six week training session is sponsored by SOCM. During this week both members and staff lead discussions about organizing strategies and experiences. Other SOCM members are also encouraged to participate in the week's events. In addition to being a school for training organizer, SEP is a network of regional citizen's organizations which can serve as a resource for its member organizations. Through SEP individual citizens' organizations learn of the work others are doing and can exchanged experiences and strategies as well as work with each other on common issues.

Strategical Variables

Initially, SOCM was organized around the abolition of strip mining and achieving a more just system of assessing the property values and taxes on the mineral rich land. Over the years SOCM has developed a much more broadly defined goal which allows the organization to address many varying issues. Now it is organized around the broad goal of improving the quality of life in rural communities in east Tennessee. Describing SOCM, one member declared, "It is a group of people helping people change for the better; working on...issues that directly affect people's lives and

improving the quality of life in communities."

This broad ideological goal manifests itself in two specific organizational goals: the external development goal of winning issues, and the internal development goal of leadership development. These goals are not unique or unusual within the organizing community. What does seem to be somewhat different is how SOCM members define "building the organization." This phrase commonly refers to an organization's external development goals such as winning issues and receiving public recognition. However, when members of SOCM refer to the goal of building the organization, they are emphasizing something different. A staff person explained:

...basically what SOCM has always intended to do is to build a very strong...organization of members who are increasingly skilled and confident and able to do more and more things on the power structure that oppresses them.

Building a strong organization means how do we get more members, how do we get more experiences that more leaders are taking an active role [in] and are getting new skills...?

When asked about the organization's goals, members usually respond with both the external and internal development goals. However, after talking to members it becomes clear the external development goals are secondary to leadership development. A member maintained, "...people [are] first and issues [are] second."

The external organizing strategies used to win issues are a combination of: action research where the members and

staff educated themselves on the issue; lobbying, both at state and national levels; and direct actions where members confront those people in positions of power/decision making. The members may attend public hearings and voice their opinions or march and sing in protest. In both cases they usually carry signs which have slogans on them emphasizing the group's stance on the issue. These actions are usually followed by an evaluation of the action, but this evaluation is much less formal than some other groups'.

Winning issue is vital to all community organizations because if the organization never won or members felt as though the organization never won its issues, there would be no reason for the members to stay involved. In order to inform members of events and also to promote the feeling that the organization is winning on issues, even if a member's particular chapter is not, SOCM produces a newsletter.

The SOCM Sentinel is published about once a month. One staff person has the primary job of organizing it, but many of the articles are written by the members. In addition to informing members of progress on chapter and state-wide issues, the newsletter informs members of upcoming events such as lobbying, walk-a-thons, and the annual picnic. It serves an important unifying function which is especially important in rural community organizing where members and chapters tend to be spread out. One member commented on its

importance: "...the newsletter ties everyone together." The newsletter also functions as an educational tool, especially to inform members and explain new legislation that may concern them. There are also nonspecific educational articles such as "How a Bill Becomes a Law."

Power to change the community comes not only from organizing large groups of people, but also from empowering the individual. Therefore much of attention is given to leadership development within SOCM. Consequently, the organization's internal organizing strategies are to create a an atmosphere where: 1) members feel safe to speak out and 2) members opinions and views are validated as legitimate by encouraging participation in discussions and decision making. Although this strategy can be observed at most SOCM events I will present five specific examples: the use of members' "common knowledge", the issue trainings, the board meetings, and the rotation of staff and the promotion of leaders.

SOCM members and staff encourage other members to participate in actions and validate members' common knowledge of situations instead of relying on experts. This strategy includes having members take water samples and make videos of destruction from unsafe or unreclaimed mining practices, as well as encouraging them to speak out at public hearings and personally lobby their state and national legislators.

Even during education actions such as issue trainings, it is viewed as extremely important to encourage members to share and discuss their feelings and opinions about the issue. The trainings are usually member led and do not follow a typical lecture style of conveying information. An issue committee member reflects on organizing trainings:

...the way to get the most information done would be to have an expert stand up and just talk and talk.....No one would deny that you can get the most information like that in an hour, but....the older members say no, it's more important to do it in a participatory manner where people have a chance to participate in discussion, where you don't set someone up as an expert, where you don't try to deny the importance of people's own experiences and feelings about it. It's important to design [a] training that might take place over two or three months at different sessions, involving people from the chapter and not only just telling them this stuff, but helping them design campaigns on how you make change in the community.

The emphasis of leadership development can also be observed in board meetings. During the meeting, only board members are allowed to sit at the table, symbolizing that SOCM is a member operated organization. Although the meetings are structured as formal business meetings with agendas, proposals, and motions, much time is also allotted for discussion of new issues.

Frequently during the meetings the board members divide into small groups to discuss a new issue before addressing and voting on it with the full board. After the small group discussions, the full board debates the issue. Each member is asked to give his or her opinion, then each comment is

written down on a large newsprint pad (as close as possible to the exact words of the person) in a list of pros and cons of the issue. This list is then used as an impetus for further discussion. There are no wrong answers. Each comment is considered valid.

Finally, to lessen dependance on a particular staff person or leaders and to encourage member growth, SOCM employs two strategies. First, there is a rotation of staff both at a chapter and a committee level. Staff are not usually reassigned to other chapters or committees if they are in the middle of working on a hot issue, but no staff person staffs a group indefinitely.

Members are also encouraged assume different leadership roles within the organization. For example after actively attending chapter meetings, a person may be asked to chair the chapter meetings for the year. After that person's term has ended, he may be asked to be the chapter representative to the board. Because of the person's involvement in the board, he may be nominated for an office on the board. At this point the person would be very knowledgeable about many of SOCM's chapter and organizational issue and so many become a member of a committee or may represent SOCM on the board of another organization such as SEP.

SOCM has evolved from these land-tax, coal mining issues to a true multi-issue organization. Currently, SOCM is organized around a number of issues: out-of-state

landfills and incinerators, safe forestry practices, promoting environmentally sound businesses, temporary workers rights, fair taxation of Tennesseans, and securing safe drinking water.

Each fall, every chapter and committee has a goal setting meeting. The group develops a prioritized list of issues that the members would like to work on and the amount of staff time that they will need to assist them while working on the issues. This list is then discussed at the annual board meeting at the beginning of the year and staff time is allotted to each chapter based on the issues and projects that the chapters and committees have identified. However, the board does not approve chapter issues. Each chapter autonomously decides the issues on which it works, both at the local level and at the organizational level.

One of the staff persons explained that the philosophy of SOCM is that the chapter always needs to be working on some issue. There should be no period of time when a chapter is not working actively on some issue. In times when members perceive no pressing issue in the community, the chapters are encouraged to either work on organizational issues or create an issue. In creating an issue, the members do not arbitrarily choose an issue. Instead they discuss the problems in the community. The community concerns are then developed into issues. This is a process where a broad problem is reduced to a specific, manageable

issue to which there is a conceivable solution. Issues are then analyzed according to a general set of criteria: 1) Will it involve many members? Is it something that many people can work on? 2) Do most members care about it? Is it compelling to a wide number of members? 3) Is it winnable, either in the short term or long term?.

This fairly recent shift, from primarily reactive organizing to more emphasis on proactive organizing, is a significant development in SOCM. In the past SOCM has had a predominantly reactive stance concerning social problems in the community. The members would wait until there was a problem and then organize and take action to solve the problem. However, SOCM is consciously attempting to change this and become more proactive. Some of these attempts can be seen in the formation of the Rhea county chapter, working on the state-wide issue of fair taxation, the development of the youth program, and the joint effort of the economic issues committee and some chapters to help recruit good paying, safe jobs into their communities.

SOCM is active at three levels of government: local, state, and national. Many community organizations focus their attention solely on local issues, SOCM has found, however, that if one chapter is successful in stopping an out-of-state waste incinerator from locating in its county, that the company may move to the neighboring county to site the incinerator. This is not the stereotypical NIMBY ("Not

In My Back Yard") group that is only concerned about something being located in their community. SOCM does not want anyone to have an unsafe landfill placed in their community. This is one reason that the organization has both expanded its chapter base and formed alliances with other organizations on specific issues.

Yet, SOCM struggles with the issue of how much farther their chapter base should grow. In a state the size of Tennessee it would be almost impossible to keep the same organizational structure, specifically the board and the committees. Thus, any further expansion into middle and west Tennessee would require radical changes in SOCM's structure. Some SOCM members see the working relationship with JONAH to be a partial answer to the question of growth into a state-wide organization.

SOCM members are not as concerned as other groups seem to be about the organization's image. Occasionally there is some discussion about the way in which SOCM organizes as compared to others:

One of the things that's fairly unique about SOCM and is part of our commitment to leadership development....

[Other groups are] real manipulative.

I think that we pay a lot more attention to accountability to each other than a lot of organizations do....we really stress that you have to be accountable to each other, that you can't just go say what you believe about an issue and act like that's your group's position....

The feeling that the last comment expressed helps to explain

why SOCM is not widely recognized.

One would think that a community organization that is celebrating its 20th anniversary and is active in at least 15 counties in east Tennessee would be fairly well known, yet SOCM's name and reputation is not widely known. On several occasions I have watched the Knoxville evening news and saw SOCM members discussing their chapters position on a local issue. One of these incidents was even after a protest march. However, the members speaking did not identify themselves as SOCM members or the event as a SOCM event. They instead present themselves as a concerned citizen of the community.

In response to a print ad bought by an out-of-state landfill company declaring its concern for environmental safety, SOCM ran an ad concerning its findings about the company. The ad was very effective in countering the pro-environmental image of the company and SOCM's name did appear in the ad. However, the name appeared at the end of the ad after the sources used to attain their information.

A member commented on this practice:

...it's been partially intentional that you're giving the recognition to the people and that you're not throwing the name, SOCM, out because you wind up trying to explain what SOCM is and what their motives is and everything else. It becomes an issue....it goes back also to the days that people were getting beat up, their houses getting blown up....You didn't publicly advertise that you were a member of SOCM.

Successful Organizing

Over the years, SOCM has achieved many successes. The first was helping to win the passage of The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) in 1977. Through the early 1970's the organization lobbied for federal regulations on stripmining because the state was not protecting the environment and the best interest of the communities involved. Strengthening this act has been an ongoing issue in the organization. In fact, during the summer of 1991, members travelled to Washington, D.C. as part of the CCC to lobby for the new Coalfield Water Protection and Enforcement Act. The CCC wrote the Act in response to the continuing water and enforcement problems. The Act includes a plan to change the burden of proof from the citizens to the mine owners in water quality cases (The SOCM Sentinel, Sept. 1991).

Another legislative win for SOCM was the death of three bills sponsored by Browning Ferris Industries (BFI). SOCM became aware of the three solid waste bills introduced to the Tennessee state legislature which "would further reduce local controls for counties" in the siting of landfills. In less than two months, with the help of SOCM allies, members effectively lobbied against a large and powerful company which resulted in the company's withdrawal of the proposed bills (The SOCM Sentinel, May 1992).

SOCM has also been effective at winning issues at the chapter level. In spring of 1991, SOCM's Oliver Springs chapter fought a proposed siting of a potentially dangerous silver recovery plant in the nearby community of Coalfield. They were able to raise enough public concern that the company withdrew its application. At the same time the Roane county chapter was putting pressure on Rockwood officials to force Horsehead Resource Development to clean up the its plant. The plant "recycles dust laden with heavy metals" ("SOCM 1991 Annual Report," 26). After almost a year of pressuring local and state officials, members won improvements in the monitoring of the plant. Instead of a once a year drive-by inspection, the state will be doing an inspection at least once a week at the site. In addition, there are several proposed sites for new air monitors (The SOCM Sentinel, April 1992).

In the Fentress county chapter, members learned of a proposed solid waste and tire incinerator. The incinerator was to take care of the county's solid waste disposal problem and make money for the county by taking tires from all over the country; the energy generated from the incinerator would power a greenhouse. A few months before, RBS, International had proposed an incinerator in the neighboring county of Overton, but because of citizen pressure the company dropped the plan.

As soon as members heard rumors of the incinerator,

they attended the county commission meeting where they learned that the county executive had given his full support to the project. Members organized and divided up possible areas where they could attain information about the company and the incineration process. Members contacted numerous people concerning: the effectiveness of using the incinerator to grow vegetables in the greenhouse; the feasibility of burning solid waste and tires together --- due to differences in temperature needed; and possible hazards of emissions from the incineration of the tires. After researching the issue, members rallied citizens together for a public meeting pertaining to the incinerator. Due to members talking to other citizens and public announcements sponsored by SOCM, two hundred citizens showed up at the public hearing. Because of the public pressure, the officials began to withdraw their support. However, the chapter learned that there were still some loopholes in the county commission's resolution which left the door open to the possibility of an incinerator. The chapter kept pressure on officials to convince them not to allow the siting. By the fall, officials stated that the company given up its efforts to build the incinerator in Fentress county ("SOCM 1991 Annual Report").

Chapter VI

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: ORGANIZING FOR WHAT?

In this chapter I illustrate how each organization's choices in strategies and issues reflect its underlying philosophy regarding social change. The comparison between ABT and SOCM does not focus superficially on differences in the way that the organizations raise funds, enter coalitions, or recruit members. Instead, I argue that these differences reflect the different basic objectives and goals of the organizations. Both ABT and SOCM appear to have the same fundamental purpose: to induce social change in the communities in which they work by encouraging people who would not otherwise have the power or skills to do so to become involved in the political arena. However, with closer examination, it is apparent that the organizations define and implement social change differently (see Table 1).

Using Biklen's (1983) concepts of the charity model, professionalism, and the self-help model of organizing, I discuss the principal differences in ABT and SOCM's styles of organizing. In the charity model of service the service provider, typically prominent citizens, attempts to provide relief from unfavorable social conditions while simultaneously helping the individuals to gain greater independence and equality. Commenting on Biklen's concepts

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATIONAL VARIABLES

		ABT	SOCM
Structural Variables	Geographic Location	Urban	Rural
	Membership Base	Existing Institutions	Chapters & Individuals
	Membership Roles	Professional Organizer & Individuals Represent Institutions	Staff & Individual Members
	Funding	Institutional Dues	Member Dues & Fundraising
	Socioeconomic Composition	Heterogeneous Except Age	Heterogeneous Except Race
	Networks	IAF	Many Affiliations
Strategical Variables	Goals	Building the Organization	Building an Empowered Citizenry
	Strategies	Social Change by Becoming a "Player at the Table" in Political Structure	Social Change by Consciousness Raising & Leadership Development
	Issues	Benefit the Organization	Benefit Individual, Empower
	Focus of Social Change	Local	Local, State, Regional, & National
	Reaction to Social Problems	Proactive Emphasis	Reactive Emphasis
	Image	Strong Organization	Group of Empowered Individuals

of professionalism and the charity model, Williams summarizes the relationship between the role of the organizer and social change:

The main tenants of charity and professionalism are, respectively, doing good for others and marshaling exclusive control of the helping process by making it into a discipline. Both thrusts create and reinforce social hierarchies that elevate helpers and create dependence in the helped. No social change, no empowerment of the helped to assert themselves, can thus occur. The organizer who falls victim to either excess will ultimately fail (1984:571).

Conversely:

Self-help refers to groups developed and controlled by affected people themselves, by consumers and by victims. They are, by nature, committed to self-determination. Professionals and nonclients or nonconsumers can assist and even belong to self-help groups, but their role is always different than in traditional professional organizations....(Biklen, 1983:184).

Based on Biklen's two contrasting approaches to social change, I suggest reasons for organizing communities fall along a continuum ranging from self-interest to service. ABT and SOCM rest at separate places along this continuum, reflecting the structural and strategical variations between the groups.

The IAF promotes the idea of organizing in ones own self-interest. Pierce, states, "...people usually have a clear sense of their own self-interest. If something doesn't affect them pretty directly, they feel that they should leave it alone and let those whom it does affect deal with it" (1984:25). By this definition citizen recruitment

to community organizations depends on the citizens' need to solve a problem that directly affects them. After joining the group to solve their problem the organizer attempts to broaden their self-interest. He accomplishes this by defining the solving of other community problems as being in the person's best-interest.

There is an inconsistency between the IAF concept of self-interest and the role that self-interest actually plays in ABT. The IAF espouses the iron rule which states, "Never do for others what they can do for themselves" (IAF 50 Years Organizing For Change, 1990:17). Yet within the same IAF booklet that quotes the iron rule, it states that the community organization's purpose is to "stand for the whole" (1990:5). ABT strongly embraces the idea of representing the diverse interests of the citizens in community decision making. In essence, the members of ABT are acting as social advocates by working for and speaking for the less advantaged and powerful.

One reason for ABT's tendency towards advocacy may be revealed by examining its member institution composition. An ABT member commented that many of the church affiliated members got involved in the organization, not out of the self-interest, but out of the direct service motives that arise from the churches' social mission work. Their involvement stems not from their self-interest in changing their position in the community, but instead stems from a

desire to help other people and thereby improve the community. Since at this time, the majority of the active leaders represent churches, the organization may take on this motivation for organizing. As a result, ABT most closely resembles a charity model of service.

SOCM's motivation for organizing originates from the members themselves wanting to change their position in the community as well as changing the community itself. Historically, to be associated with the organization may mean losing ones job, being beaten, or having property mysteriously burned. Partially because of this risk, people who join SOCM have been strongly self-motivated. This tradition of self-motivation is reflected in SOCM's style of organizing. The reason for organizing is not limited to changing and improving the community. Rather, it extends to changing individuals' lives for the better.

For this reason SOCM employs a number of consciousness raising strategies. Consciousness raising is a process which:

Through group sharing, the members explore their past experiences with social institutions and people outside their own group, their attitudes toward each other and themselves, their economic position, their political beliefs, their aspirations, and their values. Through group meetings, members examine their history and try to understand and explain their current position (Biklen, 1983:193).

This process is commonly observed in most of SOCM organizational meetings and workshops. They try to create

an atmosphere in which members feel comfortable discussing their opinions. Time is set aside for small group discussion of issues as well as discussion by the entire group. During research actions members are encouraged to talk to other non-SOCM members that have knowledge of similar situations. For example, in one chapter, members called agencies and individuals in another state to ask about their experiences with tire burning incinerators. In another chapter, members traveled to another state to tour a paper plant similar to one that was proposed in their community.

Other consciousness raising strategies can be observed through SOCM's growing relationship with JONAH. Joint leadership retreats have focused not only on organizational strategies and tactics, but also they have addressed the reality of racism in society and within the organizations. Finally, SOCM's interaction with the Highlander Center has also encouraged consciousness raising. Members regularly attend workshops such as "Stop The Pollution" (STP) workshops. Individuals and groups of citizens travel from all over the United States and sometimes the world to attend these workshops. Individuals share their experiences, strategies, and knowledge with others doing similar work in their communities.

Although SOCM's consciousness raising approach may serve as an aid in winning organizational issues, this is

only a benefit. The real goal is to empower people with the sense that they themselves can affect change, with or without the organization. One member relates the experience of fighting the placement of two incinerators in Roane county:

It gave us a sense of power, a sense of control over something that was happening to us, we didn't have to [accept it] because politicians or local officials said you have to....

...SOCM provided that for us and we have a secret now that we'll never be the same. We'll never be ignorant again. We know we can call and we know there's things that we can do and...we can change things. We can make things happen (Appalshop video, 1991).

ABT does conduct education trainings on its issues such as school budgets and changes in the Knox County economy. They also hold leadership retreats where discussion is not simply limited to a decision on a vote. Yet, SOCM puts much more emphasis on the consciousness raising process. As Pierce (1984) explains, IAF affiliates spend little time on consciousness raising. Instead, ABT places more emphasis on building the organization.

Funding

Within the field of community organizing, there is considerable debate over the question of member-raised (hard) money and foundation (soft) money. Reliance on the soft, foundation money is seen as being a potential weakness of the organization. The reliance is seen as being a

problem for at least four reasons. First, an organization cannot count on the money from year to year because foundations most often give seed money to help the organization form initially. Second, the next year there may be more organizations competing for the same amount of money, so the organization may receive a smaller amount of money or none at all.

Third, some people believe that relying on foundation money shapes the organization's agenda. One of the organizers explained, "...you end up doing all kinds of faddish work.... You can never set your own agenda and you're...accountable to the grant makers rather than to the local organization." Biklen shares this view, "For some [self-help] groups...consumer control means economic self-reliance. It means avoiding federal and foundation funding that has strings attached" (1983:198).

Fourth, critics of foundation funding believe that members need to pay for the organization themselves. Doing otherwise increases dependency on the foundation and on the organizer, who writes the proposals. Both decrease members' sense of power in or ownership of the organization. Bobo, Kendall and Max support this view: "Grassroots fundraising gives people a sense of their own power....Members and leaders feel a great deal more power when they raise \$10,000 through an event than when one person writes a grant proposal and a foundation contributes

\$10,000" (1991:176). Since many community organizations are composed of the poor and the least powerful in their communities, it is difficult for the organizations to be entirely self-reliant financially. Therefore, community organizations constantly struggle to remain independent while still relying on some grant monies.

Because of its low membership dues of \$10 per year, per family, SOCM has been criticized for being too dependent on soft money. Some presume that foundations are controlling SOCM's agenda and that members do not experience real ownership in their organization. However, I do not believe this to be the case. SOCM raises 35-45% of its operating funds internally. Furthermore, while SOCM families are required to pay minimal dues, ownership of the organization is not completely determined by the membership dues. In addition to the dues, SOCM raises funds internally by sponsoring numerous fundraising events: walk-a-thons, phone-a-thons, concerts and dances, and selling t-shirt and sweat shirts. Although no single event nets a large sum of money, member involvement in the planning and execution of the event strengthens their sense of power and ownership in the organization.

ABT, on the other hand, is quick to point out that the members pay for their organization through dues from member institutions. This type of internal fundraising is based on the budgets of the member institutions. Thus, all members

of the institutions indirectly give to ABT, whether or not they are active ABT members. In fact, some of the institutions' members may not even be aware that part of their money is going to ABT. For example, the Western Heights Tenants Association receives .72 cents per housing unit from Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC). This money pays the Association's dues in ABT. Similarly, money collected as union dues or church offerings pays their institutions dues. Essentially, ABT is supported by institutions rather than individual members. This raises some questions as to whether ABT members feel the kind of ownership and power in their organization that member-driven, internal fundraising promotes.

Democracy

One of the primary goals of both organizations is increasing democratic participation in the political arena. One first notices the symbolic ways in which both organizations promote democracy. During meetings, members sit in a circle to encourage discussion and feelings of equality. But differences between the organizations appear when one observes who is and is not allowed to speak and sit in the circle.

At ABT strategy and policy team meetings, anyone attending may speak and sit in the circle, including the

organizer. However, participation is limited at certain events such as the economic development panel discussion, (fall 1991) in which only the community leaders, certain ABT leaders, the ABT organizer, and the IAF regional organizer were the only people allowed to sit at the table and participate in the discussion. Likewise, during strategy and policy team meetings, the organizer frequently conducts lecture-style trainings on IAF strategies related to the current issue. There is little interaction or participation in discussion during these trainings.

This practice has also been observed at other IAF trainings. A person that attended one of the IAF ten day trainings commented on the lack of interaction between the organizer leading the training and the participants. Greider (1992) also supports this contention while describing an IAF meeting in Texas where state-wide "key leaders" were gathered together to discuss a paper concerning education reform. He writes:

The only discordant note was quickly smothered by Cortes [a principal IAF organizer]. A priest rose to speak in behalf of the 'school voucher issue'...and one mother seconded his plea....Cortes responded with a soliloquy on Thomas Jefferson and the need for a unifying 'common culture' in America --- a diversion that seemed to close the subject.

Outside in the lobby later, Cortes bluntly warned the priest to back off, lest he provoke and argument....

There was no debate to speak of. The format was highly structured and, ultimately, designed to avoid random digressions and encourage consensus. Ernie Cortes was the principal teacher, but also essentially the leader (Greider, 1992:231-232).

This vivid description of another IAF meeting mirrors ABT's emphasis on consensus and suppression of conflicting ideas.

SOCM chapter meetings are similar to the ABT strategy and policy team meetings. However, at SOCM board meetings only the board members are allowed to sit at the table. Other members, visitors and the staff sit around the circle. During board meetings, the staff are only to comment or advise when specifically asked. Other members may ask permission to address the board. SOCM leaders tend to be the ones that conduct the informal workshops or trainings within the meetings. Usually, the staff person only assists in the trainings although the staff may also lead at times. This reflects the attempt at keeping the decision making member controlled.

Although the SOCM staff are recruited both from outside organization and from within the organization, once a member becomes a part of the staff, the member gives up his privilege to actively participate in decision-making discussions. All staff persons are treated as outsiders in the decision-making process.

Differences in member and organizer roles are apparent when observing these meetings. The different titles conferred on their organizers reflect differences in the roles each plays. The ABT organizer is called the organizer, while the SOCM organizer is called the staff person or staffer. The ABT name for organizer has a much

more active connotation to it while the SOCM name has a much more passive, subordinate connotation to it. In this manner, SOCM closely resembles Biklen's self-help model:

Self-help members will define the professional as a consultant not a leader, not a decision maker, and certainly not the decision maker. Self-help groups expect professionals to be willing to learn the self-help organization's perspectives, values, and knowledge....They [members] will also accept advice if they have sought it, but will certainly reject paternalism (1983:205).

In addition to the actual participation in the decision making process regarding issues, both organizations try to promote democratic participation in the selection of issue. This process is an important reflection of the actual degree of democratic participation in the organization.

ABT members are very proud of the techniques that they use to select issues. The process is proclaimed by members as the most democratic method of selecting issues. It begins with house meetings. These meetings are held in various places all over town and various groups in the community. Therefore, the meetings' participants are considered to be representative of a cross-section of the population of the community. In essence the house meeting serves as survey of the local population regarding community concerns.

After the community concerns are identified at the house meetings, the strategy team selects the most beneficial issue to the organization. Above other concerns, the issue must be winnable and aid in building the

organization. ABT plays an advocacy role because it intends to represent the "people's" wishes. Yet, there are questions as to whether ABT's issues adequately represent the most important concerns to the community. The question follows, whose concerns are being represented after going through the strategy team where there are limits to an issue's selectability? For example, one of the ongoing areas in which ABT works involves the economic development of Knox County, thereby increasing the employment opportunities. Their focus in two different campaigns, thus far, has been on promoting the development of the Pellissippi High-Tech Corridor. One member explained to me that thousands of high paying jobs would be produced from this development. That point is not in question. The corridor development will no doubt bring new well paying jobs into the area. However, most of these high paying jobs require certain educational requirements. Additionally, these jobs will be located on the perimeter of the county and in other counties, far from Knoxville's inner city. Again, the question arises, does ABT's issues truly represent "community concerns" or do they represent concerns of certain segments of the population?

SOCM on the other hand, derives its issues from the local chapters. Although SOCM issues usually focus on improving the community, members do not presume to speak for all citizens. Instead, issues are chosen because of their

importance to the members of the chapter. Chapter issues which members feel strongly about are then voted on by the elected board to become organizational wide issues.

One would assume that organizations which embrace the concept of democratic participation would represent the diversity found in the community in which they organize. Yet, both ABT and SOCM do not realize this assumption. SOCM lacks adequate racial diversity and ABT and SOCM lack diversity in age of their members. Biklen reminds us:

Given that social protest has never been legitimized as a form of political expression, even though it has been recurrent and influential in America's history, it should surprise no one that people are generally ill-informed about how to participate or, for that matter, support it. In school, we learn how to vote, but not how to stand at the barricades, hand out leaflets or compose poster slogans. We learn a great deal about how legislators make laws but little about the workings of social protest groups. In a very real sense the history most of us learn in school is the history of leaders and of dominant institutions, not a history of ordinary people or insurgent protest organizations (1983: 103).

Traditionally the organizations have dealt with this inadequacy by teaching organizing skills to the adults of their communities. However, given that we are not taught to organize, protest, and actively participate in our government after elections, it would seem that an organization concerned with broad based social change and organizational longevity, would elicit the active involvement of youth within the organization. Although SOCM began addressing this issue over a year ago by hiring a

youth director and co-sponsoring a yearly youth encampment, youth involvement is still low.

ABT still has not yet identified this as an issue. When youth involvement is addressed it is through encouraging members to bring their children to the actions and assemblies or through the organizer's efforts to rebuild a member church's youth program. However, the children are not truly learning about organizing unless they are actively involved in the organization. If the theory that just attending actions and general assemblies would somehow teach one organizing and empowerment strategies, then most of the ABT meetings and IAF involvement in the organization would be unnecessary. ABT's other approach to youth involvement emphasizes strengthening already existing programs within the member institutions. The problem is that not all children within ABT member institutions have a youth program. Consequently, this provides a basis for division between the haves and the have-nots in an institution that is suppose to be promoting social change.

Racial diversity is still a problem within SOCM, although it has been identified as an issue of concern by some members. The organization has been working towards solving this problem by increasing interaction with JONAH. However, at the chapter level, minorities in the community still seem to be overlooked when recruiting new members. Even at the organizational level there is question as to

whether addressing the issue exclusively by developing closer organizational ties with JONAH is an adequate solution.

ABT has a strong aversion to the concept of being part of any movement. Their concept, promoted by the IAF philosophy, is that movements and community organizations are somehow exclusive. Pierce comments on differences between movements and community organizations:

Movements are often organized around a particular charismatic leader or a single issue or both....membership is by the individual --- not the congregation. Action is on the national or international level, and is often symbolic. Movements are highly dependent on the whim of the media for their existence and effectiveness. Some movements have money while they are popular but then spend the rest of their lives trying to maintain their solvency and justify their existence (1984:48).

I contend however that these community organizations are part of a large grassroots movement to promote democratic citizen participation. Individually, these community organizations change their communities on a local basis, but to change the system on a state, regional, or national basis, individual organizations must work together. In this cooperative effort, they exchange ideas, experiences, and strategies which strengthens their endeavor.

However, except for working on specific issue campaigns, IAF affiliates such as ABT avoid such cooperation with groups other than the affiliates. They instead prefer

to wait until other IAF affiliate organizations have been developed in the state. Additionally, they have a future goal of linking state efforts at a national level. Still their plan holds little room for other citizen's groups or styles of organizing for fear that they can not hold the other groups accountable.

Media

Utilizing the media is a common strategy within the field of community organizing. Although there is general agreement that the media should be used, there is disagreement as to how the media should be approached. Pierce states, "The media are perhaps the single most powerful ally of organized citizens" (1984:67). Bobo, Kendall, and Max (1991) recommend utilizing the media as part of building the organization. The goal is to win issues, gain name recognition for the organization, recruit members, and to aid in fundraising. They also indicate that any media attention is good because negative coverage provides the organization with a forum in which to respond. Thus negative coverage can be transformed into a positive opportunity for the group.

Biklen (1983) also advises using the power of the media to gain both name recognition and attention to the organization's issue. However, he cautions that the

alliance of the media has traditionally been on the side of the status quo. Biklen goes on to suggest that individuals should identify themselves as members of an organization to gain legitimacy: "The news media will tend not to treat individuals seriously --- individuals will generally be ignored as 'oddballs' or deviants...." (1983:173).

Consequently, organizations should be cautious when employing media strategies.

ABT and SOCM approach the media in different manners. These differences in approaching and utilizing the media reflect the differences in the organizations' overarching goals. ABT's main objective is to "be a player at the table" and build their organization. Therefore ABT is extremely conscious about promoting itself in the media and uses every opportunity to do so. Members speaking to the media always identify themselves as ABT members. To ensure the proper image to the public, events and speeches are planned, practiced very deliberate in their message. To this end, ABT has been successful. More people recognize the organization's name today than a year and a half ago. They also have been mentioned in at least 23 articles during 1990 and 46 articles during 1991 in local newspapers. In addition they have also been referred to numerous times on local television stations.

SOCM on the other hand is inconsistent in its use of the media. Occasionally the organization's name is

mentioned in the media while covering a community issue. However, much of the time, SOCM's work on the issue goes unacknowledged. Instead, the SOCM member is identified as a concerned citizen of the community. This may be due to three factors. First, historically, some SOCM members have publicly downplayed their involvement with the organization because of threats and potential violence from strong opposition. Therefore it has been much "safer" not to make an issue of identifying oneself as a SOCM member. Second, SOCM has been a predominately reactive organization. Unlike a proactive issues --- which take the form of issue campaigns and can be planned and practiced --- many of the issues that SOCM has been involved in are in reaction to changing situations. There is not always enough time to prepare media statements and actions. Finally, I believe SOCM's approach to the media also reflects their goal of empowering the individual. It is not as important for SOCM to get attention as an organization as it is for members to have the experience of speaking publicly about a community concern. It is part of the process of validating members' ideas and opinions.

Summary

Community organizing literature is confusing in that sometimes it implies that there is basically one approach to

community organizing which is dressed up differently depending on the particular preferences of the group. All community organizations have the basic goal of improving social conditions in their community which is achieved by encouraging collective citizen involvement in the political process. Yet, there are different styles of community organizing due to varying concepts of social change. Styles of organizing are not created from an organization's choices in structure and tactics. Instead, these particular choices reflect the ideological differences in the styles of community organizing.

A group's style of organizing depends upon their definition of social change. All community organizing is attempting to change the political system --- the way that decisions are made in the community. However, all community organizations do not answer the following questions in the same manner: 1) Why are we trying to change the existing situation? 2) How do we begin changing it? To the first question, the answer may either be to become one of the decision makers in the community or to improve the quality of life of the members of the organization. The second question may be addressed by either the building of a powerful organization or by the emphasis on empowering the individual members. In addition the answers to these questions either are developed: 1) by members of the community and evolve through interaction with others, or 2)

from an organizational ideology and are taught to community members by an organizer.

Both ABT and SOCM are part of the grassroots redemocratization movement now being witnessed in the United States. They have both been successful in creating social change and encouraging people to participate in the political system who would not otherwise. However, the organizations do differ in styles of organizing --- one is more participation and member-driven than the other.

SOCM members make the decisions about the issues which they want to work on, they involve members in the process, and many times they win issues that improve the social conditions of the community. But more importantly to them, they help change the individual by emphasizing consciousness raising and member participation. The member comes to believe that he can and should participate in making changes and improvements not only in the community, but in his daily life. SOCM members have set their own agenda. The members have developed their own organizing ideology, although it may be revised as it was in the early 1980's. They are not dogmatic about their style of organizing. They welcome and encourage open democratic dialogue on other styles.

After general community concerns are identified at house meetings, a group of ABT members do make the decisions concerning the issues which they want to work on. These decisions though are heavily influenced by the ability of

the issue to bring attention to and strengthen the organization. ABT involves members in the issue campaigns, and they win issues that change the social conditions of the community. However, the organizer is the one who sets the organization's agenda. He comes into the community with an organizing ideology. Other styles of organizing are discounted as being ineffective or pointless. ABT's main goal is to build a strong organization which will force the powers-that-be to listen. Therefore the power of the individual is dependent upon the organization.

ABT and SOCM's definitions and implementations of strategies to affect social change consequently reflect their emphasis on democratic participation. Although SOCM is not a pure self-help group and ABT is not a pure charity-service organization, their styles of organizing are rooted in the models.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

This final chapter provides an overview and summarizes the thesis. In addition it addresses the implications of the findings of the study and suggests areas of further research.

Thesis Overview

This thesis was developed from a multiple-case study of local community organizations, ABT and SOCM. In order to obtain a comprehensive view of the two organizations, a qualitative research approach was employed. The field research methods included participant observation, interviews, and document research. The purpose of the study was to identify possible differences in the organizations' styles of organizing and then to explore the basis for the differences. Due to the lack of strong theories of community organizing, a framework was derived from a diverse body of literature concerning community organizing and initial observations of the organizations. For a comparative analysis of ABT and SOCM, twelve organizational variables were identified. The six structural variables included: geographic location, membership base, membership roles, funding, socioeconomic composition, and networks.

The six strategical variables consisted of: goals, strategies, issues, focus of social change, reaction to social problems, and image.

The comparison utilizing the organizational variables revealed differences in the organizations' structural and strategical choices. However, these differences are only important in that they illuminate the differences in ABT's and SOCM's reasons for organizing. ABT as part of the IAF network wants a place at the table of the local decision makers, much like traditional pluralists. To this end, building the organization is of primary concern to the organizer and members. Similar to new populism, SOCM's goal is to empower individuals in communities in order to change unjust situations. Therefore, the organization's emphasis is on member participation and consciousness raising.

Implications

There is now a wide spread and growing movement in the United States to redemocratize the political system. This is evident in the growth of grassroots community organizations. These organization are not single issue oriented, but are affecting change in the system by encouraging citizen participation. ABT and SOCM are part of this movement. Yet in the literature, independent organizations like SOCM are commonly overshadowed by the

attention given to the IAF network.

This study is important for two primary reasons. First, it does identify two different styles of grassroots community organizing. This is significant because much of the current literature implicitly implies that the IAF model of organizing is the "correct" model for citizens to employ if they are interested in democratic participation in the political system. Second, related to the first, the IAF model promoted in contemporary literature as one of the best means to redemocratize politics, may be less democratic in practice than other styles. The comparison of ABT and SOCM seems to indicate this possibility. In addition to the way in which issues are selected and the roles that members play in the organizations, there are differences in the groups' openness to working with other organizations. Openness to associations with other organizations is important not only in the exchange of ideas, but also in advancing the efforts of the national redemocratization movement. Yet ABT refrains from developing alliances with non-IAF organizations.

This study suggests a number of areas for further research. First, other social scientists interested in community organizing need to focus more attention on non-IAF community organizations such as the SEP affiliate organizations. Documentation and exploration of the networks of independent grassroots community organizations

that are working in cooperation at local, regional, and national levels to affect social change would be an area of great interest. Second, although the IAF is over 50 years old most of their growth has occurred since 1985. In 1990, 15 out of the 24 IAF affiliates listed had been founded in 1985 or after (IAF 50 Years Organizing For Change, 1990). Further research is needed concerning the development of these relatively new IAF affiliate organizations. Finally, social scientists may be able to develop the concept of a continuum of styles of social change community organizations from grassroots, member-run, self-help groups to nationally sponsored advocacy/service organizations. This is essential to validating various approaches to social change and thereby strengthening the redemocratization movement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Summary of Data Collection

09/13/90	ABT Policy Team Meeting
10/03/90	SOCM Education for Community Action Meeting Education Action, Economic Workshop
10/17/90	Interview
10/19/90	Interview
10/19/90	Traveled with ABT Organizer
10/31/90	Interview
11/02/90	Visit SOCM Office, Archival Research
11/03/90	Interview
11/16/90	Practice Meeting for ABT General Assembly Take Charge Action (Education Campaign)
11/18/90	ABT General Assembly Take Charge Action (Education Campaign)
11/19/90	Interview
02/12/91	ABT School Budget Workshop
02/21/91	ABT Policy Team Meeting
02/25/91	ABT Labor Caucus
02/28/91	SOCM Chapter Meeting
03/21/91	ABT Policy Team Meeting First School Budget/Education Hearing
04/02/91	ABT Strategy Team Meeting
04/04/91	ABT Research Action Second School Budget/Education Hearing
04/11/91	ABT Policy Team Meeting
04/15/91	SOCM Chapter Public Action Protest March, Public Hearing

05/02/91	ABT General Assembly
07/10/91	ABT Action, Public Hearing
07/11/91	ABT Action, Public Hearing
07/15/91	Visit SOCM Office, Archival Research
07/15/91	Travel with SOCM Staff Person
07/15/91	SOCM Chapter Meeting
07/16/91	SOCM Action, Public Hearing
07/20/91	SOCM Board Meeting
07/22/91	SEP Organizer's Training Seminar
07/23/91	SEP Organizer's Training Seminar
07/24/91	SEP Organizer's Training Seminar
08/06/91	SOCM/JONAH Youth Encampment
08/24/91	SOCM Annual Picnic
09/08/91	Interview
10/29/91	Chapter Meeting Year-end Goal Setting Meeting
11/14/91	ABT Panel Discussion
02/05/92	SOCM Northern Internal Fundraising Committee Meeting
02/11/92	SOCM Grassroots Assembly Day, Nashville Education and Public Actions
06/09/92	Interview
06/11/92	Interview

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

An interview guide was utilized during the interview as a stimulus for discussion of general topics of interest. More specific questions followed these general ones depending upon the interests and experiences of the interviewee. The interview guide below is an example of the general interview guide that I used, however, in each interview was some what unique in its focus.

1. Describe your organization to me. What are its goals and objectives?
2. How did you become involved with the organization?
3. How are leaders/officers/organizers chosen? What is your role in the organization?
4. Describe your organization's meetings. Where and when do they meet?
5. What is the main purpose of these meetings?
6. Who attends them -- all members or certain subgroups?
7. How are the issues that your organization works on identified? Are there any limits to the issues on which you will work?
8. How does your organization raise money to support itself?
9. How are new members recruited? Are there any certain groups of people that are specifically targeted?
10. Is your organization affiliated with any other groups or organizations?
11. What do you feel makes your organization successful?
12. What are its weaknesses?
13. What do you think are the difference between your organization's style of organizing and others?

VITA

Rebecca Lynn Rader was born in Hamilton, Ohio on October 5, 1966. In 1972 she moved with her parents to Powell, Tennessee where they lived until 1980. She attended Powell Elementary School and Powell Middle School before moving to St. Cloud, Minnesota. She finished junior high in St. Cloud and graduated with high honors from St. Cloud Technical High School in 1985. In May of 1989, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with honors from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The following fall semester, Ms. Rader began the Master's program in Sociology at UTK. While in the program, she served as a Graduate Teaching Assistant/Associate. She also presented two papers at regional meetings. In the spring of 1990 she presented a paper at the Southern Sociological Society meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. Later, in the fall of 1990, she also participated in a panel discussion of a co-authored paper at the Mid-South Sociological Society meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Ms. Rader completed her thesis "Redemocratizing America: A Comparative Case Study of Two East Tennessee Community Organizations" in August of 1992. She obtained the Master's degree in Sociology in December of 1992.