

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

CALGARY'S DOWNTOWN CHURCHES, 1955-1985:
A CASESTUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE
TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

by

Cliff Underwood

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 1986



CLIFF UNDERWOOD 1986

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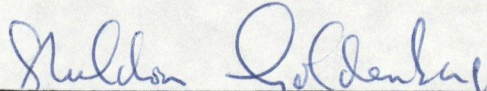
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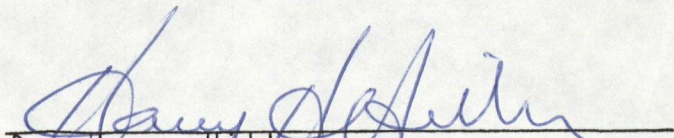
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ISBN 0-315-32769-3

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "Calgary's Downtown Churches, 1955-1985: A Case-study of Organizational Response to Environmental Change", submitted by Cliff Underwood in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.


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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine historical, transitional processes as they concern organizational response to environmental change. The study looks at twenty-nine churches which are presently residing or were residing in the downtown core between 1955 and 1985. Environmental change, demographic, physical, and functional, has taken place as the area experienced CBD development. The variety of responses by the churches can be categorized into three main types: CBD persistence, relocation, and extinction.

Taking a primarily structural perspective, the study looked at the relationship of organizational and environmental factors. These variables included the type and degree of environmental change, the churches' constituency orientations, church resources, impact and outcome of environmental changes upon the churches. The study sought to explain why different churches responded differently, and also sought to determine to what extent those responses were the result of environmental selection, and to what extent those responses evidenced strategic choice.

DEDICATION

To Margot, Elizabeth, and James who helped
and encouraged in so many ways and without
whose support this thesis could never have
been completed.

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Preface

Finding the Problem: Life-history of a Thesis Topic

Lending weight to the argument that scientific research is to some degree a serendipitous enterprise, the topic for this study was first initiated while "killing time" looking through old city newspapers. One interesting observation was the considerable amount of space devoted to the "church news" sections of the papers of several decades ago as compared to today's newspapers. My initial impression was that the churches of the 1950's played a more significant role in the overall social-life of the city. This observation certainly was not profound but as I compared the earlier religion sections with the later, I was struck by, in some cases, the complete disappearance of a number of churches from the city, and the changes wrought by others as to location, programs or constituency. This observation set in motion a series of investigations beginning first with an archival search of the city street directories printed since 1955. This initial search produced an interesting record of the movement of churches in and out from the center of the city. The dominant direction of that institutional migration was centrifugal, leaving the central area of the city with only eight churches in 1985 where there was once twenty-three in 1955.

This initial investigation also produced, as was expected, a record of rapid increases in the numbers of suburban churches as the city grew outward. However, the focus of this study will be upon those churches which have been located within the core of the city which is now the Central Business District (CBD). These churches, at first glance, seem to have experienced rapid and often traumatic changes to a far greater degree than churches located in more stable areas of the city. They present interesting possibilities for the study of the effects of CBD development upon voluntary, member-based organizations as they experience the demographic and physical changes concomitant with an emerging CBD. It would be a study of the "processes" of adaptation by churches to a particularly radical community transition.

Having loosely defined the problem, I then needed to deal with the methodological issues. If one had the "luxury" of beginning with a well-defined theoretical framework, then it would be easier to determine the most suitable research strategy. According to the common dicta of the "hypothetico-deductive" method, the researcher simply begins with theoretical postulates which in turn direct him to the most suitable methodology to test the hypotheses as they apply to the phenomena under study. Kaplan, however, has criticized this "reconstructed logic" saying that "the most important incidents in the drama of

science are enacted somewhere behind the scenes.... The conventional reconstruction presents the denouement, but we remain ignorant of the plot" (1964: p 10). The "plot" of this study can best be described as centering around a voyage of discovery rather than one of confirmation or disconfirmation.

Having said that, two qualifications must be made. First, taking an exploratory route does not necessarily imply that it is possible or even preferable to enter *tabula rasa*. The particular emphases or directions of any study will be informed by related studies and findings. Second, and connected to the first qualification, is the understanding that the study must seek to contribute to a larger theoretical body. In this study, the findings and discussion should relate to the more general material concerning organizations and transitional processes. The paper must not simply be content to reside exclusively at the level of a locally-defined case study

To accomplish this generation of hypotheses and hopefully contribute to "middle-range theory" dealing with organizations and change, I settled upon the comparative life history method (see Denzin, 1978: chapt.8). Following chapter one, which will discuss in fuller detail, with a literature review, the problem on which the study will focus its exploration, chapter two will discuss the

comparative life-history method and how it will be used. Its applicability to the study of organizations will be addressed as well as the sampling, validity and reliability issues. Finally, the method's suitability for negative case analysis or analytic induction in determining causality will be discussed.

Chapter three will begin a presentation and discussion of the findings. Principally this chapter will give the historical background regarding changes in the downtown core, and changes in the situation of the churches themselves. Chapter four will "map-out" the response-behaviour sequences, or "careers" of downtown churches. Chapter five will formulate and test several hypotheses which attempt to explain why the churches followed particular careers. Chapter six will conclude by suggesting an agenda for further research.

CHAPTER ONE

The Ecological Model Applied To Downtown Churches

To the reflective visitor to the central business district in many Canadian cities, the location may present a contradictory impression of both vitality and sterility. One will be struck by the dynamism of big business and "nine to five" productivity. One might at the same time conclude that there exists little at a human scale. The environment appears barren in the sense of "people interaction", and the impersonality of multi-storied office buildings and monotonous concrete seems to confirm the popular image of the sterile city core.

In the midst of this "high-tech" world of polished steel and glass highrises, the sight of a traditional sandstone church with stained-glass windows seems to present an anachronism. It is the intention of this study to look more closely at these downtown churches, and to discover how it is that such institutions have responded in a setting that has experienced the rapid changes in character that accompany CBD development.

The principal field of research and literature from which this study will derive its direction and problematic issues is that body of material which deals with

organizational change and environmental influences. In summing up the progress of organizational sociology to the early 70's, Aldrich contends that the primary emphasis on organizational change has been on the "internal workings" of organizations, with environment often only superficially considered (1979: pp. 1-25; also Rushing and Zald, 1976: pp.113-114). Partly in reaction to, and partly complementary to this traditional model, the ecological model of organizations has been developed which emphasizes the role of environmental factors in determining organizational outcomes. This model contends that organizational environments must be understood if organizational decisions and responses are to be understood. It is held that organizations are pushed and pulled in various directions by the demands of their environments. The debate that rages both within and without the model concerns the degree to which organizational fortunes are dependent upon the environment and the degree to which internal decisions and manipulations can modify the organization-environment relationship.

On both sides of the debate, there is general agreement that organizational change is a consequence of organizations interacting with their environments. The crucial issue centers around the weights that should be

assigned to environmental selection and to strategic choice.

The perspective emphasizing environmental selection suggests that the "environmental factors select those organizational characteristics that best fit the environment" (Aldrich and Pfeffer 1976: p. 79; also Kaufman 1975, Hannan and Freeman 1974). Organizational change is accomplished as those structures which fit the environment survive and those which do not survive, disappear. According to this model, the ability of the organization to make adaptations to the environment is greatly circumscribed; nor does it have the ability to affect the selection process.

At the other end of the debate spectrum, there is the ecological perspective which emphasizes "strategic choice", a term coined by Child (1972), who has disagreed with the over-emphasis on environmental determinism. He, along with Chandler (1962) and others, contend that while the environment does exert particular constraints on the organization, there is still room for the organization to make strategic choices in the form of structural changes and even environmental manipulation in order to assure survival and growth. The assumption is that these organizations have the resources to understand, anticipate and implement the steps that must be taken to adapt to

changing conditions, as well as the power and willingness to enact those strategies.

Holding that this ability to anticipate and adapt is very limited, Hannan and Freeman write about the processes generating structural inertia which curtail adaptive flexibility. These include such internal components as the organization's investment in plant, equipment and specialized personnel. There are also limits upon the perceptions of their environment, as well as the constraints generated by the sense of history or tradition that may reside within the organization. Externally, the organizations must face limitations placed upon them by zoning and other legal barriers, as well as dealing with the expectations or legitimacy constraints put upon them by an outside public (1977: pp. 930-933). Kaufman suggests other related factors which contribute to organizational inflexibility: 1) the tendency of organizational members not to think and behave outside of organizationally acceptable parameters, making innovation very difficult, and 2) the inter-connectedness of the organization to other organizations such that change can only be made if the others also make changes (1975: pp. 139-140).

The debate then centers around the degree to which we will assign autonomy of organizational response to environmental change. An ultimate resolution of the debate

can not be achieved here. There is obviously a great deal of variation that exists across environments and organizations. Aldrich (1979) sums up the literature dealing with variations within environments. It includes: 1.) environment capacity -"the relative level of resources available to an organization within its environment" and 2.) environmental stability-instability -"the degree of turnover in the elements of the environment" (1979: pp. 63-70). There is as well great variation in the types and sizes of organizations. Studies have looked at very powerful organizations such as General Motors and Dupont (Chandler 1962), and at small organizations. Averitt (1968) makes a distinction between "center firms" which have power to manipulate their environments and "periphery firms" which can only react to, rather than influence, their environments. Rossi (1980) has suggested that one important factor in determining how critical the environmental changes will be for organizations is the constituency orientation of the organization. That is, a change in the local demography of the area in which the organization is located would be far more critical for a locally-oriented organization than for an organization that serves a metropolitan population (Rossi 1980: p. 108).

Despite this variation that exists in the literature between types of environments and between types of organizations, there are some researchers who would still

insist that the question of environmental selection or strategic choice is an either/or issue (see particularly Hannan and Freeman 1977). This study, however, concerning a number of religious organizations and their response to environmental change, views the two extremes as points marking a continuum. Central to the entire discussion will be an attempt to articulate the interaction of environmental constraints and organizational strategy in determining response outcomes. The eventual statements that are made concerning this relationship will hopefully contribute to a larger field of inquiry which looks at rapidly changing environments, such as would occur during CBD development, and how such change affects smaller, voluntary membership-based organizations such as churches.

The next two sections of this chapter then, will look more specifically at the issues concerning CBD development and at literature which deals with churches and their environments. A third and concluding section will articulate the central problematic of the study.

A.) CBD Development and Organizations

Urban geographers have looked at the push-pull forces, concentration and deconcentration, experienced by institutions in relation to the CBD (Colby 1933; Berry and Cohen 1973; Guterbock 1976). James Bird lists the contextual factors which pull institutions from the city

center: a) increasing land values and the difficulties of horizontal expansion, b) traffic congestion and parking restrictions, c) decline of social importance of inner suburbs. He lists, as well, the factors which make the central site attractive: a) prestige location, b) function convenience, ie: access from all parts of the city. He also lists the factors which pull institutions to the suburbs: a) large parcels of land available at relatively low costs, b) "circumferential transport arterial development", c) attractive site qualities, ie: landscaping (1977: 105-107).

These push-pull factors in the CBD can only be understood in relation to what is happening in the rest of the city, particularly the rapid development of the suburbs. The advantages of central location for many institutions has been diminished by improved technology in transportation, communication, etc.. For a number of institutions it now is more advantageous to locate in the suburbs or peripheries of the city. What has happened in cities as they experience the ongoing process of CBD development, is a "sorting out" of activities largely directed by economic considerations of efficiency and locational advantage. Berry and Cohen suggest that financial, specialized retail, and administrative institutions have tended to dominate the central city while

other institutions have been "squeezed out" (1973: pp. 434-435).

The city core has seen a transition in its character and function. It no longer provides the primary locus for a number of activities and functions. Breckenfeld describes some of this transition particularly as one aspect of suburban development has abrogated some of the CBD roles:

The shopping center has become the piazza of America. In the big metropolitan areas and smaller cities alike ... indoor piazzas are reshaping much of American life. Giant regional shopping centers have risen by the hundreds across the nation and are still going up by the score. To an amazing degree they are seizing the role once held by the central business district, not only in retailing but as the social cultural, and recreational focal point of the entire community ... (1972 quoted in Berry and Cohen 1973: p. 452).

The importance of CBD development and the changing character and function of the CBD as it affects religious organizations will be discussed further in chapter three.

B.) Urban Churches and Their Environments

Much of the literature concerning urban-churches suggests that religious institutions are profoundly affected by their immediate environments. Changes in this environment will affect the institutions ability to survive

in its location. A very early study by Douglas and Brunner looking at a thousand urban churches concludes:

The first (factor in church life) is the concrete social situation which immediately surrounds a local church as an individual unit of religious organization. The quality and changes of this environment are almost inevitably communicated to the church. Differences in human fortunes suffered by the church's immediate constituencies and changes in these fortunes due to changes in the environment largely control the institutional destinies of each particular church. Where the environment is prosperous and progressive the church can scarcely fail to "succeed". When it is miserable and deteriorating the church can scarcely avoid failure (1935: 237).

Churches in different sections of the city are confronted with different influences. Some seem to be located in productive environments, others in non-productive. For instance, research has shown that churches grow "best" in areas where young families with children are present (McKinney, 1979; Hadaway, 1981). Marshall sums up a number of studies which looked at suburban and urban church attendance. His conclusion was that there were higher rates of church attendance in the suburbs. These higher rates reflected a sense of public solidarity which was largely a result of home-ownership and residential homogeneity (1973: pp.130-131; also Winter 1961; Gans 1967; Carlos 1970). James and Wilson looked at

churches in seventy-nine American cities and reported that 70% of the downtown churches lost members between 1960 and 1973, while the large majority of the suburban churches were growing (1974: p. viii). Hadaway looked at 1970-1980 membership change in the Memphis churches. He found that 100% of the downtown churches were experiencing decline. At the same time less than 10% of the churches in the new suburbs were declining while over 70% were experiencing growth (1982).

A number of sociological studies have asserted that the high mobility and rapid turnover of populations contribute to lower participation rates in local institutions, including religious organizations (Roof, 1972; Berry and Kasarda, 1978; Wuthrow and Christiano, 1979; Welch, 1983). Michelson found that the frequency and type of memberships that people held in secular associations do not significantly vary in residential location in the city. However his study showed that church membership does not seem to fit that pattern. His sample shows that 50% of the suburban homeowners go to church while only 24% of the downtown apartment dwellers attend church. The suburbanites were also more frequent attenders. These relationships were maintained even when controlling for life and family cycle (1977: p. 197).

C.) The Problematic

So far all that this discussion has established is that the downtown churches face a set of contextual constraints that are qualitatively unique to their location. The demographic and functional changes of the city-core have generally meant that the CBD churches have encountered a shift in their environment which makes their continuance in the core, and even their survival, increasingly tenuous. On the surface, then, the study appears to be dealing with a constant, CBD development, and its affect upon the fortunes of the downtown churches. However, I will argue and demonstrate that different churches experienced different degrees of environmental "disturbance". I will also argue that the churches, themselves, in the face of pressing environmental change, vary as to their ability to cope with such changes.

The work by Aldrich (1977), Rossi (1980), and by Averitt (1968) helps to give an initial theoretical basis and framework to direct the study. That is, according to Aldrich, the particular responses of the organizations depends upon the level of disturbance that the organization's environment has undergone. Different degrees and types of disturbances will place different demands upon the organizations. Closely related to this is Rossi's contention that different organizations are more

vulnerable to different types of changes. In particular, the different constituency orientations of the organizations mean that environmental change of one type may have more relevance to one organization than to another (1980: p. 108). At the same time, according to Averitt, organizations differ as to their ability to influence their environment and respond in positive ways to affect their survival. While Averitt confined his study to basically a dichotomy of very powerful, environment-influencing organizations and small environment-reactive organizations, he has shown that there is an important variation in the ability of organizations to respond to environmental change.

This study will, then, describe the downtown churches as varying according to two important dimensions: 1.) the level and type of environmental disturbance experienced by the particular church and 2.) its ability to make strategic choices in the context of environmental constraints. Let me explain how these dimensions will be used in the study: the earlier discussion in this chapter summarized literature from urban geography and from urban-church studies. These two bodies of literature directly or indirectly highlighted two general types of environmental changes connected with CBD development. Urban geographers basically spoke of physical and functional shifts while the urban-church studies focused on

demographic factors. This study will demonstrate that both of these types of environmental change or disturbance have taken place in the CBD study area. Furthermore, different churches were more "vulnerable" to one type of change as opposed to the other type, according to the church's historical constituency orientation. Some of these religious organizations have focused primarily upon a locally defined community, while the others have a metropolitan orientation. CBD development, for both types of churches, entails particular constraints and opportunities for their organizational life. Rossi contends that locally-oriented organizations are much more affected by demographic shifts in their immediate location than are the metropolitan-oriented organizations (1980: 108). Rossi does not go any further to suggest whether or not metropolitan-oriented organizations are affected by other types of changes in local environment. However this study will argue that changes in the physical and functional character of their downtown location, particularly in relation to the rest of the city, will place constraints on the ability of the metropolitan-oriented churches to attract people to the city center.

The assumption is then, that for the downtown churches, certain churches were affected differently by CBD development than were others. Depending upon their

constituency orientation different constraints were placed upon them. It is expected that the churches will respond in different ways, but the further question for both types of churches is whether or not they have at their disposal the wherewithal and the willingness to overcome these constraints. This introduces the second important dimension along which the churches vary: their ability to respond strategically to the environmental contingencies. This ability to respond, according to much of the organizational literature (Averitt 1968; Child 1972; Aldrich and Pfeffer 1976; Aldrich 1979; Miles 1981; Tichy 1981), is largely dependent upon the economic, political and ideological resources of the organization. Organizations that are able to call upon these resources have greater opportunity to expand the range of discretionary choices within the parameters of environmental constraints. This then gets back to the key problematic and focus of the study: what are the structural factors both within and without the organization which influence and make possible or not possible particular strategies and responses to the new conditions of their environment?

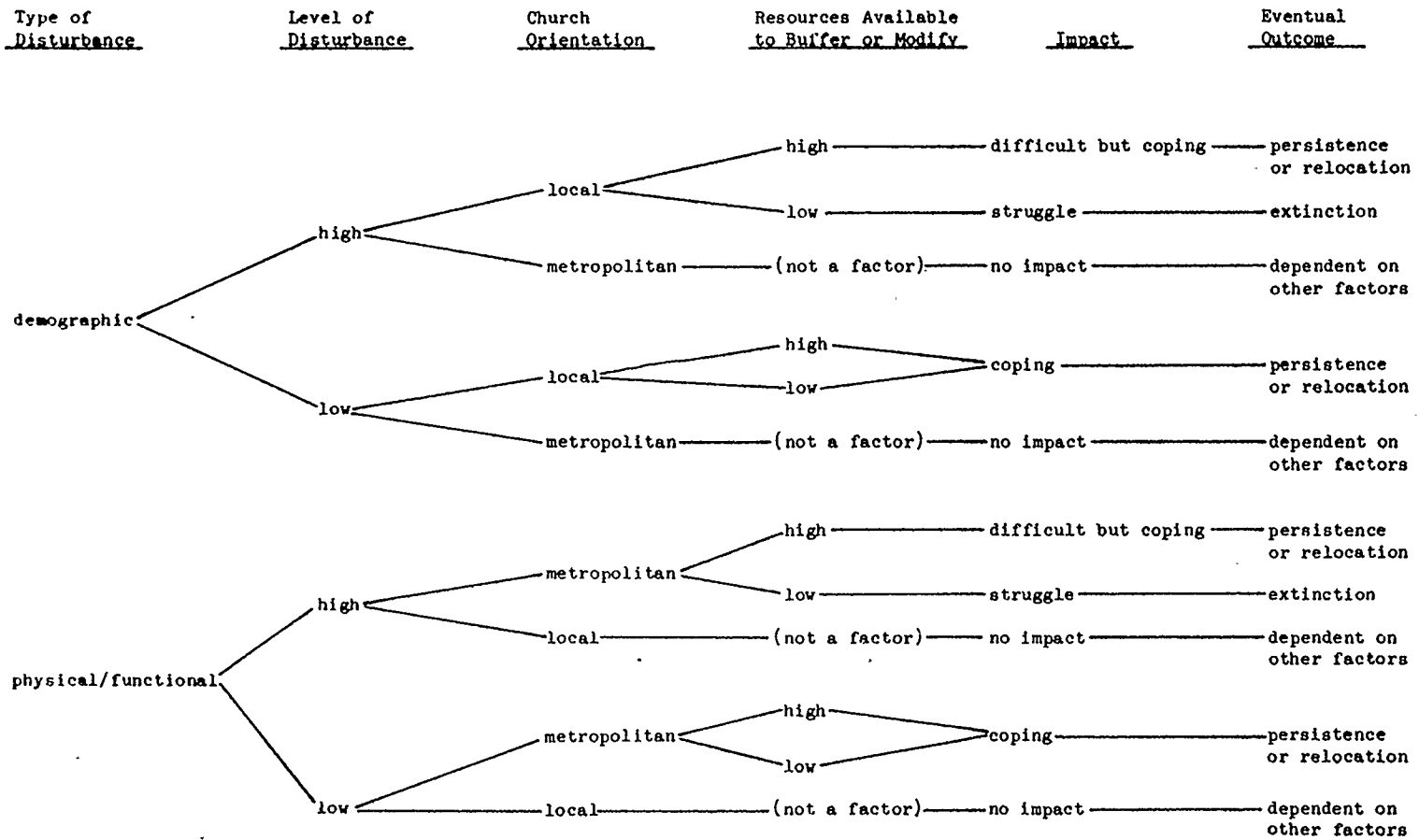
Certain expectations then will serve to give a loose direction as I enter the research field. These expectations can be summed up in several statements: 1.) There will be variation in the level and type of

environmental change that accompanies CBD development. Furthermore, there will be variation in the degree and type of impact that such change has upon particular churches as compared to other downtown churches. 2.) The impact that environmental change will have upon the churches is dependent upon several factors: the level of environmental disturbance, the availability of organizational resources to buffer or modify such disturbances, the relevance of the environmental change to the church as it relates to the church's constituency orientation.

The expected relationship of these factors may be represented by diagram 1.1. While the factors in the diagram are reasonably self-explanatory, they will be further explained in the proceeding chapters. For now the diagram serves to alert the reader to a general model that will be used to direct the inquiry.

Finally, Kimberly and Miles both have concluded that organizational research has done very little concerning the historical life-cycles of organizations and the reasons for their success and failure (Kimberly and Miles 1981: p. 5). Rossi notes that relatively little empirical evidence has been gathered as to the effects of demographic and physical change upon organizations (1980: p. 106; also Aldrich and Reiss 1976). This study will map out the careers of a number of downtown churches, and will concern

DIAGRAM 1.1 Theoretical Relationship of Organizational/Environmental Factors



itself with the environmental constraints and influences that have become important in the life and destiny of the downtown church. The main issue to be addressed will be why different churches evidenced different responses as they experienced the changes accompanying CBD development, particularly as these responses were determined by environmental constraints and strategic choice.

CHAPTER TWO

Studying the Life-Histories of CBD Churches

Good sociology is both historical and comparative (Denzin 1978: p. 215).

I am convinced that the generally moribund state of much current organizational theory and research is owing to the lack of appreciation for the role of history in, and the effects of context on, organizational life. And I believe that there is a tight coupling in science between content of understanding and method for understanding (Kimberly 1981: p. 13).

This chapter will briefly discuss the life-history method, in particular as it lends itself to analytic induction. This will be followed by a recounting of the basic chronology of the methodological issues and decisions that were dealt with in the course of the study. Data collection and sampling issues are discussed as well as some validity and reliability questions which concern the use of direct observation, interviews, and archival analysis.

A. Life-Histories as Longitudinal Research

Life-histories attempt to capture the dynamism of historical development as it occurs both within and without the particular individual or organization. The approach attempts to articulate the recursive nature of the relationship or interaction between the subject and its environment. The value of such a method is that it directly or indirectly presents a longitudinal picture of the social processes of transition. In looking at these processes, less depends upon creative inference than happens in the situation where the researcher confines his examination to one slice of ongoing social activity. Too often in the latter case, in order to speak about transitional processes, synchronic data is made to assume diachronic dimensions.

At various times throughout this study, terms such as life-histories, response-behavior sequences, and careers will be used interchangeably. This hopefully will not confuse the reader who may feel that there are technical distinctives separating the various terms. Rather, the terms are used because they convey the essential tone of the research strategy and purpose, which is to record the unfolding histories of a number of organizations as they separately and corporately experience environmental transition.

To arrive at these life-histories, a number of data sources were used. Williamson et. al. suggest that:

Historical research shares much in common with such unstructured procedures as participant observation. In both cases, the researcher proceeds by way of a kind of methodological eclecticism, making use of any available materials that will enrich insight into events or processes studied (1977: p.279).

In the course of this study, interviews, direct observation, newspaper accounts, census materials, street directories, written histories, and church reports were all used to give a clearer picture of the developmental processes that took place concerning the church organizations and their urban context.

The end product is a number of life-histories of churches, focusing on their response and adaptations to CBD development between the years 1955 to 1985. And yet the study is not only intent upon presenting another descriptive typology (such as Douglas 1926; Kincheloe 1938; Shippey 1960). There is also the desire to contribute to organizational theory by the formulation and testing of hypotheses. The strategy chosen for this task and the method deemed most suitable for the handling of a small number of separate life-histories, was analytic induction.

B.) Analytic Induction

Through the process of analytic induction, the individual life histories will be viewed in terms of tentative hypotheses. This method of analysis involves a rather free-flowing "procedure of examining cases, redefining the phenomenon, and reformulating the hypothesis...until an universal relationship is established, each negative case calling for a redefinition or a reformulation" (Denzin 1978: p. 192). Analytic induction (A.I.) has received a variety of criticisms, largely in reaction to the overstatements made by Znaniecki, contending that A.I.: should be the true method of social science, furnishes us with universal statements as opposed to probalistic statements, and is superior in determining causality (1934: pp.249-331).(1) Robinson's excellent critique of A.I. takes direct aim at the method's most obvious vulnerability; that is, it's tendency to only look at those incidents in which the phenomenon occurs and not at those cases where it does not (1969: p.200). Robinson concludes, then, that A.I. " gives only the necessary and not the sufficient conditions for the phenomenon to be explained" (1969: p.200).

(1) I owe this summary of Znaniecki's claims for A.I. to W.S. Robinson " The Logical Structure of Analytic Induction" in McCall and Simmons, 1969: pp.196-205 reprinted from American Sociological Review 1951, 16, 812-818.

While Robinson implies that this logical inconsistency is basic to the method, I would contend that the method may only present a potential for, or "predisposition" to this problem. Robinson, himself, in the same article where he points out the problem in the logic of A.I. concedes that the two key researchers, Cressy and Lindesmith, with whom A.I. has been identified since Znaniecki, have managed to include in their studies cases where the phenomenon did not occur (1969: pp.201-202).

The other major criticism concerning A.I. has been presented by Turner (1969).(1) Turner contends that A.I. principally produces definitions rather than causal explanations (1969: pp.211-212; see also Denzin 1978: pp.195, 213; Katz 1983: p.133). Both Turner's and Robinson's critiques are very real concerns; however, I would suggest that such criticisms do not so much discredit the method in favor of some other method, but rather serve to alert the researcher to possible pitfalls. As even Robinson has demonstrated, it is still possible, and certainly desirable, to deal with cases where the phenomenon does not occur. As for Turner's criticism, much of this study is exploratory - although not exclusively. Definitions will be an important part of the research but

(1) Reprinted in McCall, G.J. and J.L. Simmons, op. cit., from American Sociological Review (1953) 18, 604-611.

at the same time efforts will be made, via the formulation and testing of hypotheses, to proceed beyond definition to explanation. Ultimately it will be up to the reader to decide how effective this study has been in moving in that direction.

The real value or strength of A.I. that has made the method useful for this study and others is its explicit admonition to seek negative cases. Robinson admits that negative case analysis is "a particular excellence of the method of analytic induction" (1969: p.199). This study will look at a relatively small number of life-histories of downtown churches with the purpose of comparing them to each other. Beginning with tentative typologies and hypotheses, each exceptional case will mean an expansion, reformulation or rejection of emerging conceptualizations. At the same time, it is important to keep the purpose or goal of such activity in perspective. Only the most idealistic (or naive?) researcher would expect to arrive at some perfect explanation. The real value of the strategy of negative case analysis is the direction that it provides. It serves to keep the researcher at the growing point of his research; at precisely that point which promises an expansion or progression of understanding. Katz holds that the evaluation of A.I. depends not on:

... whether a final state of perfect explanation has been achieved but the distance that has been travelled over

negative cases and through consequent qualifications from an initial state of knowledge. Analytic induction's quest for perfect explanation, or "universals", should be understood as a strategy for research rather than as the ultimate measure of the method (1983: p.133).

Analytic induction, particularly its requirement to search for negative cases, will then, direct the comparison and analysis of the various life-histories that are obtained in the course of the study. But before that could be done, there were some important decisions to be made concerning the method of data collection and sampling issues.

C.) Data Collection and Sampling

As already mentioned, this study made use of a number of data sources. The data collection followed a natural progression, beginning from general information to more specific. At the early stage of the research, city street directories served to give an overall view of the historical movement of churches in and out of the city center. Census tract material and city records helped to give a general picture of the demographic and physical transitions of the city. Later when more specific information was required as to response-behaviors of individual churches, interviews, direct observation,

newspaper accounts, and church records were used to obtain the data. At each stage sampling decisions had to be made.

1.) Street directories, census and city records

The city street directories offered the most continuous and consistent record of the presence and location of churches in the city. These directories dated back to 1908 and were published every year with the exception of several years when a directory would cover a two year period. Each directory contained a listing of the religious organizations along with their addresses(1). Preliminary research involved looking at the directory lists, starting from 1910 and proceeding every tenth year following until 1980. This involved a simple count of the churches in the city with no particular attention paid to their location. When the locations were later noted, it became evident that the most significant action, ie. movement of churches from their location, occurred to the centrally located churches after 1960 until the present.

(1) In the directories, this listing is titled "religious organizations and places of worship". Included in these lists were a few missionary organizations and other such agencies. These agencies were not included in this count since this research is interested only in institutions which have a regular gathering of members for the purpose of religious observances and participation. This meant that only churches, synagogues, temples and mosques were counted. It should also be noted that these various places of worship have been referred to in this study as simply "churches", although I realize that normally the term is used to only designate Christian facilities.

The decision was then made to concentrate on the thirty year period 1955-1985. It was further felt that looking at every fifth year would give an adequate picture of the historical trends.

The choice of the CBD as the particular study area was partly theoretically based; in particular, it was influenced by the literature dealing with the push-pull forces of CBD development and the empirical studies dealing with urban church growth (see Chapt. 1). As well, the preliminary investigations involving the street directories and the census records also confirmed that the research should concentrate on the city-center. The churches located in the downtown showed the highest incidence of either re-location or extinction and the census material and city records indicated that the area had experienced rather rapid demographic and physical transition over the last few decades, particularly in relation to the rest of the city.

The census data from the national census is collected at five year intervals (years ending in 1 and 6) and so proved reasonably compatible with the data on church numbers. Two national census tracts encompass the present CBD area plus a small area bordering the CBD. Since census tracts demarcate areas which share common demographic characteristics, it was decided that the two census tracts

would adequately describe the demographics of the CBD. The civic census material, while providing data concerning the specific CBD area, only has the information dating back to 1969. Together the two sources of census material provide the primary information concerning demographic transition in the city and specifically in the CBD.

2.) Interviews, newspaper accounts, church records and direct observations.

The initial stage of research determined that there were 29 churches that had been located in the city-center sometime between 1955 and 1985. Many of these churches had either been terminated or moved out of the downtown by the time the research began. For the fifteen churches that had ceased to operate altogether, the available data proved to be very sketchy. No information could be obtained by interview and so data concerning these churches tended to only cover general descriptions. Much more specific data was collected, however, concerning the surviving churches, both those which were still in the CBD and those which had re-located.

It was decided that individual life-histories would be obtained for each of the surviving churches. In the end, detailed information necessary for a life-history was not available for two of the churches. Both were churches that had relocated early during the thirty-year study period and

it proved impossible to find people familiar with the events surrounding the move or written records documenting the relevant histories of these churches.

Of the surviving churches, then, life-histories were obtained for twelve. The two principal sources were loosely structured interviews with people who had been associated with the churches during the study period, and written records. The written records included published histories of the individual churches, church minutes and newspaper accounts. Approximately half the churches had published histories. These proved very helpful in giving a picture of the environmental changes around the church as well as the sequence of responses. For the other churches, often newspaper accounts reported on the important changes that were taking place with the churches. Church minutes tended to be rather sketchy and very inconsistent in the quality of their reporting. In many cases these minutes were either not kept as archives or it was church policy not to make them available to outsiders. All together, however, these different sources of recorded data served to "flesh out" the information gathered through the interviews.

In deciding on who should be interviewed concerning each of the churches, the main criteria was that the person be well-informed regarding the past history of the

particular church as well as aware of the present decisions concerning its day to day operation. As it turned out in nearly all cases, this meant that the pastor of the church was the first person interviewed. If, as occurred in several instances, the pastor was relatively new to the church and not well informed as to its history, the interview was used primarily to get the names of church members who could give more detail concerning the historical developments. As mentioned earlier, the interviews were mainly used to get the sequence of environmental changes affecting their church's situation and a recounting of its response to these changes. As a general guideline, it was decided to attempt to obtain interviews from at least two respondents from each church. These respondents were typically located in the leadership roles such as pastors, elders, deacons, etc..

It is important that the reader be made aware at this point in the discussion that a rather difficult methodological and theoretical decision had to be made concerning the purpose and content of these interviews. As will become evident further in the study, the perspective taken in looking at organizational response to environmental change is primarily structural. Not very much is discussed regarding the definition of the situation; that is, the interpretive process that could be said to mediate between the contextual variables and the

response variables. Several considerations came to the fore in making this paradigmatic decision. Theoretically, it became a question as to whether or not there would be much variation in the relationship between definitions of the situation and the situations of similar organizations. Methodologically, it seemed that if the study was to look at all 29 churches, the number of interviews needed to get at the definition of the situation would be rather large. One or two respondents from each church would not give an adequate picture of the complex decision/ interpretive process that likely went on involving most or all of the congregational members. As well, the availability of respondents connected with the extinct churches proved very limited. Therefore, for these two reasons, theoretical and methodological, and of which the practical methodological problems proved a major consideration, it was decided that only a few interviews for each church were necessary. In the end approximately thirty-five unstructured interviews were carried out, each lasting from ten minutes to one hour long. These interviews with people who had been directly involved in the environmental and organizational transitions, plus written records to assess and complement the data, were determined as being sufficient in giving a picture of the response-sequences of the churches.

Having said that, I am not dismissing the potentially important role that the definition of the situation may

have in the whole process. This study will certainly give some discussion to how similar situations were defined differently. However, due primarily to time constraints and data availability, this study will only emphasize a more structural perspective concerning the transitional processes. In a sense, this study will provide the broader picture and will hopefully provide the basic foundation for further study which may have to look at only a sub-sample of the churches but in greater detail to arrive at the various definitions of the situation.

D.) Validity and Reliability

It was mentioned earlier in this chapter, that comparative life-histories required less inference than cross-sectional studies when it came to discussing transitional processes. However, as implied above, in most instances of life-history research, the researcher is not able to be a first-hand observer through out the long-term developmental period. This study, for a large part, had to rely upon written records and verbal accounts of the past. This brings up its own set of problems with inference and internal validity. The archival records, assuming they are available and deal directly with the phenomenon under study, are not simply objective (accurate?) accounts of the past. Someone has written them and so that immediately opens them to the suspicion of bias. This does not present

a great problem with certain documents that were used, such as the street directories and governmental census data. These materials exist at a reasonably objective level and their accuracy proved very reliable when they were cross-checked with other directories or census records. However the individual church records presented more possibilities for recorder bias. Concerning attendance figures for instance, if it was the pastor who kept the records, it may be that it was in his interest to over-estimate church attendance. Some of the attendance records were taken from denominational records which compared various churches to others. Again it becomes obvious that there is room for recorder bias when it comes to church data. There were only limited opportunities to check the veracity of these figures. On several occasions, I was able to count attendance at Sunday services in the churches. In each case, the figures that were arrived at lined up very well with the figures that were entered in the church records.

The same type of internal validity problem arises with the verbal accounts of the church histories. Each interviewee would recall the past from a particular perspective. This problem would even be exacerbated if the study had been focusing on some of the more subjective aspects of change and decision-making such as personal conflicts and disagreements that arose during the process.

While these aspects were mentioned in the course of the interviews, they were not the focus of the inquiry. A simple recounting of the sequence of environmental changes and organizational responses, although affected by the subjective bias of the interviewee, provided less room for idiosyncratic interpretations of the church's past.

Realizing that there were other possible problem areas concerning church records and verbal reports, at this level of exploratory research, it was decided to take the data at face-value unless obvious discrepancies showed up. This made important the ongoing process of cross-checking different data sources and the assessment of their credibility.

At an equally important level, the issue of external validity needs also to be addressed. To what degree do the direct observations I make, the interviews and archival records, generalize to the larger picture outside the particular situation under study? In a sense, analytic induction makes this a moot question. Analytic induction as a procedure expands the generalizability of its findings as it progressively deals with each exceptional case. It takes on the difficult question of external validity by making it the ultimate end of its endeavour. For this particular study, which admittedly is limited in the number of cases, generalizability of its conclusions will be

halted only with the discovery of a negative case. Further research which may reveal new negative cases, will continue the process of redefinition and reformulation of the hypotheses. The question of "how far is enough" is rather subjectively answered depending upon the researcher's expectations and view of the possibility, even desirability, of ever attaining a universal statement of fact.

Reliability can be reasonably assured when it comes to data collection from the street directories and census reports. This basically involved duplicating the categories already articulated in the documents and recording the quantitative data. Analyzing the data taken from the open-ended interviews, and from the written church records involved a constant refinement of categories or concepts. However, reliability should only increase as the categories become more refined and the concepts clearer. In many ways the proof of reliability as well as the improvement of reliability will only become evident as this study is followed and expanded by further research.

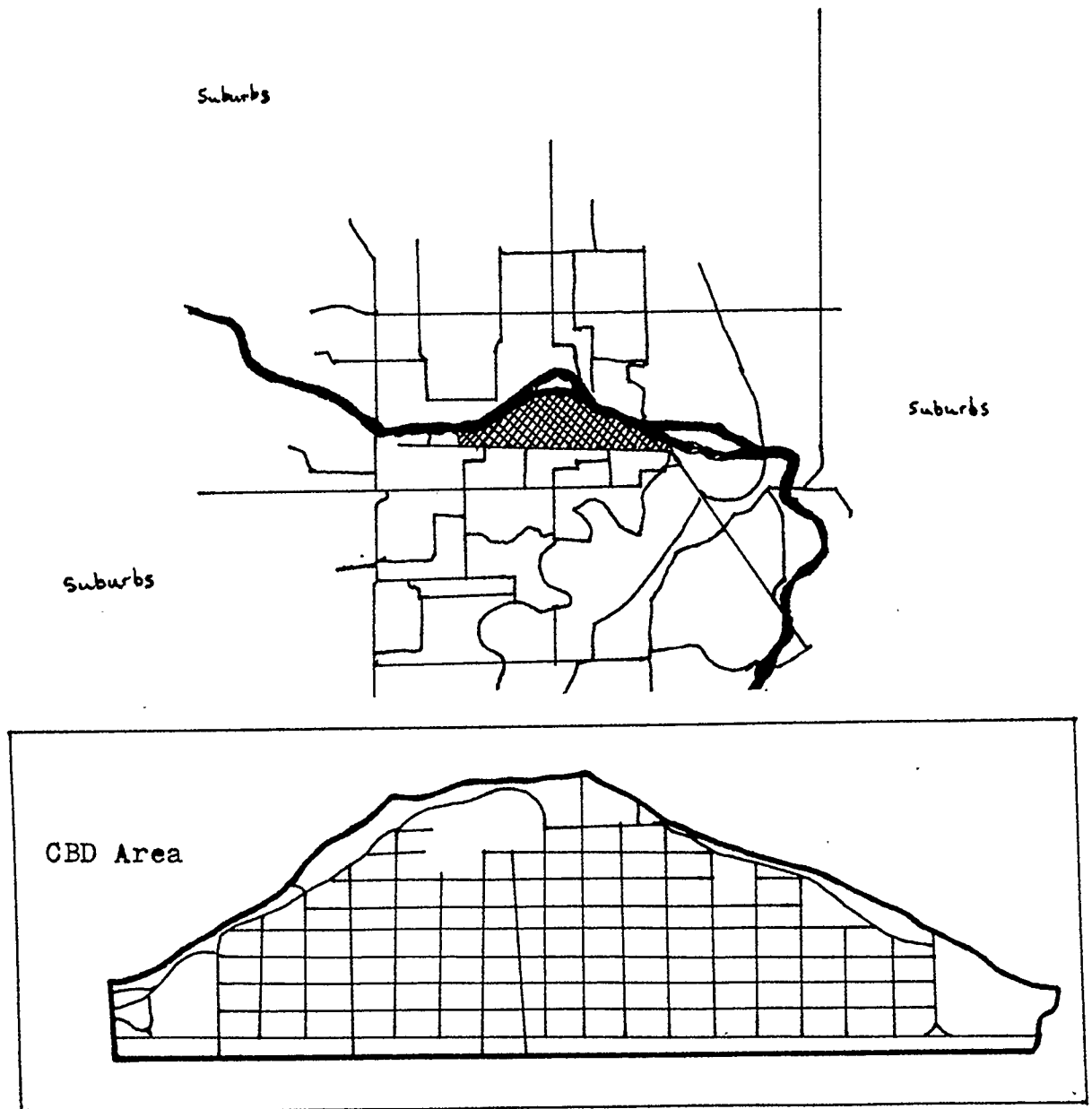
CHAPTER THREE

The Setting : Historical Transition in the Downtown Core

The city of Calgary has demonstrated, over the past several decades, rather remarkable growth and development. Much of this rapid growth - one of the highest rates of growth in N. America - is due to the city's involvement with the petroleum energy industry. This rapid development has meant that the city has experienced a sustained period of transition and change. One of the common jokes circulating about the city during the "boom years" of the late 70's and the early 80's was that Calgary's civic bird was the construction crane.

This study has chosen to concentrate on the historically central location of the city. This area, at a rate that is perhaps faster than is typical of most Canadian cities, has seen significant changes in its demographic and functional structure to where now, as the Central Business District, it is characterized by a concentration of high-rise administration offices, private and governmental, along with a number of high density residential complexes. The concentration of business offices is greatest at the core of the CBD with the residential buildings being located nearer the edges. The complete CBD is well marked, being principally bounded on

Map 3.1 Calgary's CBD in Relation to the City



three sides by the river where it forms a loop, and bounded on the south by the railway tracks (see Map 3.1).

This chapter will chronicle the demographic and physical/functional transitions of the area primarily as it has developed in relation to the rest of the city since 1955. Included in that development will be the change in the number of religious institutions in the CBD. The emphasis or intent of this discussion is to establish that the area, due to a number of historical trends has seen a significant shift in its demographic make-up, as well as in its function and character as a "people gathering" place.

As noted in chapter one, certain contextual factors or variables have been identified in the literature as key influences in the growth and decline of organizations. Of importance to this study is the work of urban geographers who have dealt with the push-pull forces of CBD development on organizations. As well, chapter one noted that there is a body of research which looks specifically at demographic transition as it affects the life of church organizations. These two bodies of literature have served to inform this study concerning two important types of contextual transitions which have an impact upon the downtown churches.

Bird has summed up the push-pull forces exerted upon institutions. The problems for the downtown organizations

may include the limitations on space for expansion of facilities, access and parking restrictions, and the deterioration, physically and socially, of inner-city areas. While these factors tend to push institutions out from the city center, there are also features in the suburbs which attract or pull the institutions to the outer areas of the city. These features include: more space at lower costs, attractive site qualities, and ease of vehicular access (Bird 1977: p. 101-105).

The push-pull forces identified by urban geographers principally describe the physical and functional changes that will take place in an area undergoing CBD development. But there is another important type of contextual transition that takes place during such development which also will have an impact upon downtown churches. Hoge and Roozen have summed up a number of studies which look at factors affecting the growth and decline of churches. They conclude that the most important contextual variables dealt with changes in numerical population, family/life cycle stages, homeownership and mobility rates (1979; see also McKinney, 1979; Hadaway, 1981). The brief discussion which follows will present a picture of demographic transition: a declining population, growing proportion of young singles and elderly, fewer families and home-owners, and increased mobility. Following that will be a discussion of the

physical/ functional changes in the development of the city's CBD.

A. Demographic transitions

The city has grown at a rather substantial rate over the period under study. In 1956, the city population was 177,450; in 1984, civic census reported the population as 619,815 - an increase of 249%. At the same time, the population of the downtown core fell from 13,211 to 7895 - a drop of 40%. More detailed figures for the sub-areas of the city are not available until 1968. These figures give a break-down of the population into mutually exclusive sub-areas defined by the city planning department: downtown, inner city, inner suburbs, and outer suburbs. As table 3.1 shows, the downtown population was somewhat erratic, the two inner areas showed more or less unchecked decline for the years recorded and the outer suburbs were the areas of growth.

Table 3.1 Population by Sub-area

	downtown		inner city		inner suburb		outer suburb	
year*	pop. (a)	% change	pop. (a)	% change	pop. (a)	% change	pop. (a)	% change
1956	13.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1968	7.2	-45	70.7	-	99.9	-	176.8	-
1971	8.8	22	72.4	2	98.8	-1	217.9	22
1976	9.6	9	65.7	-9	88.7	-10	305.9	40
1981	9.5	-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
1984	7.9	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-

(a) multiply figures by 1000

* population figures for 1956-1976 from Downtown Retail Study (1978). Population figures for 1981-1984 from City Census material.

Data concerning changes in the age of the population, family status, residency types and mobility rates could not be obtained for the exact area under study. Rather, the only material available concerns two census tracts which include the downtown core plus one small bordering area. One census tract (43) includes most of the western half of the CBD and no other area. The other census tract (42) includes the east section of the CBD plus an older residential area to the south. These census tracts show some interesting differences between the demographics of the western half of the CBD and the eastern half, which will be discussed later. It should be pointed out that the boundaries of census tracts are formed around areas demonstrating similarities in demographic characteristics. Therefore, for this study, it will be assumed that the

demographics of the larger census tract 42 will adequately describe the demographics of the eastern section of the CBD study area. This study is interested only in the general demographic transitions of the area, and so the lack of exact correspondence between the boundaries of the study area and those of the census tract should not pose a significant problem. As table 3.2 indicates, there has been considerable shifts in the age-group composition of the down-town area. The percentage of young children in the city core has remained low in comparison to the total CMA. The western section of the CBD has seen a sizeable increase in the percentage of its population aged 20 to 34 years. While in the eastern section there has been only a small change in this "yuppie" age group, the percentage of people over 65 has grown considerably.

Table 3.2 Age Characteristics

		% under 9 years			% between 20-34 years			% over 65 years		
		1961	1971	1981	1961	1971	1981	1961	1971	1981
CMA		25	20	14	24	25	35	7	6	6
tract 43		10	6	3	25	37	49	20	15	14
tract 42		13	13	5	22	17	27	20	24	37

* from census tract bulletins: 95-535 (1961)
95-756 (1971)
95-906 (1981)

Table 3.3 shows the family status of the two census tracts in comparison to the whole CMA. The ratio of

families to total households in these two tracts has dropped over the twenty year period and is far lower than the average for the CMA. From what we know of the age characteristics for the downtown population (table 3.2), it becomes apparent that there are a lot of young singles living downtown, particularly in the western section of the CBD. This is further supported by the figures given for average household size in the two downtown tracts. Both tracts show an average household size of 1.4 persons per dwelling for 1981, exactly half the average for the entire city.

Table 3.3 Family Status

	number of families(a) per 100 households		
	1961	1971	1981
CMA	86	80	71
tract 43	53	35	22
tract 42	61	32	17

* from census tract bulletins: 95-535 (1961)
 95-756 (1971)
 95-906 (1981)

(a) family = husband and wife or
 parent(s) with children

Table 3.4, comparing the residence type in the different areas, again shows a marked transition, in this case a shift from a significant number of owner-occupied, single detached dwellings to a very small percentage of

such types. The downtown area is now almost exclusively made up of rental high-rise apartments.

Table 3.4 Residence Types

	number of occupied dwellings (X 1000)			% single- detached			% occupant owned		
	1961	1971	1981	1961	1971	1981	1961	1971	1981
CMA	78.4	121.2	210.8	65	60	55	63	57	57
tract 43	1.6	2.2	2.6	25	15	2	21	7	2
tract 42	1.7	2.2	2.0	35	27	14	33	14	6

* from census tract bulletin: 95-535 (1961)
95-756 (1971)
95-906 (1981)

Finally, table 3.5, while rather sketchy and inconclusive, indicates some shifts in mobility patterns. Some of the figures are estimates, due to the fact that the 1981 mobility rates were calculated in a different manner from the earlier rates. However, as could be implied from the other figures on the age and residence types, the downtown population is more mobile than the general city population.

Table 3.5 Mobility Status

	% of pop. in dwelling less than 1 year			% of pop. in dwelling more than 5 years(a)		
	1961	1971	1981	1961	1971	1981
CMA	24	26	n/a	38	45	35
tract 43	32	36	n/a	38	27	17
tract 42	20	36	n/a	51	40	25

* from census tract bulletin: 95-535 (1961)
 95-756 (1971)
 95-906 (1981)

(a) these are estimated

The above four tables, dealing with age, family residence and mobility characteristics, describe a general development of the downtown over several decades. What has taken place has been a shift from an area which shared some characteristics of more traditional neighborhood - ie: families, single-homes - to an area whose resident population is largely either young single apartment dwellers, or the elderly apartment dweller. This kind of shift in population has certain influences on the very character of the area, as well as impacting the churches in the area. Certainly, as will be discussed in greater detail later on, some churches were less affected by the demographic shifts than were others. The churches most affected were those who had been drawing on the immediate neighborhood for a major portion of their congregation.

Rossi, in an exploratory study concerning the effects of residential transition on organizations, identifies two types of organizations, the locally-oriented and the metropolitan-oriented. He concludes that the latter are basically exempt from the impact of local demographic change, whereas the locally-oriented organizations are very sensitive to such transitions (1980 p. 108). However, Rossi only looked at the effects of demographic transition on organizations. As with Rossi's study, this study anticipates that for a number of the religious organizations in the city center, the local residential changes will have little impact upon their existence. However, for these metropolitan-oriented churches, it is expected that the negative influence upon their situation comes primarily as a result of changes in the very nature of the area, from a general "people-gathering" place to an area which draws people only on week-days from nine to five. This study is suggesting, then, an expansion in Rossi's direction of inquiry to include the effect of physical and functional change in the external environment of organizations.

Before dealing with the second set of transitions, I must first comment as to why functional changes and physical changes in the downtown core have been grouped together and the terms used almost interchangeably. It could be argued that the two processes are quite different,

however this paper would contend, somewhat simplistically perhaps, that, in CBD development at least, functional changes involve physical changes in the central city environment. It will be shown in the course of this study that as the functional character of the downtown changed, it necessitated physical changes. In looking at the effects of these two related types of transition, it was difficult to separate them as to their impact upon the downtown churches. In the proceeding discussion, much will center around the contention that the downtown core has changed in nature as a place that attracts people for reasons other than week-day employment. This has resulted from both a functional change, whereby the area has become more specialized, and a physical change, whereby the area has become less convenient and less safe to be in at certain times and places.

B. Functional and Physical Transition

Several of the downtown churches, as "first churches" or prestige churches, have over their history drawn on city-wide constituencies, so that the residential changes going on in the immediate vicinity have been diminished in their impact upon the congregation. The real impact upon these churches has been caused by transitions which, while related to the demographic shifts mentioned earlier above, have more to do with changes in the function and physical

character of the downtown core. The rest of this chapter will discuss those kinds of transitions.

The city center has traditionally operated as a locus for the city. It was the primary location for retail, administrative and cultural activities. With the rise of suburbanization, however, there has been a marked shift in these functions. The suburbs have become more self-contained. The climate-controlled shopping malls, with their benches and plastic greenery have replaced the central park as a place for people to gather.

There are still a large number of people who come from the suburbs to work in the downtown office buildings. Figures concerning the growth in the number of downtown workers show a rise from 34,636 downtown workers in 1964 to 52,025 in 1976. Estimates at the time of the study (1978) predicted that there would be over 70,000 workers in the city core by 1986. While there has been a numerical increase over the years under study, the ratio of downtown employment to city population has remained a constant 0.12 (City Planning Department: 1978, p.82).

However there are few reasons for coming downtown other than employment. As the suburbs become more developed or self-contained many of the retail services that a downtown location once offered have become redundant. In 1978, only 10% of the suburbanite's budget

was spent downtown, and this is reflected in the exodus of certain types of retail stores. Between 1961 and 1976, there was a drop of 56.3% in the number of downtown food stores, and a 26.8% drop in the number of general merchandise stores. Certain specialty stores did rise in number, such as shoe and apparel stores, but these mainly catered to the downtown workers on their lunch-break (City Planning Dept. 1978: p. 5, 85). This same study noted that the two major reasons people gave as to why they were no longer coming downtown to shop were the problems of poor vehicular access and inadequate parking (1978: p. 5). As an aside, it is expected that these same reasons will come into play when considering why fewer people are coming to downtown churches.

City planners have tried or suggested a number of options to bring people back to the downtown core. A large pedestrian mall closing off one avenue to vehicles for several blocks has been tried. When this proved largely unsuccessful, there are now calls to put a roof over the mall to make it more appealing. Other attractive "people-places" have been proposed such as setting up a year-round farmers' market as part of another large pedestrian street mall. However at this stage the problem remains, people are basically not coming downtown for reasons other than employment. The downtown church, then, faces the same problem, but exacerbated by its emphasis on

services on Sunday when most of the retail stores are closed and the public transit operates on a limited schedule. The churches in the suburbs have a certain competitive advantage when it comes to providing a more convenient location for most church-goers.

In the course of the study, as the research involved being in the city core at different times in the day and the week, I was struck by the emptiness of the streets during times outside of the regular work-day. In the last year, there has been some new attractions to bring people downtown such as new cultural center and the renovation of an old movie theatre. However, on the whole, one is still left with the impression of "hollow canyons" and empty streets. Seventh Avenue, in particular, situated near the center of the CBD, has had an even more dramatic shift in character. This avenue is now the almost exclusive domain of a light-rapid transit system with basically no vehicular traffic allowed. Since being installed, the avenue has become an area of break-ins and vandalism, the main reasons being the number of dark areas hidden from view by the rail structures and the inability of the police to patrol the area by squad car. Several churches located on or near this avenue have mentioned the problem of offering programs during the evenings. Two of the churches have ceased having evening programs for their youth groups because parents no longer want their children having to be on the

streets at night. A secretary of the church located on 7th avenue told of how she often can look out of her window at any time of the day and watch drug deals going on.

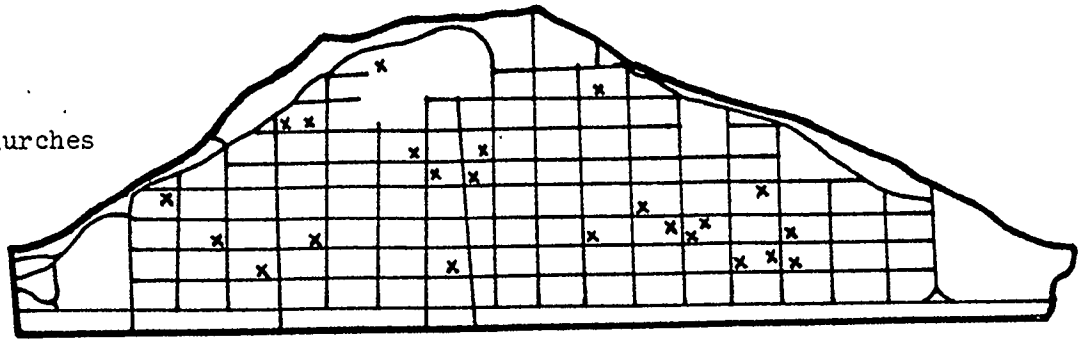
The change in the number of churches in the city core is both a reflection of the functional shifts of the central area as well as a partial product of such changes. Map 3.2 shows the historical transition in the numbers and locations of the downtown churches. Beginning in 1955, there were 23 churches in the study area; in 1965, 17 churches; in 1975, 12 churches; and by 1985 there were 8 churches. In between 1955 and 1985, six new churches located in the area, but only one of those churches has remained - a Chinese church which started in 1959. Therefore, of the eight remaining CBD churches, seven were present in 1955 and the eighth has been in its location for over 25 years.

Table 3.6 compares the number and percentage changes for the churches in the CBD, the inner city and the suburbs. The number of churches within the area presently encompassing the CBD experienced a marked decrease, a drop of 65.5% over the 30 year period. The area immediately surrounding the CBD, the inner city or older residential area, remained relatively stable with an absolute loss of only one church between 1955 and 1980. The suburbs, as would be expected, showed a steady increase over the years

MAP 3.2 Historical Trends in the Numbers and Locations
of Churches in the Downtown Core

1955

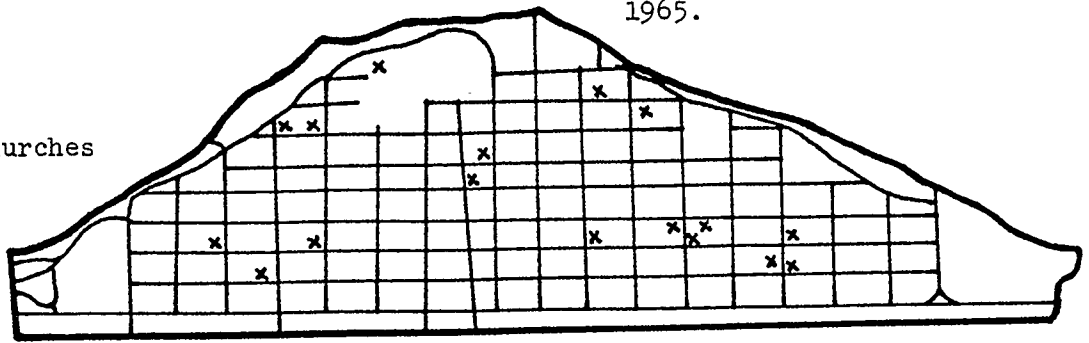
23 churches



Between 1955 and 1965, 3 new churches located in the area but had ceased to exist by 1965.

1965

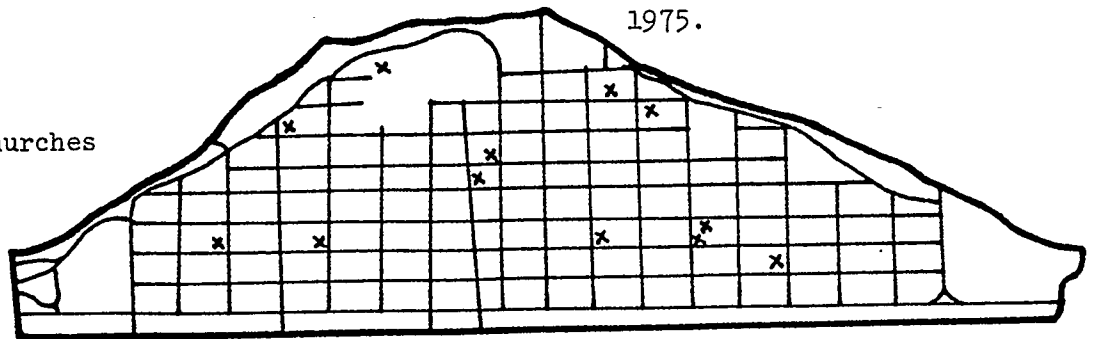
17 churches



Between 1965 and 1975, 1 new church located in the area but had ceased to exist by 1975.

1975

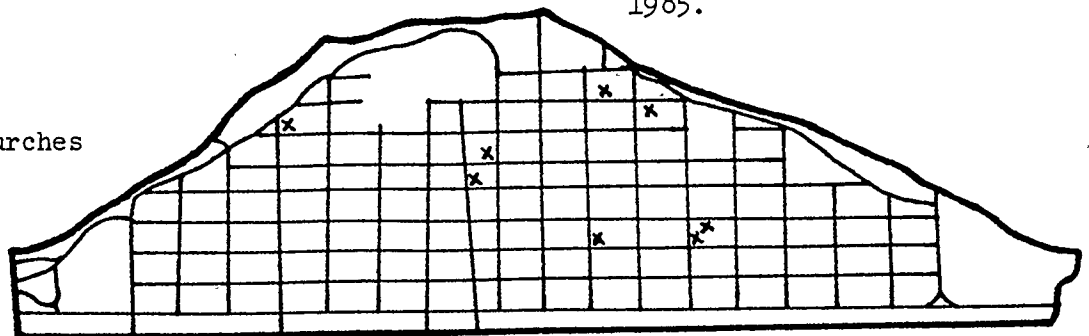
12 churches



Between 1975 and 1985, 1 new church located in the area but had ceased to exist by 1985.

1985

8 churches



in the number of churches located within its expanding boundaries.

Table 3.6 Number of Churches Per Sub-area (1955-1985).

	CBD churches		Inner city churches (excl. CBD)		Suburban churches	
	no.	% change	no.	% change	no.	% change
1955	23	-	63	-	30	-
1960	22	-4.3	70	11.1	88	193.0
1965	17	-22.7	64	-8.6	129	46.6
1970	14	-17.6	65	1.6	157	21.7
1975	11	-21.4	64	-1.5	186	18.5
1980	10	-9.1	62	-3.1	228	22.6
1985	8	-20.0	-	-	-	-

* figures calculated from the Henderson Calgary Street directories (1955-1985).

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to describe historical transitions occurring over a 30 year period in the city core. Two general but related types of transitions have been noted: demographic changes and functional/physical changes. The demographic transition principally has concerned the changes in the residential characteristics of the downtown community. The physical and functional transitions, while closely tied to the demographic changes, have primarily dealt with the physical environment and the way that the city core now relates to the rest of the city. The physical transition primarily involves access and

safety problems. The function transition generally can be described as a shift from an area of varied activities which drew people from all over the city to a highly specialized area of office buildings largely populated by week-day nine-to-five workers. The reverse side of that coin is the development of the suburbs and the competitive alternatives or services which they now offer.

The two types of transition, demographic and functional/ physical, have had different effects upon different churches. The church that depends largely on attracting a congregation from its immediate neighborhood experiences difficulty when those residents change. As was noted, a number of churches between 1955 and 1985 left the city core and moved to the suburbs. Interviews with the leaders of a couple of re-located churches indicated that the main reason for the move was to follow their congregation which had already moved out to the suburbs. These churches, it seems, had trouble identifying with the new city-core residents, mainly single young apartment dwellers; and vice-versa, it seems the new residents had trouble identifying with the churches.(1)

(1) The 1981 census tract for the western section of the CBD had the highest proportion of residents identify themselves as "religious nones" (25.3%) in the city (CMA 13.8%).

Other churches have been less affected by the actual demographic changes in their vicinity because they have traditionally drawn on a city-wide constituency. However the principal problems that they face concern the changes in the city core as a place that draws people for reasons other than employment. The city-core is, in some ways, a less convenient or attractive area to get to, and for many suburbanites, a trip downtown is extraordinary in their normal travel patterns.

Chapter four will attempt, to look at the downtown churches in more detail and describe the careers or response-sequences of the churches as they faced the demographic and functional changes of their urban environment.

Chapter Four

The Churches: Life-Histories and Career Types

Twenty-nine churches have been identified in this study of religious organizations that are existing or have existed within the downtown core sometime during the thirty year period between 1955 and 1985. Some of these churches have had very short histories. They appeared in the city-center and seemingly disappeared a short time after, leaving very little information about the organizations, the circumstances of their development and of their decline. As well, some of the churches were terminated several decades ago. In both instances, the researcher has only scant clues that would give some indication as to these life-histories. Other churches have much more by way of historical information. Informants are available who have been personally involved with the organization. There are also documents available in the form of records and newspaper reports which add to a fuller account of their organizational life-histories.

At the descriptive level, this study is seeking to map out the response behavior sequence or careers of the downtown churches as they face CBD development. For some of the churches, as mentioned, we have only sketchy information. Most of these churches are the fifteen organizations that became extinct. In these cases it has

proven rather frustrating to get more detailed information to fill in the gaps between their appearance in the downtown and their disappearance. There is, therefore, little that can be said in terms of their life-histories other than identifying them by their common end: extinction.

Of the other fourteen churches still existing either in the CBD or now relocated to the suburbs, life-histories have been obtained for all but two. What follows in this chapter are brief summaries of those life-histories particularly paying attention to their encounter with CBD development and their individual response-behaviour during that time and following. The concluding section of the chapter will then attempt to organize these life-histories into general career types. These types will assist the task of chapter five which will seek to build a theoretical framework to explain the variety of responses by the churches to CBD development.

A.) Life Histories

1. First Lutheran

First Lutheran is presently situated on the very edge of the city limits on 4.4 acres of land. It sits among trees and horse pasture, and in the pastor's words, offers a "pastoral, rural atmosphere much more conducive to

worship". However only a few years ago the church was in the downtown core where it has had a long history.

In the 50's, their downtown location was primarily residential and there was a strong sense of parish. That is, the church, typical of most Lutheran churches, saw its main role as directed towards the immediate geographically-defined area. However, by the late 70's, CBD development was complete, and they were "engulfed by highrises and constantly pestered by real-estate agents". By this time as well, the congregation was elderly (average age 65 years) and declining in numbers. The church was unable to support itself and wondered how long it could expect the denomination to subsidize its operation. The idea of merger with the two other downtown Lutheran churches was proposed. This concept involved joining together to establish one common Lutheran church in the city core to serve the area. After much discussion, the proposal fell through. One pastor commented that the merger failed because the churches had "too much history" and were not willing to lose that by becoming one congregation.

In the meanwhile, there was an attempt by the church to "tap into" the new residential population in the high rises; however this proved unsuccessful. In the pastor's words:

There were thousands of people around us in apartments. But it was only rarely that anyone came from the apartments. We tried to have an apartment ministry, but we were only fooling ourselves. People in apartments do not want involvement and one can't gain access to solicit anyways.

Faced then with a declining congregation and support base, and seemingly no possibility of building a new constituency given the constraints on their location, the leaders of First Lutheran decided to sell their property and build near one of the new suburbs. Since moving, congregational growth has not gotten underway as they had anticipated, mainly because the city has not spread to where it was supposed to be. However, the Pastor still reports positive changes, mainly having to do with the appearance of younger families in the congregation.

2. Bethel Baptist

Bethel Baptist moved in 1976 from its downtown location to the edges of the city, where it purchased eight acres. Within a very short time, suburban housing was alongside their property and they were able to sell four acres to developers. The money from their sale enabled them to completely pay for the construction of their new church.

The pastor reported that in the 50's, the church in its downtown location, was in a residential area. Several long-time members recalled that many in the congregation lived in the immediate area and walked to church. However by the late 70's, the character of the area was changing rapidly. The members of the church, many of whom now lived in the suburbs, were starting to find it inconvenient to come downtown. Two suburban churches were started by Bethel during this time. The avenue in front of the church became one-way and parking was prohibited. A developer wanted to buy the church property since he owned the lots on either side of the church. He began to put greater pressure on the church to sell when he refused to allow any church parking on his properties. There was an attempt at this time to recruit new membership from the apartment buildings which were now around the church; however this was largely unsuccessful. The pastor's assessment of the reasons why their attempted appeal to the apartment dwellers did not succeed was that the new residents were "week-enders with no children and no time for church".

3. First Spiritual Church

The First Spiritualist is the only church of its denomination in the city, and while it places itself within the general Christian tradition, it is considered to be rather distant from the mainstream of Christianity.

The First Spiritualist congregation had met in a small church building in the city core since 1920. Members of the church had come from all sectors of the city, and one leader reports that there had also been quite regular attendance from people outside of the city. By the late 70's the area immediately surrounding the church was being slated for redevelopment, primarily to convert the area to administrative office space. Prior to the completion of this development, however the area had become increasingly run-down and dangerous. Many of the congregational members were reluctant to attend the church services, as the nature of the area had changed so that it was unsafe to walk or leave their cars unattended in the vicinity of the church. Attempts were made to sell their land to a developer, however mid-way through negotiations, the city announced that it would expropriate the property to build new police facilities.

After the sale of their property, the church relocated and built a small facility in a suburban area.

4. House of Jacob Synagogue

The House of Jacob Synagogue was the earliest synagogue established in the city, and dates its beginnings back to 1911. The synagogue was in its central location since first being formed until the late sixties. At that time, the city required the synagogue property for its own

development and so the property was expropriated. From the sale of the land, the congregation bought an empty church building just outside the boundaries of the present CBD. This was generally considered only a temporary move, and only a few years later it was decided to move further out from the city center to the suburbs. The main reason given for this move was the increasing inconvenience of access and parking, and the growing concentration of the Jewish community in the newly developed southwestern suburbs of the city. Many in the congregation were asking that the synagogue be closer to their residential area.

5. Mt. Calvary Lutheran

Mt. Calvary is one of the three Lutheran churches referred to earlier. It had been in the same downtown location since 1919. However, by the mid-70's, the church leaders were beginning to realize that there were real problems for the church concerning local residential changes and an aging and numerically declining congregation. Many of the members, now in the suburbs, were going to the suburban churches which had been started by Mt. Calvary. At this time several options were considered, one of which was the merger already mentioned. Another option was a rebuilding project in their location which would include a senior's high-rise. This facility would help to pay for the church complex and make it

possible for them to stay downtown. Eventually, however, it was simply decided to sell the property for over three million dollars. Some of this money, along with most of the church members, went to start two new suburban churches and the remainder was held in a trust to finance the rental of ground floor offices in a downtown high-rise. Part of the rented space was renovated into a church sanctuary and offers a Sunday morning service for approximately 20-25 elderly parishoners who still wished to attend downtown rather than the new churches in the outlying parts of the city.

The pastor of Mt. Calvary stated that it was very costly to maintain the church downtown in the rented facilities and that he did not expect any kind of increase in membership that would enable the church to eventually pay its own way. Rather, for him, the key reason for renting space downtown was to maintain a presence in the city core. Some of the church program is directed towards the week-day business crowd with seemingly very little effort, if any, made in building a traditional congregation. The pastor's view is that "high-rise dwellers are not joiners", and the church can not expect congregational growth from the local residents.

The programs offered by the church involve week-day noon-hour worship seviles and bible-studies. As well, the

pastoral staff are active in lobbying civic and governmental agencies for social relief programs in the city. In a sense, the trust fund from the sale of church property allows the church the ability to concentrate almost completely on offering programs and pursuing activities without having to justify their existence in terms of building and maintaining a congregation.

6. Trinity Lutheran

Trinity Lutheran has been in its central location since 1899, and the surrounding area has been a predominantly Norwegian community up until the last 15 years. The church had a strong neighborhood orientation, and the Pastor reported that during the early 60's, between 400-500 people met in the Sunday morning services along with a large Sunday School of over 200. While the congregation was primarily locally based, it also served as a focal point which drew on the larger Norwegian population. The pastor commented that this worked because in the past "people were more conscious of their ethnicity".

During the time when Trinity was experiencing its largest congregations, it was also the beginning of considerable suburban growth for the city. A historical overview of the congregation, written by a church member for its 75th anniversary (1974), reports that the church

spawned four new churches, principally to serve the congregational members who had moved to the suburbs. The overview summarizes the end of the 60's by reporting:

The (decade) closed with further residential decay in the inner city and continued expansion of commercial and high-rise buildings in down-town Calgary. The future role of Trinity was undergoing an agonizing appraisal (Loken, 1974: p. 8).

The immediate residential area around the church has been torn down, and at present, the church sits with high-rises on one side and surrounded on the other sides by large vacant lots stretching several blocks; this the result of a massive commercial/residential building project halted by a recession in the city's economy.

Presently, Trinity averages a weekly attendance of 56 people, the average age of whom is between 60 and 65 years. A quick perusal of the 1985 membership list indicated that over 55% of the names were of Scandinavian origin, showing that the church still has strong links to ethnic roots, when the services were once held exclusively in Norwegian. Looking at the past several decades of decline in congregational numbers, one might conclude that the church will eventually cease to exist. The Pastor however reports that over the last three years, the decline in numbers has stopped. Recently the church has again attempted to make contact with apartment dwellers in the area by sending out

a brochure which seeks to acquaint the local residents with the church. Among the church leaders there is still an optimism and determination to stay in their location. Much of this hope for the future relies upon the resumption of the residential housing project planned for the area by city developers. One church leader writes:

It is planned that the 60 acres north of Second Avenue should again be predominantly residential, accomodating some 10,000 people living in some 4000 dwelling units. As envisioned, the Eau Claire district will again be a beautiful place to live in a setting combining the natural and the urban. Where there are people, there is the church (Loken 1974: p. 10).

Besides trying to appeal to the local apartment dwellers and hoping for a new population of local residents, Trinity is also attempting to begin a ministry to the Finns in the city. Only initiated in the last two years, this has involved occasionally offering bi-lingual services (Finnish and English), and employing a Finnish-speaking theology student in the summer for a visitation program to the Finns, most of whom, according to the pastor, are first-generation immigrants. The church feels that its language services and centrally located meeting place can attract this new city-wide constituency.

7. St. Francis Church

St. Francis could now be called an "enclave church" in that it focuses on a locally-based specific group of people. This new constituency is the elderly who are primarily living in the "senior citizen" highrises located along the eastern section of the downtown core. These highrises have developed in the area over the last decade as the government has initiated a program of subsidized housing for the elderly. In 1971, the census tract which encompasses the eastern section of the CBD recorded that 24% of the population was over 65 years old. This ratio has risen until presently 42% of the residential population in the eastern half of the CBD is over 65 years (1984). In comparison, the western half of the CBD has only 7.2% of its population over 65 (1984 district census). As the elderly population has increased in the area, the church found itself concentrating more and more in ministry to the elderly. This has meant a major building program beginning in the mid 70's which involved the church selling 40% of the property and using the proceeds to build an eighteen story senior-citizen's highrise in conjunction with the provincial government and another church. Full-time staff are involved in the administration of the building as well as counselling and pastoral care for the residents. The church building itself also had to be demolished and another built on a smaller scale to make room for the

development. Presently they are holding three services per Sunday, and one on Saturday night, each attended by approximately 130-140 people. The pastor noted that the large majority of the congregation comes from the senior citizens' highrises in the immediate area.

8. Chinese United and Chinese Pentecostal

Within the CBD there exists a single ethnic enclave referred to as Chinatown. As of 1984, there were over 800 people living in this area of approximately eight city blocks. Although the city has a large Chinese population living outside of Chinatown, the downtown location serves as a focal point for many cultural activities and services. Among the stores and other commercial establishments, two Chinese churches offer religious services in both Chinese and English.

This ethnic enclave has achieved a relatively high degree of institutional completeness (see Breton, 1964), and the two Chinese churches, as part of that development, are able to draw upon a local base for their membership. Certainly there is also a part of each congregation which is dispersed, but the ethnically-defined location offers an identifiable nucleus for the city-wide Chinese community.

Both churches report that they continue to have good attendance and that their congregations still attract a

"healthy" number of families of all ages. Their program offerings have changed little over the past several decades and the picture given of both churches can be characterized as stable.

9. Central and Knox United

Central and Knox United both have had long histories in the downtown core and were for many years two of the prestigious churches in the city. One church lays claim to having two important past members: one who later became a provincial premier, and the other became a prime minister. These churches were noted, particularly in the 40's and 50's for their exceptional preachers, large congregations and radio broadcasts of the Sunday services. The two churches, of the same denomination, are only a few blocks apart, this the result of a merger of their two former denominations (Presbyterian and Methodist) beginning in 1925.

Knox has been designated a "heritage site" while Central has turned down the designation. The pastors noted that a continued appeal to church attendance partly lays in the traditional beauty of their buildings. One pastor stated that the facilities made possible an atmosphere of worship which attracts a number of people "who are unhappy with the modern architecture and structure of newer churches". This same pastor noted that his church has the

"longest aisle" in Calgary which apparently puts it in great demand for weddings.

The congregation membership figures for both churches between 1974 and 1982 indicate that Knox United has experienced a 12% decline in membership while Central United has seen a 31% decline. Both churches in 1974 had similar sized memberships; Knox United reporting 1,177 and Central United reporting 1,236. During approximately the same period of time, 1971- 1981, the census data for the complete city, shows that there was a drop of 6% in the percentage of people claiming affiliation with the United Church denomination. Of course, these figures are not directly comparable with each other as there are differences in how membership is defined. As well, often between the churches, membership rolls are kept in a variety of ways. However on the surface, at least, it appears that both CBD churches have been going through membership decline that is beyond the general decline recorded by census data for the larger community.

Both pastors claim that in the last year or two there has been a flattening out of membership trends. At Central United, the shift has been to a increase in younger families. One leader interviewed in this church claimed that this was largely due to the appointment of younger pastors. As well, there has been a re-scheduling of church

programs such that youth groups and other activities do not meet during the week-day evenings since most members do not want to come downtown at night. These programs are now largely run during the hour before the regular Sunday services.

Knox United has also recently gone through a re-evaluation of the congregationally oriented programs. This, according to the pastor, comes in light of the increased mobility and time commitments of the members. For instance, people are not willing to commit themselves to a twenty week Sunday School course, but will participate in short-term study courses of four or five weeks. This same pastor also notes that in a downtown church the congregation would necessarily be more heterogenous and residentially dispersed than in a suburban church. He felt that one of the prime activities of his church would be as a "generator and facilitator of groups" within which individuals could share common identities and interests. Some of the groups that have been formed within the church are the choir groups, social action groups, young singles, the elderly, etc.. The unifying theme around which these groups operated is as a "worshipping community".

The impression given then, is that the two churches have attempted to adapt programs to stem the trend of declining memberships. At the same time, however, both

churches report greater effort to focus on the week-day population of the CBD. Each church is open to the public during the day, with the noon-hour offering a number of programs. Central United offers noon jazzercise in the gym, Wednesday noon-hour services and Bible studies, AA meetings, and various seminars covering a number of topics from business ethics to coping with stress. Knox United has an even longer list of activities including dieter's meetings, exercise classes, AA, Gambler's Anonymous, French and Spanish language classes and music classes. As well, the facilities are used for a number of evening activities including concert recitals, dinner theatre and major theatrical presentations. The pastor commented that Knox United hopes to become a significant center of cultural and artistic presentations in the city core.

Both Central and Knox, then, direct their efforts somewhat equally between a traditional Sunday congregation and the week-day downtown working population. This seems to involve, among the concerns of the church leadership, a continued desire to adapt to the changing demands of maintaining a congregation, and at the same time considerable energy is devoted to establishing programs that are not congregationally oriented. The issue that arises, however, from this latter direction, concerns institutional return; that is, the week-day attenders generally do not have the ties and commitment to the church

that would translate into membership and financial support. At this stage, both churches continue to attract congregations that are committed to the development and support of ministries and programs that are not congregationally oriented.

10. Cathedral Anglican

Cathedral Anglican is an impressive sandstone structure, complete with ornate woodwork and stained-glass windows. In the first half of this century, it was the center of considerable religious activity in the downtown core. It was the site of the Bishop's residence, the church school and parish hall. A 1961 newspaper report noted that the church served over 2000 members and adherents. But the 60's and 70's saw real changes in the local area. A brief history of the church records:

In the 60's, the area would be almost totally demolished to make way for projected urban renewal development schemes. But then difficulty arose in terms of funding nationally, regionally and locally, and for a number of years the blocks near the cathedral were left as unsightly parking lots. Most of the parishoners of the cathedral were living a long way from the central core of Calgary (Carter 1975: p. 37).

By the late 70's, Sunday attendance was averaging less than 80 people per morning service. The church has since increased its attendance to average over 250 per service

and it appears that this figure is still increasing. The pastor noted that the principal factor which is attracting new people has been the re-introduction of a liturgy presented in a high quality musical format. The church claims to be unique in having the only men and boys choir in Western Canada. The worship service is becoming known even beyond the city as the church is now receiving regular weekly attenders from as far as fifty miles away.

Also noteworthy at Cathedral Anglican is the large percentage of single individuals who attend. There are approximately 100 families in all which attend and over 200 singles. The pastor felt that most of these singles had chosen the church because the suburban churches were primarily family oriented.

Although not as busy during the week-days as some of the CBD churches, the Cathedral offers a noon-hour Eucharist every day with 10 to 12 people attending. While there is, then, some involvement with the downtown worker, the church has directed much more of its energies during the week-days to promoting the arts. As the pastor stated: "this church now sees itself as a servant of the city. One of the main ways of serving is through the arts". The facilities are used by the Calgary Philharmonic and, besides the musical liturgy offered on Sundays, the church

presents evening concerts several times a month, as well as art displays and theatre.

11. The Extinct Churches

As mentioned earlier, there is a paucity of detailed information concerning the extinct churches. However some general data is available. Of the fifteen city-core churches which were terminated, three belonged to small denominations while the other twelve were independent. The majority seem to have been renting their facilities, many operating in store-front space. Twelve of the churches had ceased operations by 1971. This lines up well with what we know was happening in the CBD by this time. The case-studies recorded above generally all indicate that by the early seventies the downtown churches were becoming fully aware and affected by the rapid changes of CBD development.

Although these extinct churches have been grouped together under one career type, it must be noted that there seems to be two distinct types if one looks at the length of their life spans.⁽¹⁾ Five of the churches appeared in the city core after 1955. All of these had very short

(1) The length of life-spans of these organizations was determined by using the annual city street-directories' listing of churches. Each directory was checked as to when the church name first appeared in the listing and when it no longer appeared.

lives, averaging 3.8 years. The other ten which had existed in the downtown previous to 1955 had a life-span averaging 30.9 years.

The short-lived churches were not peculiar to the study period, 1955-85; rather, a quick look at the church listings of the street directories prior to 1955 and going back as far as 1910 suggest that there have always been a number of church organizations that have appeared in the city and disappeared shortly afterwards. Rather than seeing these churches as simply victims of CBD development, it is likely that these churches are more influenced by what Stinchcombe calls the "liability of newness" (1965: p. 145). More will be discussed regarding this in chapter five.

B.) Career Types

It is now the concluding task of this chapter to take these life-histories of the individual churches and attempt to organize them into a more general description of an evolving process - the response-behavior sequence of downtown churches as they encounter CBD development. The object is to form types or careers that will assist in the next step involving the analysis of variables which influence particular churches to follow certain careers.

The twelve case-studies summarized in this chapter represent two general types of careers for the surviving churches: persistence in the city-core or relocation. A third type can be established by grouping together those churches which have ceased to exist altogether: extinction. These are very general categories and much important detail is lost by focusing only on the outcomes of the churches. However it is a useful place to begin and efforts will be made to bring to light variations within the general career types.

1.) The Extinct Churches

Not much more, by way of description, can be said about the careers of churches that eventually became extinct. Brief comments have already been made about their associations, or lack of same, with denominations and the average length of their organizational life. The group of extinct churches with the longer life-spans is more relevant to the study than is the group of short life-span churches. As has been suggested, the demise of the former group seems more closely associated with influences of CBD development than are the latter, who simply seem to be part of a general phenomenon of organizational birth and death. Chapter five will spend some time elaborating on this when it deals with reasons why some downtown churches survived and others were terminated.

2.) The Surviving Churches

Most of the surviving churches, those still in the CBD or those now relocated in the suburbs, are able to point back to a period of institutional vitality where they were experiencing congregational growth and program success.⁽¹⁾ All of them also indicated a period, however, usually occurring during the 60's and 70's, when residential and physical changes in their central location had negative influences. For some of these churches, the decision to relocate to the suburbs was made.

The discussion which follows will look at the two career types, relocated and persistent; but will further distinguish them according to their constituency orientation, local or metropolitan.

(1) It should prove possible, given more data and looking at the full life-spans of the various churches, to compare the development of the churches to the four stages of organizational growth as discussed by De Greene (1982: p. 96). These four consecutive stages are: 1) high growth 2) greatest efficiency 3) severe diseconomies 4) systems crisis. During the fourth stage, systems crisis, several directions can be taken, ie: muddle through, chaos and continued decline, or transformation. While this study is principally detailing the stages 3 and 4, most of the life-histories also suggest clear parallels to the first two stages prior to the early sixties.

1. The Relocated Churches

1a. Locally-Oriented Relocated

For the relocated churches, two patterns established before their relocation can be seen depending upon whether their constituency orientation was local or city-wide. The locally-oriented church first experienced difficulties when its membership began moving out of the immediate community to reside in the new suburbs. When their local members began to migrate, the churches tried to maintain ties and accomodate their members by establishing "daughter" churches for them in the suburbs. Rather than viewing this exodus of members as a possible loss situation, it was viewed as a growth opportunity. That is, relationships with the members would be maintained under the larger umbrella of the mother church / daughter church connection; and at the same time both churches would have opportunities for continued growth by recruiting from their local areas. However, for the mother-church, offering the same familistic programs which it had always been offering, the new local residents in the apartments proved to be a very unproductive source of new members. In the meantime, the suburban churches, including the daughter churches, were pulling more members away. It was only after the realization that the church could not expect any real growth from the new downtown residents that the decision to

move was made. All churches reported that their programs, largely family-oriented, were again experiencing success in their new locations.

The extended period of frustration and decline in the city center while waiting for the new residents to join their churches partly illustrates the common inability of many organizations to change significantly to meet new conditions. Miles contends that "organizations are characterized more by inertia than by adaptability" (1981: p. 447). Kaufman notes that "organizations often persist in courses of action that were previously beneficial even when new conditions necessitate new patterns of behavior" (1975: p. 140).

These churches often displayed a naivete regarding the nature and character of the newly developing community in the CBD. One church document, written during the time when apartment buildings were rapidly beginning to dominate the area around the church spoke optimistically of starting an "outreach ministry" to the new residents. Nothing was indicated in the article as to the implications regarding the programs of the church if these new residents were to begin attending. Another church announced an organized attempt at attracting the apartment dwellers and entitled the initiative: "Ministry to Vertical Villages". Such a title seemed to imply that the apartment building was

simply a local residential community turned on end. After a series of attempts to contact high-rise dwellers, the leaders began to express their disillusionment at being unable to even gain entrance to the buildings, let alone find people interested in their church programs.

1b. Metropolitan-oriented Relocated

The other pattern of behavior prior to relocation can be seen in the two churches (First Spiritualist and House of Jacob Synagogue) that had been appealing to a city-wide constituency. These churches also were experiencing difficulty with CBD development, however not because of local members moving away, but rather because their central location had become an undesirable destination for their city-wide members. The area had, for both, begun to deteriorate rapidly during the period of transition from a largely residential area to an area of governmental and commercial high-rises. The period in between had meant abandoned or torn-down buildings and many areas felt to be unsafe for people to walk. While both had their property expropriated, the desire to move to a more attractive and convenient area directed their move to the suburbs.

I have, thus far, suggested several variations in the career of the relocated churches principally as they differ according to their historical constituency orientation: local or metropolitan. It is also helpful to describe

variations in the career of the persistent churches along that same dimension of constituency orientation.

2. The Persistent Churches

2a. Locally-oriented Persistent

The churches that have historically depended upon a local population have experienced various degrees of residential change and have responded in various ways while remaining in the city center. Mt. Calvary followed a very similar behavioral sequence to that of many of the relocated churches, including the loss of a local constituency, establishment of daughter churches, unsuccessful attempts to build a new local constituency and the eventual decision to sell. However, instead of a complete desertion of the city-core, the leadership opted to rent commercial space for a small sanctuary and offices. The rationale was that it was necessary to maintain a "religious presence" in the CBD in spite of the realization that it would not translate into "institutional return" in the form of new members and financial support.

Trinity Lutheran closely followed the behavioral response outlined above until the stage at which there is a relocation decision made. The initial conclusion is that the church, while not at that stage now, will soon make the decision. The attempts at contacting the apartment

dwellers in the area have proven largely unsuccessful, and there are indications in the recent church report that there have been considerations made regarding the possibility of selling the property. However, the church is also introducing a new strategy that would involve staying in the central location and appealing to the city-wide population of Finnish immigrants. Whatever the direction that will eventually be taken, there are some important factors, to be discussed later, which have led to this particular church being willing and able to maintain a "wait and see" stance during a prolonged period of low membership and declining program function.

The third church, St. Francis, illustrates another variation in the career of persistent churches which had depended upon a local constituency. In this case, with the residential transitions that come with CBD development, the church found itself in the midst of high-rise apartments principally catering to the elderly. In 1956, 65% of the households in the eastern section of the study area were made up of families; by 1981 this had dropped to 17%. The percentage of the population over 65 years of age in 1985 was approximately 40% compared to 16% in 1956. Rather than relocate then, the church chose to radically change its program, even to the point of tearing down the parish hall, and building a high-rise for the elderly in joint-sponsorship with another church. St. Francis now

focuses almost exclusively upon the new local constituency which should prove to be a relatively stable population in the city core since the highrises will continue to attract the elderly to live downtown.

Two other churches, the Chinese United and the Chinese Pentecostal, have experienced considerable stability in their ethnic enclave. Certainly Chinatown has experienced changes relative to the rest of the city, such that the Chinese population in the eight block area represents a much smaller proportion of the total Chinese population in the city than it did several decades ago. Both churches report that, while the local area still provides a significant number of their members, more and more of their members are now residing outside of Chinatown. One could conclude that in the future, the constituency orientation will continue shifting from a local to a city-wide ethnic constituency. However, for the time being, the local community remains an important constituency for the churches and will likely continue to serve as a focus for the larger Chinese community. Looking at the careers of all the surviving churches, these two churches evidence the least degree of change in their behavioral sequence in terms of programs, congregational numbers and make-up.

2b. Metropolitan-oriented Persistent

The final three churches, Central and Knox United, and Cathedral Anglican, represent the persistent churches which have had an historically metropolitan constituency orientation. These churches all point to very successful operations during the middle of the century. They were among the largest churches of the city, and all three could be classified as prestige churches. That is, they had the best known preachers and the churches were influential in the religious life of the whole city - two of them having weekly radio broadcasts. Beginning in the 60's however, the churches began to notice significant drop-offs in their memberships, much greater than the decline in the general denominational averages. Each church experienced their lowest membership in the late 70's or early 80's. They point to the physical changes of their central location rather than the residential changes as being the cause of their troubles. These prestige churches, which once viewed their central location as advantageous, found that their location was no longer prestigious. That is, as one church leader noted, there were several years when they were surrounded by vacant lots and commercial construction. Once much of the major construction had been completed, they were faced with the increased problems of limited access and parking. Another church leader noted that the changes to their avenue made it unsafe to walk at night,

and parents were hesitant to send their young people downtown to attend evening church programs. Given these problems and others, the suburban churches gained the competitive edge over these centrally located churches. It has only been in the last several years that these three CBD churches have begun to regain some of their city-wide appeal. They have done this by emphasizing certain features such as their architecture, their history, and even their ability to draw a more heterogenous congregation; all of which are not available to the typical suburban church. At the same time, they have changed programs and made arrangements to overcome the problems of parking and the inconvenience of their members having to attend week-night functions.

Given that their congregationally-oriented programs are now almost exclusively offered on Sundays, these three churches have also begun to focus on the downtown worker, offering a variety of services from jazzercise to noon Bible studies. In talking to the leaders, all remarked that previous to these shifts in programs, the churches had gone through a period of questioning and re-appraisal as to whether or not they still had a function or "mission" in the city-center. This re-evaluation came, it seems, as a result of the increasing under-utilization of their facilities and personnel particularly during the week-days.

As with all the churches, the career of the persistent metropolitan-oriented churches presents an ebb and flow largely in response to the changing environment. The career of these persistent churches has moved from a successful emphasis on a city-wide constituency, through a period of decline, to one of relative congregational stability but with considerable lower numbers. The churches now divide their energies between maintaining the traditional city-wide congregation, and offering services to the downtown 9 - 5 worker.

Conclusion

Three career types have been suggested, identified by the general outcomes: persistence, relocation, or extinction. These general categories or career names will be used with the understanding that the terms do not describe the dynamics of the full behavioral-sequence of these groups of churches. The study, after all, is not just interested in where the church eventually finds itself, but is equally interested in the process of adaptation and change which has led the churches to their present situation. As well, using the career names above to categorize the response behavior sequences of the individual churches does not necessarily "close-off" the possibility, even inevitability of continued transition and evolution.

In two of the career types, persistence and relocation, the historical constituency orientation has been further noted because of how it seems to affect the response patterns of the churches. That is, for the churches that eventually relocated, the locally-oriented churches shared common behaviors that were very different from that of the metropolitan-oriented churches. Similarly, response patterns of the persistent churches could be grouped according to what had historically been their constituency focus. In effect, four career sub-types are being suggested. This refinement becomes more crucial in chapter five when explanations will be given as to why some churches relocated while others persisted.

Finally one could conjecture that perhaps the historical constituency orientations of extinct churches had also produced distinct behavioral patterns based upon whether they had been local or metropolitan churches. For now, however, due to a lack of detailed information, these extinct churches will be dealt with simply as one career type, and will be contrasted with the surviving churches.

CHAPTER FIVE

Factors Influencing Response Behaviors

This chapter will proceed to suggest and discuss possible factors that led certain churches to follow particular response sequences. The first section will deal with the two broader categories: survival or extinction. Pennings has argued that there needs to be much more empirical research and theoretical discussion concerning the reasons for the success, decline, or death of organizations (1981: p. 160). The basic question of why some churches cease to function and why others survive will be primarily dealt with by looking at the differences in economic resources particularly as they are available through extra-organizational ties and property-capital. Some rival hypotheses will be suggested, however as will become apparent, these rivals can not be adequately dealt with in this exploratory study. They are suggested with the hope that further research will be stimulated or undertaken. The second section of the chapter, will look at the surviving churches and the differences between those which have persisted in the CBD and those which have relocated. The final section will assess the roles played by environmental selection and by strategic choice in determining the outcomes of the individual churches.

A.) Survival and Extinction

Table 5.1 compares the two types of churches as they relate to denominational ties. While keeping aware that the cells of table 5.1 involve some small totals, it would be possible to tentatively hypothesize that independent churches are more likely to become extinct than the denominational churches. The majority of churches that survived perhaps received backing and support from the larger resources of their respective denominational organizations. The independent churches generally were more autonomous and so were more susceptible to the contextual changes of their local environment. In other words, these independent churches were more influenced by their immediate circumstances than were the churches who were tied to organizations outside of their local context. If for instance, the local congregation is solely responsible for the pastor's salary and church upkeep, then a downward shift in the economic input of the local congregation will have a more negative impact on the continuance of the church program than if that church also had available the backing and resources of the larger denominational organization.

Table 5.1 The Churches' Denominational Ties

	Denominationally- tied	Independent	Total
Surviving	13	1	14
Extinct	3	12	15
Total	16	13	29

At the same time however, there is a problem with table 5.1 in that it tends to gloss over some important differences within the general category of denominationally-tied churches. What the table fails to do is to distinguish the different relationships between the denomination and the single church. That is, some denominations take a greater role or responsibility in the life of the individual church than do others, and so it is not possible to state definitively that just because a church is denominationally-tied that it can depend upon support from its larger organization. More research into different denominational polity would need to be done to deal with this question, but for the time being we are left with the problem that not all denominations would likely provide the same degree of support for their churches. Eventually more detailed data along those lines may be a way of dealing with the three negative cases, ie. the denominationally-tied churches that ceased to operate.

It is necessary then to introduce another line of reasoning which looks at whether or not the churches owned property. Table 5.2 looks at this variable, and on the surface at least, suggests a very strong relationship between ownership of the property and survival. In fact, one might be inclined to say that property ownership is more important than denominational ties. It is interesting to look at how this table relates to the negative cases in Table 5.1. All three of the terminated churches did not own their own facilities, while the surviving independent church owned its own facilities. However, due to the speculative nature of table 5.2 we cannot place too much weight on this table.(1) The problem that arises is the uncertainty in some cases as to whether or not particular churches owned or rented their facilities, and for that matter, whether or not some churches owned their property outright or carried mortgages.

(1) Table 5.2 is partly speculative due to the lack of detailed information available concerning the extinct churches. In some cases there was direct information concerning whether or not the church owned its property. In other cases I had to surmise from the addresses that some churches had been renting store-fronts or space within a larger building.

Table 5.2 Property Ownership by the Churches

	Owned	Rented	Unknown	Total
Surviving	14	0	0	14
Extinct	0	12	3	15
Total	14	12	3	29

At this stage then, it seems wise to combine the presence of denominational ties and/or property-capital under the general heading of the availability of economic resources. Those churches which could call upon such resources were able to use them either to persist in the core despite the negative impact of CBD development, or were able to relocate and continue functioning in a more favorable environment.

The lack of extra-organizational ties or capital in property can be suggested as an important factor in the extinction of the downtown churches. The rationale is that these churches lacked the necessary resources to continue attracting a viable congregation in the downtown core, or make the necessary adjustments, ie. relocation. These resource-poor churches were less capable of surviving the environmental changes such as demographic and physical transitions in the CBD than were those churches that could utilize extra-organizational ties, or capital, or both.

The assumption in this explanation is that the extinction of the churches was precipitated by financial failure. Possible rival hypotheses could be suggested by looking at the conclusions of Miles in his discussion of the dimensions or causes of organizational failure (1981). The first possible cause that he suggests is "technical failure" or the "inability to achieve and maintain economic efficiency in required transactions". The second possible cause may be political failure, "the inability to achieve and maintain legitimacy among strategic constituencies". The third cause could be "cultural failure" or "the inability to achieve and maintain ideological bases" (1981: p440).

As one quickly becomes aware, these three bases of organizational failure can be closely inter-related. The exploratory data for this study has focused upon the economic resource differences between the churches that survived and those that became extinct. The explanation given then, tends to parallel Miles' technical failure. However the problem of dealing with the rival explanations is to try to determine whether legitimacy or ideological problems may have also played a role. The failure of any one, the economic base, legitimacy base, or ideological base would likely expedite failure in the other two; and so one is faced with the rather difficult task of determining which brick was first pulled to send the whole structure

crashing down. Lacking the detailed information that is needed, we can not adequately deal with these rival hypotheses, but would suggest that they might provide interesting directions for further study into the reasons for the termination or extinction of religious organizations.

Before going on and looking at the differences between persistent and relocated churches, one other perspective on the extinct churches should be briefly mentioned. It concerns the age of the different churches, and while very much related to the above discussion, it brings out a dimension that Kimberly says is seldom seriously considered in organizational literature (1981: p. 5,6). Stinchcombe is cited as one of the few researchers to pay any attention to the role that the age of an organization plays in the question of survival. Stinchcombe has called it the "liability of newness" which he summarizes as : "a higher proportion of new organizations fail than old" (1965: p. 145).

Table 5.3 Age of the Churches

	no.	avg. age	range
Surviving churches	14	71.4	27 - 111
in the CBD:			
prior to 1955	13	74.8	32 - 111
after 1955	1	27	n/a
Extinct churches	15	20.4	2 - 68
in the CBD:			
prior to 1955	10	31.0	12 - 68
after 1955	5	3.8	2 - 6

When the ages of churches were averaged, it was found that the mean age of the surviving churches is 71.4 years, while the mean age at which the extinct churches were terminated is 20.4 years. (See table 5.3) However as was mentioned earlier, the 15 extinct churches were made up of two quite distinct age-groups. The five churches that were identified as first appearing after 1955 averaged a life-span of only 3.8 years. It would seem likely, as mentioned in chapter four, that this kind of short-lived religious organization has always appeared and disappeared in the city. Their termination does not seem to be primarily affected by CBD development since such organizational birth and death appears to be a common

phenomenon not limited to a specific stage or location in urban development. The "pathology" of these churches, it seems, closely fits Stinchcombe's notion of "liability of newness" which emphasizes internal structural weaknesses rather than the interplay of organizational structure and adverse external contextual conditions. So far, looking at the differences between extinct and surviving churches, this discussion has suggested a lack of extra-organizational ties and resources at a time of environmental change and upheaval as being the main reason for the failure of the churches. The ten extinct churches which had been in the city-centre before 1955 averaged 31 years of operation before their termination. The "liability of newness" may be an important factor for the five short-life span churches, but it would seem to be far less important in explaining the termination of the ten other churches.

B.) CBD Persistence and Relocation

So far, this paper is suggesting that economic resources in the form of extra-organizational ties or property-capital are necessary for the survival of the churches; however it does not explain why certain churches stayed in the CBD while others relocated. This is the next question that needs to be addressed.

Of the 14 surviving churches, six have moved out from the city core and relocated in the suburban areas. As chapter four has indicated, there were two career sub-types of churches that relocated: those that had been focusing on a local constituency and those that had been appealing to a city-wide population. Likewise, among the persistent churches, there are two career sub-types differentiated by their constituency orientation: local and city-wide. Depending on their constituency orientation, all of those churches have been vulnerable to, or influenced by either demographic or physical transitions accompanying CBD development. However, unlike the terminated churches, they had the capability of modifying, to varying degrees, the effects of their changing environments. This capability, it is suggested, is largely due to resources via extra-organizational ties or property-capital.

The question though, which now must be answered is: why did some churches relocate and others persist in the city core during the period of contextual change which accompanied rather rapid CBD development? First, however, it is necessary to note, as was mentioned in chapters 3 and 4, that some churches encountered qualitatively different contextual transitions than did others. For the locally-oriented churches the transition most central to their situation was the demographic shifts, while for the metropolitan-oriented churches the crucial transition

concerned physical and functional changes in the city center. A simple chart (table 5.4) shows that there are cases of each type of church relocating and persisting.

Table 5.4 Churches by Constituency Orientation and Location

Historical Constituency Orientation		
	Locally-oriented	Metropolitan-oriented
Persistent	Chinese United Chinese Pentecostal St. Francis Trinity Lutheran Mt. Calvary Lutheran	Knox United Central United Cathedral
Relocated	First Lutheran Bethel Baptist	House of Jacob First Spiritualist

The necessary comparisons that must be made are between those churches which had to deal with similar contextual threats to their existence and yet responded in one of two general ways: persisting or relocating. Therefore this discussion will first turn to exploring and suggesting factors which led some locally-oriented churches to move out from the city-core while others with the same type of orientation stayed downtown.

1.) Locally-oriented Churches

Rossi's exploratory study, alluded to earlier in chapter 3 and which concerned local demographic change and its effect on organizations, is relevant to this discussion

(1980 p: 105-113). It should be noted that he only gathered data concerning organizations which were persisting in their location, and did not interview any organizations which had relocated. Therefore while he does include relocation as one strategy that an organization may follow to deal with local residential change, he does not include any relocated organizations in his sample. Rossi suggests, then, a list of possible responses that a locally-oriented organization may make when experiencing demographic changes. Some of the "modes of adjustment" include: change in constituency base, geographic expansion, modification of function, and relocation (1980: p. 110-111). It is interesting to look back at the case-studies of the locally-oriented churches and find that there is at least one example of each type of response. St. Francis Church adjusted its focus to a new constituency base, the high-rise elderly. Trinity Church is attempting to expand its appeal to a city-wide ethnic community. Mt. Calvary Church has changed its function to where now the task of attracting and maintaining a congregation is secondary to its role as an agency which lobbies for social change. Three other churches, have relocated to the suburbs of the city.

Rossi, then, has described various organizational responses to demographic change, similar to the descriptions in this study concerning the responses of the

churches to CBD development. But this study is also interested in looking at the reasons why some churches relocated and why others, facing similar contextual conditions, made adjustments with the intent of staying in the CBD. First it is necessary to note that while the conditions faced by the locally-oriented churches were qualitatively similar, they were not quantitatively the same. The two Chinese churches did not experience the same high degree of residential change as did the others, and it would follow then that the relative stability of their constituency would make major adjustments unnecessary. One is left then with the six other churches, three of which made adjustments to stay and three which relocated. Realizing a problem exists with such a small sample, nevertheless the first tentative hypothesis proposed is that the churches which had a stronger sense of obligation or "mission" to the city center were more likely to persist in their location despite changes in their traditional constituency. This hypothesis was proposed after a few days in the field while principally dealing with the persistent churches. It was noticed how often the interviewees spoke of their "mission to the downtown".

Measuring the strength of mission or obligation proved to be a difficult task, but in future research it should be possible to refine the concept and the measurement. For now, though, there were only rough indicators such as

written statements of the church's mission or purpose and the verbal reports of leaders. In all cases, both the persisting churches and those that eventually relocated, the organizations expressed some sentiment that their "mission field" was or has been the community around them. This included documents and verbal reports concerning the period prior to the move of the relocated churches. It is evidenced by the initial attempts of the relocated churches to first recruit or offer programs to the new downtown residents.

A sense of mission, at least as it is presently defined, is not enough, then, to explain the differences between the persistent and relocated churches. Some of the churches which expressed this notion of mission to their community, did not persist in their location once it became obvious that the new residents were not interested. The decision to move or not seemed to come down to a more pragmatic consideration: would a shift in focus to the new constituency produce institutional return? After initial attempts at contacting the new residents, three of the churches concluded that there were no opportunities for service or growth and so moved to "greener pastures".

This then suggests an alternative hypothesis: locally-oriented churches which experience a loss of their traditional constituency are more likely to attempt to

persist in their location if they perceive that the new constituency will provide opportunities for institutional return. So far, the concept of institutional return has been primarily used to mean financial support and membership. However also important for the life of the religious organization, or any organization, is the awareness that it has a purpose or raison d'être. It is necessary for both internal and external legitimacy claims. This re-introduces what was just talked about, the organization's sense of mission, except now the concept is proposed as a necessary product of organizational life and not only a part of the means to maintain the organization. Raison d'être or mission is both an end and a means for the religious organization in the same way that finances and membership are both ends and means. This helps to explain the case of Mt. Calvary. The financial and membership concerns were no longer an issue. The endowment fund from the sale of the land provided the bulk of the finances, and the church linked itself to the membership of the two daughter churches. In fact, the membership is referred to as the "triune congregation", meaning that the same congregation is simply split into three locations. The church, and the denomination to which it belongs, are fully aware that its central location will not produce any return in the sense of new members or financial support, however the church persists in the downtown because it can continue

to fulfill and receive a sense of mission. This is not to disparage the altruistic nature of the church's position, but also recognizes the exchange nature of the act.

The hypothesis then, concerning the churches' perceptions of opportunities for institutional return, appears to "fit" the locally-oriented churches and would serve to explain why some left the city center and why others stayed. The three churches which eventually relocated, initially felt that their new neighbours represented opportunities for increased organizational vitality in the form of financial support, membership, and mission. That perception changed after a few years of trying to interest the new residents. The other locally-oriented churches, including the Chinese churches, persisted in their central location because in their view there were still opportunities for institutional return.

2.) Metropolitan-oriented Churches

The churches within the career sub-types, persistent metropolitan-oriented churches and relocated metropolitan-oriented, do not display as much variety within each sub-type as did the locally-oriented churches. The three persistent churches share similar characteristics such as belonging to major denominations and having larger facilities. Of the relocated churches, two belonged to very small fringe denominations while the other was

independent. All three, when in the downtown, owned only small facilities.

When the major changes started occurring downtown such as re-development projects in the form of high-rise commercial and residential development, there was a period when all six churches reported that the area presented access and even aesthetic problems. All churches reported that it became increasingly difficult for people to come downtown to attend. It is interesting to note that not all six churches experienced the same problem of competition from the suburban churches. Early in this study, it was expected that a prime factor in the declining membership of all the metropolitan-oriented churches would be the increased competition from the suburbs. This was noted by the three churches belonging to major denominations. There were many new churches in the same denominations being started in the suburbs and the members were finding it much more convenient and safer to attend the church in their own communities. However, as the study progressed, an unexpected finding was that the other three metropolitan-oriented churches did not experience any significant competition from the suburbs. They each represented religious beliefs that were not represented by any other church in the city, and in fact were quite far removed from the religious mainstream.

These three religious organizations, while not feeling the pressure of suburban competition, were most vulnerable to the physical changes in their location. In the two documented cases, their property was expropriated by the city. Each has noted that the area around them had deteriorated and so they were very willing to move. However, it should be recognized that the area became less attractive largely due to the work of the city developers prior to the expropriation of the church properties.

A tentative hypothesis then, suggests that the smaller (weaker?) churches will experience greater disruption to their existence during CBD development and so are more likely to relocate. Competition from the suburban churches is not a factor which explains the differences between relocation and persistence for the metropolitan-oriented churches. Rather, what is important is the level to which the churches are exposed to the physical disruption and changes of CBD development and the degree to which the churches have the resources to modify or "ride out" the adverse affects. Although detailed evidence is not available, it is very likely that an important resource for the churches is the power to influence city government as to just how much disruption will be allowed to go on in their immediate area.

As just mentioned, competition from the suburban churches does not explain why some of the metropolitan-oriented churches moved and why some persisted. However, this competition does play a key role in shaping the response pattern of the churches that did not move. As was mentioned earlier in chapter 4, these churches have changed their programs to continue attracting the city-wide constituency and to adjust to the problems that their location presents such as the difficulties of attending evening or week-day functions. An unexpected finding was that rather than these program shifts resulting in closed or empty churches during large sections of the week, the churches have instead been able to utilize their facilities often to a higher level than before. This is the result of a week-day focus on the downtown worker.

Organizational change in goal orientation or mission has been addressed in several studies, two of the better known being the study of goal succession in the March of Dimes (Sills 1957) and the YMCA (Zald and Denton 1963). Both studies deal with organizational change in response to environmental conditions, however the changes evidenced in the response-sequence of the YMCA seem especially relevant to the situation of the metropolitan-oriented CBD churches. As Aldrich describes the study: "the YMCA was transformed from an organization with a highly specialized evangelical base, stressing religious activity, to one emphasizing

general programs to develop 'the whole man' without regard to religious affiliation" (1979: p. 215). The organization, facing an increasingly secular society, shifted its focus from almost exclusively "religious" activities to a more general service orientation. Similarly, it seems, although these CBD churches have not transformed as completely, they have experienced a shift in their downtown environment that resulted in the area being increasingly dominated by "secular" activities and less amenable to "religious" functions. In response, the churches have increased the relative amount of time and energy devoted to the more generalized services which range anywhere from artistic presentations to "jazzercise". Certainly, one could assert that these changes have also been taking place at the larger organizational level in the mainline denominations that these particular churches represent; however I would contend that the specific kind of environmental change - ie. functional changes - in the CBD has produced a more radical shift than the shift caused by the general increase of secularization at the larger societal level. While only anecdotal evidence for the time being, a brief series of exploratory telephone interviews to other churches in the city belonging to the same denominations (Anglican and United Church), revealed that the number of "non-religious", public service programs was

far less for churches outside of the city-core in comparison to the CBD churches.

Zald and Denton concluded that the YMCA made the shift in the face of decreasing institutional return in the form of membership and financial support. That is, by shifting to a more general service orientation, memberships and finances increased. This has not happened with these CBD churches, nor does it seem to have been their intent. However, the church response still has been directed to gaining institutional return, but of a different type. These churches, after going through a period of membership losses and program cutbacks, questioned whether or not they still had a purpose in the downtown. After a period questioning and sensing a loss in their *raison d'être*, it appears that their sense of mission was strengthened as they expanded their programs to the week-day nine-to-five worker.

C. The Role of Environmental Selection and Strategic Choice

It is with some trepidation that I enter the debate concerning the role of environmental selection and the role of strategic choice in determining organizational outcomes. Rather than presenting both sides of the debate here and then trying to come up with a satisfactory conclusion or compromise, I will simply state the "middle-ground"

perspective that has been guiding this research, and assess how the findings would relate to the environmental selection/strategic choice debate. Aldrich in a summary statement following his own attempt at settling the debate gives a good basis and an outline for presenting my contributions to the debate:

Environmental selection processes set the limits within which rational selection among alternatives takes place. Prior limits and constraints on available options leave little room for maneuvering by most organizations and strategic choice may be a luxury open only to the largest and most powerful organizations. Whether strategic choice operates only at the margins of change (producing small effects of little consequence) or at the forefront of change (remaking environments in the organization's image) is ultimately an empirical question, open to resolution only through the cumulation of historical research.

The "middle-ground" perspective that I have been taking leaves room for strategic choice or "maneuvering" within the limits set by internal organizational and external environmental constraints. The external environmental constraints in the downtown core basically are related to the transitions that were taking place in the demographic and physical/functional nature of the downtown core. The internal organizational constraints include the resource base and the history of the church. The history of the church primarily concerns its traditional constituency orientation while the resource

base includes the economic resources available through extra-organizational ties and property capital.

This study has already demonstrated variation in the level and type of environmental change, variation in the historical constituency orientation of the churches, and variation in their resource bases. Combining these variables, in a non-quantified manner, I have attempted to explain the variation in the church responses and outcomes to environmental change. A further refinement in the study would be accomplished if the independent variables could be assigned numerical values or weights in the relationship. However, for now I have been content to test for rivals via analytic induction and then suggest these particular variables as being important factors in explaining the differential church response to CBD development.

Any "maneuvering" that has been done on the part of churches in efforts to positively affect their situation - ie. maintain or increase institutional return in the face of an increasingly scarce environment - has largely been subject to the internal and external structural constraints experienced by the churches. The churches which faced demographic change that directly and adversely affected their traditional constituency "pool", were placed in a situation of decreasing institutional return that threatened their very survival. Some churches had the

ability to make adjustments that made possible either their continuance in the downtown core or their relocation to more "hospitable" surroundings. The churches that were dependent upon attracting a city-wide constituency into the city core, faced decreasing returns when the downtown, for a variety of reasons, became less attractive to their traditional constituency. Again, some churches were able to make adaptations that have made possible their continued operations either downtown or in a new location. The assumption concerning the extinct churches, in both types of situation, is that they did not have the ability to adjust to the environmental changes and so, facing decreasing returns, simply ceased operations. This assumption is not without some support. In particular, one can see from the material available that an obvious difference between the surviving and extinct churches concerns their access to economic resources. The rationale is that these extinct churches had no ability to implement alternative strategies with which to sufficiently challenge the environmental pressures, and so were basically "victim" to the whims of environmental selection.

How then does this relate to the question of environmental selection or strategic choice? I would argue that the church organizations on the whole have been operating within only a very narrow sphere of discretionary responses available to them. The extinct churches had

basically little or no opportunities for adaptive maneuvering largely because of a lack of a resource base. Under the pressures of adverse environmental changes, economic resources are necessary if the organization is to cope with the demands of such contingencies. However, economic resources are not sufficient. That is, the availability of economic resources does not automatically ensure that strategic choices or adaptations would be made. This is evidenced by the slowness of adaptive response by many of the churches when they experienced institutional loss precipitated by environmental change. The life-histories repeatedly describe churches which had, over a number of years, experienced a steady drop in their congregational membership. It was only when these figures were very low, almost to the point of no return in some cases, that significant organizational changes were made.

Nor does the availability of economic resources automatically ensure that "sound" strategic choices will be made. Consider the churches that, when seeing their historical constituency move away, established daughter churches in the suburbs which further pulled their membership away. These CBD churches then assumed that the new local residents would simply be recruited through the programs that had worked in the past.

The slowness and the inappropriateness of response, suggests that there are factors other than just environmental pressures and availability of resources that operate to restrict strategic choice for organizations. One such factor is the problem of perception on the part of the organization. The churches failed to accurately anticipate the effects upon their memberships caused by CBD development, and failed to understand the implications of their initial efforts at building a new constituency.

Shippley writes from a perspective primarily interested in helping churches adjust to the environmental pressures of rapid urbanization. While his work is mainly directed to church leaders, he has summed up well the tendency of church organizations to be slow in understanding and responding to new contextual conditions:

Lack of adequate sociological knowledge of parish work appears to produce many blunders. Such ignorance underlies repeated mistakes in church placement, in spacing between churches, in program adjustment, in provision of transitional ministries, and in basic conception of the urban religious task. How often on the basis of a very superficial knowledge of community needs, vast sums of money have been invested in projects of dubious merit. ... Failure to discover a causal relationship between inadequate sociological knowledge and repeated churching mistakes accounts in part for the distressing impact of the urban revolution. Surely no beneficial revision of Protestant strategy and urban church tactics can come out of a

deficiency in community knowledge
(1952: p. 27).

But a failure to understand the context may not be the only reason for slowness of response. Hannan and Freeman (1977) list a number of internal and external factors that place "inertial pressures" on organizational ability to adapt to new contextual conditions (pp. 930-933). Several of these seem to apply especially well to the life-histories of the downtown churches. One internal constraint may be the organizations' facilities. Two of the churches that persisted in the CBD have been named "heritage sites". While there is no direct comparison to be made to other churches, it is interesting to note the impact of such a designation. Both of these organizations commented that they likely could not move out of the CBD now even if they wanted to. Being named "heritage sites", their church buildings can not be torn down or renovated significantly and so the property is basically useless to builders who may have wanted to buy the property.

This internal constraint is closely related as well to the organization's sense of history. What has been done in the past, forms the basis or standard for acceptable responses to present conditions. These normative agreements tend to "preclude the serious consideration of many alternative responses" (Hannan and Freeman 1977: p. 931). Finally, this "tradition" constraint, emanating

largely from the conservative nature of churches, also comes from external sources. That is, the outside public places certain expectations or legitimacy claims upon the churches. If they fail to act as churches are "supposed" to, then certain outside pressures may be put upon them.

These pressures, both internal and external, which come to bear upon an organization that wishes to go against established patterns of behavior, have had a very definite effect upon one proposed attempt to adapt to the new CBD environment. Within one of the larger metropolitan-oriented churches, several of the leaders proposed that the church be torn down and the property be sold to developers. However rather than relocate, the church would set up its operations in the new high-rise commercial development that would be built on the property. The idea was that the church would have its facilities in the midst of the daily activity of downtown business. It was to be a "ministry to the marketplace" that would take on a rather different form from the traditional church services. Opposition to the plan came from both inside and outside the church. There was a letter-writing campaign that saw the mayor of the city and a well-known author (Pierre Berton) brought forward to oppose the plan on the basis that the city would lose an important historical landmark in the city. From inside the church, many members worried that the traditional ministry of the church to the

congregation would be lost. In the end the plan was scrapped, and several of the proponents of the new proposal, including the senior pastor, left the church.

This same church, and several of the other CBD persistent churches, have seen an evolution in their programs and emphasis over the past several years, however not on as rapid a scale as was unsuccessfully proposed. These churches are the metropolitan-oriented churches, which as was stated, have begun to make more use of their facilities during the week-days. An under-utilization of their facilities, caused by a reduced congregation, has given them the option of offering programs to the nine-to-five downtown worker. While not supplying these churches with the institutional return in the sense of new members or financial support, it does seem to fulfill another important need, the idea that the churches have a "mission" or a raison d'être for being downtown. As was stated earlier, during the period of declining congregations and program cutbacks, and before the heavier emphasis on the week-day workers, the organizations went through a period of "soul-searching" or identity crisis largely brought on by the internal questioning of whether or not they still had a purpose or mission in being downtown. This seems to have been generally resolved with the implementation of the week-day programs.

Finally, to bring the discussion back to the debate concerning environmental selection and strategic choice. This study would tend to support the view held by Aldrich (1979) that strategic choice operates within rather narrow parameters. The structural factors restricting strategic choice include the degree and type of environmental change, the constituency orientation and history of the organization, and its resource base. Related to the internal structure of the organization are the limits on strategic choice caused by problems of perception and the normative expectations tied to the history of the church. These normative expectations also impinge themselves upon the organization from the outside. Together this complex set of constraints poses a rather formidable barrier to the ability of these churches to make rational strategic choices which would allow them to adapt to new environmental conditions.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

A.) On the Reconstruction of Research

In the preface of this thesis, I expressed the desire to include in the research an accurate record of the real research chronology. That is, I had hoped that the reader would get some idea of the "drama" of inquiry that is basic to social research; the frustration of dead-ends and the surprise of serendipitous findings, the difficulty of gathering data from reticent informants and the pleasure of interacting with new and interesting people. As well, I wanted to capture in my presentation the evolution of the theory, so that the reader could understand how I came to the conclusions and assess the validity of those conclusions. I felt that analytic induction as a research methodology was conducive to this type of presentation. Katz (1983) has maintained that an important feature of A.I. is the interactional relationship that is established between the researcher and the reader. For A.I. to really work, it requires that the reader be made aware of the actual process of research and not simply the reconstructed version.

However, my good intentions very quickly ran into some practical problems. The account of my "voyage" of inductive research becomes rather cumbersome and tiresome for both the writer and the reader. The process of refinement and reformulations, of going down one "rabbit path" only to find that one has to turn around and go back to the beginning, became a rather repetitious and "messy" exercise to record. And so as the writer, I found myself polishing up the edges, cutting corners, and leaving much unstated. The reader is left with a largely reconstructed picture of the research process and theory development. The bridges leading from one idea to the next are often only implicitly available. Partly to remedy this lack, the following section will attempt to briefly review the chapters particularly with the idea of relating some of the chronology of the research and theoretical development.

B.) Review of Chapters

Chapter one briefly explicated the ecological model as it applied to the study of organizations and alerted the reader to the debate within the model which concerns the degree of autonomy that an organization has in relation to its environment. The chapter then looked at several bodies of research; the first dealing with the effect of CBD development upon organizations. This literature, largely by urban geographers, looked at how the physical and

functional changes in the downtown affected the resident organizations. The second body of literature principally included studies of churches and their environments. The emphasis in this research tended to concern demographic changes related to CBD development and its effect upon the "fortunes" of churches. Implicit in both sets of literature was the understanding that there are different types and degrees of environmental change, some of which are more "relevant" to certain organizations than to others, depending particularly upon their constituency orientation. As well, the literature recognized that organizations vary as to their ability to cope with or challenge the pressures placed upon them by environmental changes. This then set up the primary focus of the study: how do these factors - ie. types and degree of environmental change and its relevance to particular churches, and their ability to cope with the changes - operate to affect church response to changing environments, and to what degree is that church response determined by environmental selection or by strategic choice.

The theoretical relationship of the environmental/organizational factors as pictured in diagram 1.1 in chapter one was not in that specific form when the research began. As the study progressed, the concepts, most of which were mentioned in the initial literature review, became clearer as they were seen to actually occur

in the study field. The refinement of the concepts as represented in diagram 1.1 largely occurred via the interaction of the literature and the ongoing field observations.

After the methodological discussion of chapter two, chapter three sets about to discuss the setting of the study. It was at this early entering stage of research, that Rossi's reference to different types of environmental change affecting organizations differently (1980) became relevant. The history of Calgary's CBD development suggested that major changes had taken place, demographically, physically and functionally. At the same time the changes had not been of a uniform degree within the study area. The type and level of environmental disturbance in the city core as it occurred over the thirty year period, and the sharp drop in the number of churches in the area, were both documented. At this juncture, the guiding interpretation was: the downtown churches had over several decades faced an increasingly hostile environment, one that placed demands upon their existence to such a degree that many were no longer able to cope in their location. The question became: what characteristics of the churches in relationship to the environmental conditions determined the impact upon and the response by the churches?

Chapter four and five then set about to examine the churches in greater detail. Chapter four presented brief life histories of twelve of the fourteen surviving churches and a general description of the fifteen extinct churches. Career types were proposed which grouped the churches into one of three categories: persistent, relocated, or extinct. Two of these career types, persistent and relocated, were further distinguished by the church's historical constituency orientation - local or metropolitan. This attention paid to the historical constituency orientation was largely due to Rossi (1980), who suggested that it was a key distinction between organizations and one that would affect their "vulnerabilty" to particular types of environmental change.

Chapter five represents, in a much "tidier" form, the constant process of comparing each church with the others. It was suggested that a critical difference between those churches which have survived and those which became extinct centered around the availability of economic resources which could be used to challenge or buffer the adverse effects of environmental change. However, while these resources were necessary for the survival of the churches, they could not explain the different responses of the surviving churches. Comparisons were made between the surviving churches which shared the same historical constituency orientation, but differed as to whether or not

they persisted in the CBD. For the locally-oriented churches, persisting in the downtown largely depended upon their perception of the opportunities for institutional return. For the metropolitan-oriented churches, it was the churches with smaller facilities and tending to be outside the religious mainstream that moved out from the city center. It has been suggested in this study that the smaller and politically weaker churches were most vulnerable to the disruptions caused by downtown redevelopment. Finally the chapter also examined how this study of church response to environmental change might contribute to the environmental selection/strategic choice debate. While there was evidence of adaptation and choice shown by the churches, generally it would seem that these organizations operate within rather narrow limits in their ability to actively respond to contextual demands.

C.) Significance of the study

This study has sought to contribute to organizational research, which by many reports tends to be lacking in studies which take an historical look at the processes of interaction between organizations and their environments. The principal subjects of the study, the churches and the downtown core, provided a rich field for inquiry, in that the churches have displayed a variety of responses, and the city center shows rapid and wide-ranging change over the

thirty year period of ongoing CBD development. The result is that the study can provide an interesting set of life-histories depicting a variety of action going on within and without the organization. It is this dynamic quality of organizational/environmental interaction that needs to be documented and analyzed if organizational theory is to grow.

This study does not assume that the full range of organizational life is represented. Indeed, the study has found itself dealing most often with organizational decline and failure. Such a study needs to be complemented by a look at organizational birth and growth. For this study, one such complementary study would include the newly formed churches particularly those in the more "hospitable" environment of the suburbs.

As well, the study has tended to take a perspective which presents a more external picture of the organizations as they encountered the environmental changes. Much more needs to be done regarding the inner workings of the organizations, the decision-making processes, the internal politics of tradition and innovation, etc..

Finally, the study does not assume to represent the full range of organizational life, because it is only dealing with one type of organization. It is expected that a number of the findings of this study are applicable to a

wider range of organizations. Rossi, in his exploratory study (1980), principally dealing with the issue of demographic change, found that there were many similarities in the responses of organizations, including churches, to such changes. However, Rossi also made very little attempt at exploring in more detail the response differences of the various types of organizations. This study has improved upon Rossi's study by looking at a more complete picture of environmental change and at the differences that exist in the response-behaviors within one type of organization, the churches. The findings and conclusions would be strengthened and expanded if life-histories of organizations such as schools, club- organizations and businesses in the midst of CBD development could also be collected for analysis.

While this type of expansion of the study would contribute to organizational theory, this study as it presently stands is especially relevant to the much smaller body of literature which looks specifically at church growth and decline. Much of this literature has either been written by or written to the people directly involved in the leadership of churches. For that reason it tends to stress the role of decisions and structures within the churches, with little time given to outside forces. As well, as part of the success orientation of our society, the research is more geared towards growth management,

rather than dealing with situations of decline and termination. Finally, a common criticism of much of the literature, particularly the "church-growth" research, is that it tends to be lacking in sociological understanding. In much of this literature there is little or no attempt to link up with other areas of theory and research, such as organizational literature. This study has attempted to address some of those problems by dealing with the effect of environmental pressures upon the churches, by focusing on the problems of declining churches, and by drawing upon the larger body of organizational literature. In this way, it is hoped that the study might both contribute to organizational theory as well as provide a bridge to this larger body of literature for those who are directly involved in the matters of church management. In a sense then the study will have both a theoretical and a practical significance.

D.) Directions for Further Research

As already mentioned, this study has only looked at a small aspect of organizational response to environmental change. A profitable direction to proceed would involve comparing similar organizations in different environments; more stable or resource-rich environments, for instance. Another possibility would be to look at different types of organizations, schools, businesses, etc., in similar or

different environments. This kind of expansion to the study would principally be with the intent of testing the generalizability of the findings and would most certainly mean the reformulation or refinement of the hypotheses presently proposed.

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