Christian intentional community in New South Wales: a study of the desecularisation process

Jim McKnight
University of Wollongong

Recommended Citation
NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.
Page 211 line 26, read comparison for comparision.
Page 216 line 11, read prerogative for perogative.
Page 227 line 10, read effected for effect.
Page 232 line 12 read reflexive for feflexive.
Page 234 line 25, read knew for know.
Page 239 has been duplicated disregard second page.
Page 241 line 8, read minimise for immimise.
Page 249 line 18, read commitment for committee.
Page 250 line 1, read burnt for burn.
Page 255 line 3, substitute reclaim for colonise.
Page 257 line 13, read within for with.
Page 267 line 7, read justifications for justification.
Page 271 line 12, read seen for see.
Page 279 line 23, read essence for essense.
Page 286 line 18, read in for on.
Page 286 line 25, read of for or.
Page 298 line 8, read from for in.
Page 313 line 23, read prerogatives for perogatives.
Page 317 line 32, read relevant for relevent.
Page 320 line 20, read those for these.
Page 331 line 6, read machinery for machineries.
Page 350 line 14, read eschatological for eschatalogical.
Page 353 line 7, read preceding for proceeding.
Page 354 line 13, read prerogatives for perogatives.

The pages from 354 onwards are wrongly ordered. Please read 354 and then 363 to 366 before returning to page 354.

Page 361 line 2, read Unfortunately for Unfortuantely.
Page 369 line 5, read charisms for charisma.
Page 369 line 31, read notably for noteably.
Page 370 line1, read notably for noteably.
Page 396 line 14, read referent for referant.
Page 398 line 4, read Lyon for Lyons.
Page 404 line 20, read communities for communiites.
Page 421 line 27, read thing for think.
Page 426 line 20, read would for were.
ADDENDUM

1/ It should be noted that the use of the word privatise and its noun privatisation, whilst used in this thesis to refer to individuals, i.e. communitarians, may as well apply to families groups and indeed societies. Its use in an individual context exclusively in this thesis, should not be taken as any limitation of its wider sociological meaning.

2/ Equally the use of the word colonise in several quotations of communitarian viewpoints, reflect the widest meaning of the term, not the perjorative connotation adopted amongst critical sociologists.

3/ One of the provocative sources studied in preparing this dissertation was Dr. Larry Shiner’s work on the meanings and usages of the term Secularisation. Unfortunately from page 75 of the text his name is spelt with a double n, reflecting a certain confusion within secondary sources in the literature. This is regreted and the text should be read throughout as amended.
CHRISTIAN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY
IN NEW SOUTH WALES:
A STUDY OF
THE DESECULARISATION PROCESS

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the award
of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Jim McKnight, B.A., (UNSW), M.A., (SYD)
Department of Sociology
1985

VOLUME ONE
This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University and to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.
This is a thesis in the sociology of knowledge that examines the social constructions of reality which Australian Christian communitarians engage in to sustain a Christian worldview. From a phenomenological viewpoint it investigates the motivations of four thousand Australian Christians who have formed intentional communities to reverse the cognitive secularisation of faith and practice within the institutional church and wider society. It is argued that Christian community represents an intentional attempt to desecularise the communitarians worldview by providing an alternative site, the communal, in which 'appropriate' Christianity may be practised. As such these communitarians are using the communal form as one possible alternative social construction. Other mechanisms are postulated and the choice of the communal by an otherwise conservative social group is discussed.

As a first work in the area the discussion traces the rise of this communal form historically and distinguishes it from other Australian Communal ventures. The study is seen as a complementary work to Peter Cock's 1977 study of Bourgeois and Countercultural communities, rounding out the major forms of communal expression in Australia. It argues that the Christian communal should not be equated with the larger countercultural movement, being essentially socially conservative.
The thesis identifies five subgroupings of Christian Communitarians:—
the leadership, the aspirant leadership, the undecided crytocore,
the needy or welfare recipients and the committed core. This last
group is found to be the dominant force expressing and maintaining
community purposes and structures. Numerically and financially they
dominate virtually every area of community life, in effect becoming
the arbiters of community meanings.

In recognition of the committed core's dominance, the thesis examines
the paths-to-community process by which the core make the transition
from committed church adherents to committed communitarians. An
ideal-type continuum is proposed to account for this shift involving
seven stages:—The Engagement phase, Disillusionment, Disengagement,
Disbelief, Privatisation, Dissonance and finally the Community phase.
This process illustrates the impact of cognitive secularisation, as
well as the responses of community building as a desecularisation
device.

A closer examination of the committed core's motivation towards
community reveals a number of interrelated themes which in
combination make up the communal worldview. These themes define
the communitarians' reaction to the institutional church:—The
Church Universal, Secularisation and Authority-Leadership-Clergy,
the because motivations towards community. Another cluster:—
Acts 2, Renewal and Community and Family, are essentially pre-
scriptions for change within the Christian confraternity. Two
other themes: Simplicity and Social Action/Social Justice, relate
the communitarians efforts to the wider society.
The study concludes with a discussion of Relevance, a sociological construct of some concern to this and other social groups experiencing fundamental shifts in worldview.
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction
The scope of the study
The study (overview)

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

The Researcher's Context
The Theoretical Ground
The Theory of the Methodology
The Paradigm
The Research Actualities
  The scope of the study
  The strategy
  The theoretical process
Conclusions

CHAPTER THREE: THE SECULARISATION DEBATE

The secularisation debate
Definitions
Central Issues
Institutional Definitions
  Decline
  Routinisation
  Differentiation-Pluralism-Disengagement
Normative Definitions
  Generalisation
  Transformation
  Desacrilisation-Secularism
Cognitive Definitions
Conclusions
CHAPTER FOUR: THE RISE OF AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

A Historical perspective
Christian Community in the mid-eighties
Christianity as a social form
The Sect Cycle-Troeltsch-Niebuhr
Community or Association?

CHAPTER FIVE: THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF COMMUNITY LIFE

Numbers
Location
Denominational backgrounds
Structural groupings
Family groupings
Cluster groupings
Institutional groupings
The People
The Goats
The Committed core (sheep)
The Uncommitted cryptocore (the lambs)
The Undershepherds
The Shepherds
Purposes
Welfare Communities
Parish related communities
Church communities
Intercessory communities
Summary

CHAPTER SIX: CASE STUDIES

Bound in a separate Volume
All pages are in numerical order
CHAPTER SEVEN: THE PATHS TO COMMUNITY

Preface
Social Realities-Schutz
Religious Experience-Luckmann and Berger
The Paths to Community Process
  Engagement
  Disillusionment
  Disengagement
  Disbelief
  Privatisation
  Dissonance
  Community
Some final considerations

CHAPTER EIGHT: A DESECULARISING WORLDVIEW

The Church Universal
Authority, Leadership, Clergy?
Secularisation
The First Century Church Acts 2
Renewal Ecumenism
Community and Family
Simplicity, Science and the 21st Century
Social Justice-Social Action
Conclusions (Millikan)

CHAPTER NINE: RELEVANCE

The lifeworld and relevance
The lifeworld and the world of religious experience
Secularisation
Desecularisation
Community as Relevance
Relevance and Social Science
Further Research Considerations
Postcript
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDICIES</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix One The leadership of Christian Community</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Two Recorded Transcript (In Volume Two)</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Three Selected documents</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIBLIOGRAPHY 437
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people assisted in the process of generating this piece of research. It is always difficult to give due acknowledgement and thanks but here goes.

Firstly to Robin Horne my supervisor. Confident that the research would be significant and more importantly come to a satisfactory conclusion, he displayed his sheer skill as a Sociologist in gently directing its progress. Robin as mentor and friend has developed my insights to the point where this thesis is indeed a joint theoretical/intellectual effort. A great debt not easily repaid.

To Vaughan Bowie, colleague, fellow communitarian and friend, I owe much. His interest, gentle disbelief and incisive comments often provoked me to look again to my unfolding theory. I also owe him an extensive debt for the practical assistance he provided, books, access to obscure people, conferences and communities as well as the chance to test my perspectives against his experience of Christian Community on three continents.

To Professor Stephen Hill who first provided the opportunity to make the transition from Psychology to Sociology and who obligingly gave up his holidays to critically read the final draft of this study.

To all of the communitarians who allowed themselves to be peered at, prodded and provoked as the study progressed. In particular
to those Catholic communities, particularly those related to the Related Christian Communities network, who gave me such a warm welcome, showed little hostility to the purposes of the research, encouraged critical debate and shared freely the joys of the Roman Catholic tradition.

To my fellow communitarians at Cobbitty, who patiently endured the inevitable histronics that accompany any such study and who so obligingly listened to me reading the many drafts. Thanks particularly to Mandy, Max and Beryl, Colin and Timothy, Mary M., Jan I., Andy, Jeff and Hugh.

Lastly to some very important people. The X Street communitarians, who broke their own privacy rules, to allow me to study and write on them. Michele who waited so patiently and then typed and retyped the final draft. My wife who endured my 'fud' whilst quite pregnant, and to Lee-Lee, who brought me at least one thousand cups of coffee.
A NOTE ON THE CONVENTIONS USED IN THE STUDY

This is an Australian study that attempts without too great a degree of parochialism to make as much use of Australian researchers and sources wherever possible. Thus some primary references are cited from the first local source rather than from the date of first printing.

This study uses the male gender exclusively, not out of sexist bias but rather to reflect the conservative usage of the communitarians themselves, who though perhaps two-thirds female, continue to refer to themselves and community in the masculine.

The words community, the communal and commune; communard, communitarian, social actor or participant are used interchangeably. The words established, institutional and organised are likewise used interchangeably to refer to mainstream Christian denominations rather than any structural arrangements of a particular church.

Single parentheses indicate a paraphrased quote from the transcripts of recorded conversation. Double parentheses indicate a direct quote. Both have been abbreviated in the process of transcription to simplify internal redundancies, colloquialisms and other figures of speech.

All names in this study have been altered unless the participants have indicated the use of their real names would not constitute an invasion of their privacy.
Chapter six is the case study records of two communities chosen to illustrate the study. For ethical reasons and to protect the privacy of the communitarians concerned, they are bound in a separate volume. Researchers seeking access to this material may write to the author care of the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, P.O. Box 108, Milperra NSW 2214.
Briefly put, it appears to me that Science and everything scientific can be and often is used as a tool in the services of a distorted, narrowed, humourless, de-eroticised, de-emotionalised, desacralized and de-sanctified Weltanschauung. This desacrilization can be used as a defence against being flooded by emotion, especially the emotions of humility, reverance, mystery, wonder and awe.

Abraham Maslow
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This doctoral thesis investigates an aspect of secularisation theory, perhaps the most interesting theoretical construct within the areas of the Sociology of religion and knowledge. It investigates the progressive meaning shifts that underlie the term and examines an instance of the impact of secularisation forces on a social group. The thesis considers a Christian communal movement in the New South Wales context, that has international connections and differs from other communal groups by its essentially conservative orientation. The major argument of this thesis is that Christian Community represents a group experiencing secularisation and that communal efforts are an attempt to reverse the secularisation of the Christian substrate that once informed the Western World. As such this thesis identifies, examines, describes, and attempts to construct a theoretical model of a social process. It traces the efforts of committed Christians to desecularise their worldview and to construct a social reality in which the practice of real or appropriate Christianity is possible and probable. The communal form is a reflection of a belief that the established churches have failed as agents of continuing relevance, and that newer social structures are necessary to contain the essence of Christian belief and practice. Further, the communal form is a recognition that they live in a post-Christian era and need new solutions to the many real problems that an age of epistemological pluralism brings.
The Sociology of Religion has since its inception as an academic sub-discipline, had a major focus on Secularisation theory. Secularisation has traditionally been described as the progressive loss of authority of the Christian ethos that underpinned the western worldview and its replacement by other, principally scientistic, meaning systems. The ambit of the term 'secularisation' has changed with the winds of sociological theory. Lyons (1) has cogently traced the central shifts of interest in secularisation theory as well as the many meanings the term has encompassed. From his research and the writings of more general authors (2) secularisation emerges as an interesting if many splendoured theoretical beast, which has at least as many prophets as detractors, (3). However the term remains and has a certain central utility as a vehicle for describing the many transformations of meanings that underlie the area equally generally described as 'religious'.

Phenomenologically inclined theorists following in the footsteps of Schutz, Luckmann and Berger, have added a certain lustre to secularisation theory by enumerating the many meanings that underlie religious belief, the levels at which they may be held and the many shifts or transformations that meaning might undergo. Of central concern, if slightly neglected of late, is the question of relevance as a factor in determining the many twists and turns of individual, group and societal belief that are undertaken to promote a harmony between ones experiencing and comprehension of the world around. To certain phenomenologists (4) the question of relevance is \textit{the} central question that sociology has to address if it seeks to provide a convincing account of the individual and his or her contribution to social construction at any level.
Schutz (5) has provided a theoretically significant platform for this task by developing a comprehensive account of the many levels that experiencing of reality may proceed on, together with the meaning structures and motivations that are entailed by such experiencing. He has left us with a picture of disperate 'provinces of meaning' that bound an individual's social construction of reality, as well as the problem of how in a complex society, a coherent social construction might be maintained given elements of these provinces that intrude on each other. Schutz has commented on the dislocation and shock that intrusive elements from separate provinces bring to a coherent worldview but did not develop this area prior to his death. Unfortunately while there have been accounts seeking to expand Schutz's formulations this problem remains.(6) How an individual might maintain or reinforce a basically religious worldview, when scientific and/or other factors threaten, is a major preoccupation of this thesis.

Luckmann's contribution to this issue was to show that explanations of social reality that had their roots within the religious province were not becoming secularised as such, if secularisation was understood as the loss of ultimate significance of religious or supernatural accounts of the construction of reality. Rather Luckmann suggests the religious worldview is much more diffuse and pervasive than institutional and or normative departures from 'orthodox doctrines' would suggest. Further he proposed that successive transformations convert the 'cognitive' map held by the majority of the population into newer reformulations of 'ultimate significance' that underlie the lifeworld shared by those constructing a society. However whilst the ostensible content of the cement of ultimate significances might change; the
way in which we hold or need an overarching set of values remains
the same. Thus Christianity may no longer act as an institutional,
normative or even cognitive authority in informing the lifeworld
and its relations to other spheres of understanding but it may
be incorrect to say that our need is any less for cognitive
transcendence. Luckmann, with a heavy intellectual debt to Weber,
Schutz and Tonnies, (7) proposes an elegant theory to plot the
many changes of meaning, not the least the decline of orthodox
Christian understandings, in western society.

A major plank of Luckmann's theory of cognitive secularisation
is the notion of privatisation. Bellah, both delimits the process
as well as exploring the issues to be faced. Defining religion
approximately as a 'set of symbolic forms and acts which relate
man to the ultimate conditions of his existence', he states
'now less than ever can man's search for meaning be confined to
the Church'.(8) He argues that this process of privatisation
means:-

"Religion is increasingly an individual quest for
meaning rather than a collective act of worship.
In this way religion has undergone a process of
individuation whereby the individual works out
his own salvation and follows his own path to
ultimate meaning. The importance of religion
has not declined rather its form of expression
has changed... in contemporary western society,
there is an increasing acceptance of the notion
that the individual must work out his own
solutions and the most that the church can do is
provide him with a favourable environment for
doing so, without imposing on him a prefabricated
set of answers. No longer is religious doctrine
imposed. Modern man has a greater freedom than
ever before to search for and construct his own
ultimate meaning." (9)
Unfortunately privatisation wars against the cohesiveness needed to maintain a societal 'overarching system of transcendance'. As the individuals become privatised so they face the question of relevance. At an individual level each person strives for an integration of the many levels of meaning they act on; at the very least becoming cognitively segmented. As a unit of a social collectivity, each person contributing to a social construction of reality, the task becomes one of developing a set of cognitive relevances which will bind together and underlie society's institutional and normative expressions. While at a philosophical level this becomes another aspect of the interesting problem of intersubjectivity, in sociological terms it becomes one of explaining ongoing social cohesiveness in the face of increasing privatisation (10).

It is to this point that this thesis addresses its major question, How do individuals who subscribe to a pre-existing worldview deal with its loss of authority as meaning system that promotes social cohesiveness and hence relevance? Luckmann and many other theorists have demonstrated the consequences of secularisation in its many forms by concentrating on the transformations:- invisible religions, new meaning systems, cults, secular substitutions and other seeming end products of a passing meaning system. However, equally, the pre-existing meaning system may reconstitute itself into newer forms as a challenge to its perceived loss of authority. Indeed Luckmann has recently acknowledged this:-
"it would be downright silly for a sociologist to maintain that the degree of privatisation of individual existence and consciousness and religion ...is incompatible with some form of resocialisation of existence. It is becoming rather evident that this may take new - or at least seemingly new - forms of organisation." (11)

This thesis argues that Christian Community is such a reformulation, a conscious attempt on the part of committed orthodox Christians to resacrilise their social mileau to resist secularisation and to promote relevance, principally by demonstrating 'real' or 'appropriate' Christianity at work. Theoretically it demonstrates a social process that relates the issues of relevance raised above to a concrete historical instance. It questions the theoretical bias that secularisation is 'irreversible' and by implication that Christianity is no longer a meaningful system of overarching symbolic significance. While accepting that any system of beliefs that has a relatively cohesive group of followers is an intact meaning system, the thesis explores the accommodations necessary on the part of the communitarians to maintain that Christianity should enjoy a central position in western society. This is achieved by exploring the worldview of the communitarians, their motivations and their aspirations in forming community.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This thesis did not start as a dissertation on secularisation. It arose from much more humble beginnings. The researcher while studying countercultural communities became aware that there was a Christian communal movement distinctly different from the alternative lifestyles worldview. Christian community was composed of conservative, middle aged middleclass committed Christians, who (or so it seemed) were the antithesis of the stereotypical commune dweller. The initial thrust
of the research was to explore and delimit each communal movement in the New South Wales context. From this beginning several largely descriptive tasks emerged:

Firstly there were few accounts that distinguished between Christian Community and other communal forms. Indeed it seemed that the literature conflated communal type with communal purposes. Within the Australian context Peter Cock (12) had distinguished three communal types: the countercultural, the bourgeois and the religious. While he had devoted his research to the former two, the religious communal type had been 'left to another work!' At the outset then the research project as a first work in the area was essentially a descriptive analysis of a smaller social movement theoretically eclipsed by a larger communal form.

Secondly as the descriptive demographic data was analysed and compared to the preexisting sociological literature it appeared that there was considerable theoretical confusion being generated by seeing one rather than several different religious movements, amongst which Christian community was but one. Again this reflected a preoccupation with the communal form rather than the social process. Yet again the research task was essentially descriptive in delimiting the various religious communities.

Lastly by the time the doctoral study commenced, the researcher felt that intentionality was the key factor in distinguishing between the many communal forms. Community is by nature intentional. While there are communes that evolve as organic 'happenings', these are the exceptions. An examination of purposes would provide a rich source of theoretical insights into this form. Thus at the start
of the project a grounded methodology of participant observation was chosen to explore intentionality. The study was at this stage an exploratory/descriptive first work without a clearly defined theoretical thesis. It was rather a set of operationalised concerns:- Why community for these people? What are they trying to achieve by communal means? To what extent are they related to other communal ventures? Gradually the grounded methodology presented an arguable thesis that Christian community is a reaction to secularisation and to make the point that at the level of intentionality it is a reaction against the very changes to western society that other communal ventures seek to promote.

From the outset this orientation to purpose yielded significant theoretical information by confirming that at the level of self reported aspirations Christian community differed substantially from other communal ventures. Though still at an essentially descriptive level it became apparent that Christian communalists were essentially reactionary to social change and wished to 'turn back the clock' to an imagined golden age of faith and practice. Though few Christian communitarians held this notion uncritically they were as a group essentially past oriented. By contrast the other communal ventures were essentially future oriented in as much as they largely welcomed the decline of Orthodox Christian values and saw the present as an unformed example of new age and/or other beginnings. While these self reported differences in orientation beg certain functionalist questions of the common communal form they point out the theoretical peril of identifying a communal type.
The literature that surrounds the communal form has perpetuated this conflation of communal purpose. Andrew Rigby, an influential British sociologist of the communal form serves by illustration. In his *Alternative Realities* he saw religious communities as...

"All four of them (his religious examples) look forward to the establishment of a new age and a new social order characterised by the brotherhood of man. They all see themselves as working towards the attainment of this end at least partially by their own exemplary actions, by living out their lives as a community of brothers and sisters according to those values...they hope to see implemented on a worldwide scale in the future." (13)

This quote highlights a certain orientation to the data. Religious communities are interested in establishing a 'new age' and a 'new social order'. Much sociological theorising has adopted this set and portrayed Christian community as an alternative in the new age sense. However this did not accord with the researcher's experience of both British and Australian Christian community; nor with the comprehensive devotional literature generated by the communitarians themselves.

In fairness to Rigby's excellent work on the communal form, his religious examples Findhorn and Centre Nucleus were new age communities with an essentially syncretic rather than Christian orientation to religion. He does distinguish between mystical and ascetic belief systems but selects examples from both that support his essentially alternative realities orientation to the communal form.
In a similar way sociologists often differentiate the communal form into ideal/types that reflect the gross characteristics of the communal activity (14) and thus fuse many widely divergent communal groups that rest uneasily within the same label. 'Religious Communities' is such a label. Within the communal form there are a diversity of religious communities. They do not however represent a cline, or graduation, of religious expressions, in any reality other than the theorists typifying perspectives. To the social actors themselves, the label religious contains antagonistic groups that sharply diverge. The Christian, the mystic, the Buddhist and the new age communities to name a few could all be labelled religious but with little further theoretical utility.

A problem with any previous research is that it imposes structure on social phenomena that subsequent researchers find difficult to deal with. Influential works such as Rigby's impose a mental set to the data which subsequent researchers are obliged to take into account. Thus the 'alternative realities' view of Christian community is pervasive. It is hard to underestimate the extent to which writers even within the Christian Communal movement have adopted this perspective. Thus David Clark, an English Methodist minister and sociologist, subtitles his review of Christian communities - 'Towards an Alternative Society' (15). Within the Australian context Trevor Harris in his Masters Thesis adopted the same set by locating Christian community within the alternative lifestyles movement (16).

However not all theorists have adopted this set and indeed Skolnick as early as 1973 argued strongly that these differing forms be recognised and differentiated (17); As did Abrams and McCulloch in
In 1971 Cock embarked on a five year study of alternative communities within Australia. He started with a vaguely defined interest in the communal form and quickly developed a typology that divided the communal into three distinct groupings - the countercultural, the bourgeois and the religious. He then gained an appreciation of the differing elements within the religious communities...

"At the same time, through various conferences, I came in contact with a very different stream; the religious communal lifestyle - first the more traditional form, then countercultural and the increasing effort to build a more eastern based religious communities." (19)

While identifying the traditional form with the bourgeois communities in style, he felt that all communal forms under the label 'religious' were sufficiently different to await a follow up work (20). To date this has not eventuated. Cock noted in passing however...

"since the early part of the movement...was dominated by a secular concern, there were few specifically religious communities. The trend since has been the other way; for each new secular community (there) has arisen several Eastern or Western religious communities." (21)

This points out the growing significance of the religious communal form and the Christian communities in particular and at this date (1984) the trend has not waned. Cock's work remains the best and most authoritative research on countercultural and bourgeois communities in Australia. However the picture is incomplete. This study seeks in part to redress this by describing the Christian communal within the Australian context.
However interesting a descriptive analysis may be, it did not adequately answer the operationalised questions raised above. Demographic data and self reported descriptions of communal purpose did not exhaust the levels at which theoretical enquiry might proceed. As the researcher had few if any hypotheses at the start of the research project to test, a methodology that generated both data and theoretical insight was indicated. For this reason the Grounded Theory approach of Glaser and Strauss (22) was adopted as the best strategy for what was of essence an essentially qualitative research - a discovery of the questions that needed to be asked as well as the answers given.

As detailed in the methodology chapter intentionality was again the key to theoretical insight. The secularisation/desecularisation process theory, this thesis argues, arose from the phenomenological distinction of types of meaning. Perhaps the most important purpose in examining the motivations of Christians to community is the question what are they intending in their intentionality? This question may be answered at different levels of meaning. The phenomenological perspective after Schutz distinguishes between the in order to and because motivations of the social actors that comprise and construct actively a social reality. A juxtapositioning of questionings that surround these two sets of motivations provided the key to explanation at another level of meaning the sociological (or in Schutz's terms the scientific). As the study proceeded questions that asked 'why are you doing this?'; revealed complementary but different answers. Communitarians expressed in-order-to motivations in terms of purpose. 'We are in community to achieve these objectives'. Enquiry into personal journeys to community
gave because motives couched in terms of past expectations and actualities. Juxtaposition, a favoured technique of the grounded approach, led to the discovery of the relevance of secularisation theory and in turn to the development of a model of social process as outlined in chapter seven.

The questioning stance of the grounded methodology to the field under study dictated the choice of the participant/observation strategy of enquiry. Perhaps the last and most important contribution of this thesis is to let the social actors themselves be heard. For sociological research to distinguish the Christian from other communal forms, or to describe the essential features of such a community in structural or functionalist terms, is to underestimate the importance of the conscious efforts of the social actors themselves. Therefore this thesis is a study of social meanings.

Juxtapositioning revealed that Christian communitarians felt threatened by the institutional and normative decline of the Christian ethos that once informed the western world. They experienced cognitive secularisation and the degree of privatisation this entailed. They reacted to the loss of authority of the established church by seeking a site at which they could construct a social reality under their control and thus insure both relevance and the opportunity to model appropriate Christian practice to the church primarily and then to a largely disinterested wider society. For some Christians this was achieved by the communal form, for others differing venues as discussed, for all, a profound sense of disequilibrium threatened their personal understandings and sense of social cohesiveness. All sought a sense of relevance, in the many shades of meaning this term enjoys.
Is this a sustainable thesis? From the Phenomenological perspective it is just one of a possible range of interpretations and by no means is an exhaustive analysis or precludes other theoretical perspectives. However it has the strength of having been tested against the meanings and realities of the social actors themselves. The meanings that communitarians bring to their communal efforts are a rich and significant source of sociological insight long neglected by researchers in the field, who tend to confine their explanations to consideration of social forms studied. One of the coming challenges of sociological method is to construct explanations of social phenomena in the face of the critical scrutiny of the groups studied. Increasingly the object of the sociologists' scrutiny, understands the meaning system from which the theorist or researcher operates and often with amused tolerance points out the paradigmatic or other inconsistencies of the theorist's perspective.

The study is heavily grounded in the phenomenological. Of necessity the methodology is sympathetic to the subjective, the experienced, the felt and the understood. It does not reject the empirical, rather it acknowledges the limitations of the Positivist approach in addressing meanings. This is a study of the thought and perceptions of the communitarians more than a description of the forms they construct. It relies on the pioneering work of Alfred Schutz and his successors to provide a theoretical vehicle by which the meanings of the communitarians may be conveyed.
This then is the fruits of a five year research project that examined thirteen countercultural and bourgeois communities in Australia, one countercultural and three Christian communities in Britain and twenty-three Christian communities in New South Wales. During this time the researcher has lived in Christian community and been intimately connected with the rapid growth of the communal movement in Australia. It is the account of a participant and as such a unique document, the account of his travels within community. Its necessary subjectivity is grounded in the perspectives of the social actors studied and at each point of the research project developing perspectives have been tested against those of the people involved. Their comments, agreements and disagreements noted and used as a rich source of collaborative material. During the process of living in community the researcher has been exposed to a fair range of interesting experiences, not least a continuing criticism of 'ungodliness' in attempting to explore 'the religious' from a sociological perspective (23).

OVERVIEW

Chapter Two

The examination of Christian community starts with a discussion of the methodology and the theoretical implications of the strategies used. As is traditional with participant/observation studies it sketches briefly the personal history of the researcher to provide a biographical context to the study and to indicate observer perspectives. It then addresses the choice of the Phenomenological approach as a necessary reflection of the theoretical inclinations of the researcher. As indicated above the questions posed in this research project dictated both the research strategy as well as the theoretical perspectives employed; the first section of the
chapter explores these in detail. The second part of the methodology articulates the Grounded Theory approach of Glaser and Strauss which was the qualitative methodology used. Section three briefly examines the research decisions made using Riley's paradigm for sociological research (24). The last section concludes with a detailed discussion of the research actualities, the decisions made, the problems, the changes of direction and the way the theory unfolded from the data base.

Chapter Three addresses the secularisation debate. This thesis lies squarely within the considerable debate surrounding whether religion is declining or becoming transformed into newer social expressions. Before detailing the research data in subsequent chapters, the literature is reviewed that surrounds the secularisation debate. Glasner's typology is employed to characterise the varying expressions of secularisation theory and Institutional and Normative definitions are considered in detail. Chapter three establishes both the ground in which the following discussion lies as well as introducing the communitarians reactions to each view of secularisation theory. Chapter three concludes with a statement that while communitarians may be reacting to institutional and normative secularisation, their situation reflects cognitive secularisation and privatisation as discussed by Luckmann and Berger.

Chapter Four begins the introduction and consideration of the research findings of the study with an examination of the historical, cultural and situational contexts of Australian Christian community.
It commences with a historical overview of the communal form in Australia and a brief look at the 1960's countercultural communities to establish a comparative baseline to differentiate the Christian form. Building on the historical antecedents it sketches the significant features of Christian Community in the 1980's as a historical consequence. The chapter then explores the attributed cultural antecedents the communitarians bring with them as part of the baggage of community, before concluding with a situational analysis using Troeltsch's Church-Sect typology as a theoretical tool. The discussion concludes with a consideration of community by association, or contractual gemeinschaft.

Chapter Five  The demographics chapter seeks to present a first work mapping of the essential characteristics of the Christian communal movement in Australia. It starts with an examination of basic data, numbers of participants, ages, occupational and other demographic data to locate community within a social context. It then generates a number of ideal-type dimensions that further describe in an analytic-descriptive mode the communitarians themselves. Community is then typed by the construction of a simple structural typology based on the living arrangements of the communities. It then types the community purposes or the in order to motives of the community intention. It then establishes another typology of 'communitarian type' that is essentially a reporting of the various social distinctions of the communitarians themselves. Lastly it proposes a dimension of privatisation as an ideal-type construct that will allow an examination of the degree of cognitive secularisation of the community constructions studied.
Chapter six is the case studies chapter. In line with the major purposes of this study it concentrates on the biographical characteristics of two communities chosen to represent the poles of the privatisation continuum. X Street, a small isolated and highly privatised community, is contrasted with Cobbitty community, an engaged relevance seeking community. While both are considered as still largely cognitively secularised they are contrasted to show two differing approaches to desecularisation.

Chapter seven represents the major theoretical statement of the thesis. Christian community is an attempt by the individuals to desecularise their worldview. It represents an attempt by cognitively secularised individuals to construct an alternative social reality in which they are able to reduce cognitive dissonance and practice 'real Christianity'. This chapter starts with an examination of the theoretical difficulties faced in exploring meaning systems. It then completes the review of the secularisation debate commenced in chapter three by examining the work of Schutz, Berger and Luckmann. This provides a theoretical base for the remainder of the chapter which is a detailed examination of an ideal-type social process model by which committed church-goers become committed communitarians. The chapter concludes with a brief examination of the purposes of the last phase of the process, the Community Phase.

Chapter eight is an examination of eight related themes which characterise Christian community. They are grouped together to demonstrate the conscious attempts of the communitarians to construct a social reality that is both desecularising in their own lives and has a wider relevance to their primary reference group, the Church.
It then considers themes that reflect the views of the communitarians to the churches from whence they have derived, the contexts they now find themselves constructing and the relationship they wish to evolve with the wider society. This Weltanschauung is seen as being partial and evolving.

Chapter nine contains some concluding remarks. It examines the relations of this study to the wider theoretical context. It considers the effectiveness of Christian community as a desecularisation mechanism and the problems faced by communitarians attempting to create an essentially conservative social reality in a time of rapid social change. It poses a number of methodological and theoretical considerations that may act as a basis for further research, or alternative conceptualisations.
NOTES CHAPTER ONE


6. See chapter nine for further discussion.

7. Thomas Luckmann, The Invisible Religion, MacMillan, New York, 1967. While Luckmann acknowledges his debts to Weber and Schutz freely; he is somewhat more circumspect with his borrowings from Tonnies.


9. Ibid., page 483.


14. Rigby op. cit. list six types of commune:- selfactualising communes, communes for mutual support; activist communes; practical communes; therapeutic communes and religious communes.


20. Ibid., page 16.

21. Ibid., page 19.


23. One of the hazards of this research was the constant proselytisation that the researcher was subjected to in the course of the study. Most researchers in the area experienced considerable antipathy to sociological enquiry and saw secular attempts at understanding as the same form of ungodliness they sought to avoid in community. At the same time they experienced direct appeals to 'forsake' sociology and join the community. On two occasions I experienced appeals to 'greater godliness' which amounted to propositions to merge my community with that under study. See appendix 4 for an example.

'All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and essence of things directly coincided.'

Karl Marx
CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the theoretical ground of the research project and its attendant methodology. The philosophical background of the researcher introduces the sociological perspectives, from which the research questions are posed. The chapter then discusses in turn the phenomenological perspective of Alfred Schutz, The Grounded Theory methodology of Glaser and Strauss, the paradigm of Riley and the actualities of the research as it unfolded.
CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Unlike quantitative research strategies the choice of a combined qualitative method and participant/observer strategy necessitates the careful consideration of the observer's background and theoretical perspectives to establish the lens through which data is analysed. Though no less rigorous than empirical studies, the qualitative research project has a necessary element of subjectivity that encourages the construction of theories based as much on insight and deduction, as on the elucidation of data. For this reason and to assist the reader the methodology section commences with a traditional participant declaration of background and theoretical perspectives.

The Sociologist as Participant/Observer

As remarked in the previous chapter the study commenced with the researcher's growing awareness that Christian community was in form and intent distinctly different from the communal expressions of the 'alternatives' movement. This awareness grew from experiences within each expression of the communal form. Indeed the study commenced when two disparate strands of the researcher's life came into a juxtaposition:-

Growing up in a close fundamentalist Anabaptist congregation involved a heritage of three hundred years of Anabaptist communal endeavours (as discussed in chapter four), as well as a sense of bible literalness as the only source of a coherent worldview. From within the confines of a cosy, if rigid, worldview the universe was orderly and God centred.
Problems were externalised as 'unbelief' and discrepancies in the worldview internalised as 'the imperfect trying to comprehend the perfect'. The world was essentially a tidy place. As adolescence gave way to adulthood the many competing meaning systems of a pluralistic society impinged on this narrow worldview and brought with it attempts to reconcile fundamentalism with an increasingly discordant social perspective. University studies and eventual practice as a Clinical Psychologist in a maximum security gaol further weakened the authority of an Anabaptist perspective.

At the same time as this essentially post-adolescent reappraisal, studies at the University of New South Wales between 1972 and 1975 led to an immersion in the countercultural activities of the day. As part of the available options, the communal had a particular interest. Involvement in student households and countercultural 'squats' and 'crash pads' climaxed in May 1973 with a pilgrimage to the Nimbin Festival, which in some ways represented the high water mark of countercultural activities of the seventies.

The dismissal of the Whitlam government coincided with a growing disillusionment with direct political action as a means of social change and a gradual readoption of Christianity as a personal philosophy. Considerable experience in countercultural protest led to a conviction that social change was most effective when it was 'grassroots' and had a clear ideology the encompassed all those striving for change. To pursue this interest the researcher, his wife and two other Christians, formed the nucleus of a small community to explore Christian expressions of social concern in 1977.
At a theoretical level the countercultural communal form seemed to offer considerable practical advantages as an action base to effect social change. From 1978 to 1981 studies were undertaken at the University of New South Wales to assess the potential of countercultural community as a vehicle for social change. From the fortunate position of researching the countercultural at the same time as living in a Christian community, certain basic differences made themselves felt. Contact with a growing number of Christian communities highlighted these differences and brought with it an exposure to the literature that seemingly conflated the two types, as discussed in the introduction. It seemed that the majority of Christian groups were interested in achieving a return to a pre-existing social reality, that was conceived as being more appropriate to the Christian conception of society, rather than to an as yet untried alternative society. However it seemed that the intentionality of the larger countercultural movement was essentially alternative to a society that was seen as alienating or at best confused.

This fortunate juxtaposition of lifestyle with theoretical interests led to an insight that both groups saw society as it exists as being inadequate, and as such were both alternative in the sense that they proposed moves to a very different society. However they differed in the direction they wished society to move. This insight prompted the commencement of this study of the Christian alternative.

The choice of the participant/observation strategy flowed from the researcher's circumstances. As a participant within the phenomenon under study the observer was inextricably caught up in his subject matter and like Cock chose to capitalise on this and 'Study the movement from a vantage point within the window of community'. (1)
While this strategy has its difficulties as addressed by Becker, Hill and other (2) it had considerable advantages that accrued from being accepted by Christian Communitarians as being one of their kind, in no way different from themselves. This ensured an acceptance that few researchers would enjoy in this area, given the increasing hostility of the communitarians to 'worldly researchers'.

As much as the researcher's circumstances largely dictated the investigative strategy; so did his theoretical interests and concern for investigating meanings, lead to selecting a grounded qualitative approach as a methodology.

The Theoretical Ground

All research projects bring with them the theoretical a priori's of the researcher. The totality of the theorist's experiences, intellectual or otherwise, are the lens through which the researcher views his or her subject. This is particularly the case in the participant/observer situation where the compartmentalisation necessary to limit control effect and biased viewpoint effect errors, is difficult to achieve (3). One possible resolution of this limitation is to acknowledge the impossibility of divorcing the 'knower from the known' (4) and to study the process of knowing itself. Thus a necessary precondition for sociological method is the choice of a philosophical stance to the data and consistent application of these theoretical perspectives to the subject under study.

Thus the researcher is an unequivocal solipsist committed to a phenomenological apriorism that sees all understanding as ultimately: 'the attentive inspection of one's mental, particularly intellectual, processes, that one brings to any understanding (5). Husserl's
phenomenological method best defines the basis of understanding—ultimate processes of 'knowing' and following with his successors, it is asserted that such understanding is essentially nonempirical (6). This is an elementaristic if not psychologismic view of reality that sees intuitionism, essences and the extrapolation of meanings as the building blocks of understanding.

This philosophical position, squarely in the middle of the Existentialist—Phenomenological tradition, has its personal roots in the rejection of the Positivism that came from the researcher's initial training as a Behaviourist Psychologist. The paucity of explanation that empirical accounts of behaviour and the naturalistic reductionism that this approach assumes, seemed inadequate given the complexity of personal meanings clients brought to therapy.

Sociologically, this philosophical stance, was developed by the works of Georges Gurvitch, Max Scheler and Karl Mannheim (7) who were important theoretical staging posts of a developing sociological appreciation of the Verstehen approach to method. As Gurvitch has suggested the best approach to understanding social reality is...

'an immanent downward reduction through successive stages towards whatever is most directly experienced in social reality'. (8)

Max Scheler contributed by introducing the difference between ideal as against sociohistorical 'real' motivations (or the fusion of ideal and factual events in an individual's cultural reality) (9). Mannheim continued this personal development by demonstrating the meanings that may be applied to the social acts of individuals. The Objective, Expressive and Evidential meanings of the 'cultural phenomena' that underlies an individual's weltanschauung (10).
At the level of the phenomenology of everyday life the work of Alfred Schutz and his successors Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann provided an immediate orientation to the data. In chapter seven Schutz's levels of meaning and their usefulness as a tool of analysis are discussed as they share much with Mannheim's levels of meaning. At a more general level Schutz provided an orientation to the field that underlies the remainder of the discussion. Thus the methodology has explicitly been adopted because it is compatible with Schutz's theoretical work. The view here is that the primary purpose of methodology is the generation of theoretical insights in a rigorous manner. This is not an 'after the data' approach but rather a searching for data that addresses the thesis or problem posited. The theoretical stance from which the questions are posed commands the form, if not the content of the answer, in reply. Therefore an examination, necessarily cursory, of Schutz's thought as it applies to this study, follows (11).

Schutz had two main aims in his theorising. Firstly an elaboration of Weberian concepts. Secondly he was dedicated to the development of a phenomenology of the everyday life world. His major theoretical task was the elaboration of the social reality that all individuals occupy. Schutz's theoretical work starts with the assumption that we exist in the natural world as people amongst people and thus hopes to avoid solipsism (12). He feels that social reality is essentially intersubjective and immediately shared with other individuals who share a common stock of knowledge that locates them in 'here and now' contexts. This understanding is not theoretical, rather a common practical orientation to the world that supplies a scheme of meaning that orients the individual to his social context. This scheme is a
taken-for-granted cultural orientation the individual inherits at birth. It supplies him with an understanding of the past, guides for the present and anticipations of the future. This stock of knowledge is never completely unambiguous and often contains elements that are discrepant. However it is largely uncritical.

With Weber, Schutz points out that this taken-for-granted stock of knowledge allows historic individuals to engage in a process of myth building and maintenance. There does not need to be a one-to-one correspondence between beliefs and actualities as long as the individual's understanding is largely common with other members of his society and together they regulate the common social reality. The myth is the understandings of the society the individual finds himself in and which in turn he subscribes to and maintains. Thus the individual's actions are meaningful to himself and his peers, stemming as they do from common ideals, assumptions and worldview. This myth building is the individual's social construction of reality.

The person does not subscribe to this construction uncritically and may seek the alteration of the construction as his experience differs from the taken-for-granted outcomes of the worldview. However the majority of the person's worldview is derived from and hence legitimated by the socialising agencies at work in his social milieu. Social constructions of reality change and evolve gradually but are at risk of those sudden changes of history that cause the individual members of the society to doubt the relevance of the construction.
Schutz felt that language provided an immediate source of typifications that order the relevances of a particular society and a large body of his work was devoted to an elaboration of the conditions of language. However this is peripheral to this study. Language does however provide a medium that suggests typifications that order the social relations of individuals, via the shared factual world of experience. Language acts as a bridge that relates the common experiences of individuals and the network of all of these shared typifications, equals the common reality.

A tenet of Schutz's phenomenological sociology is that individuals are free people with a will to change. They interpret the conditions of their existence by testing them against the common ground of shared experiences, mediated by language, that is direct and accessible to all members of the social reality. Unfortunately as the complexity of society evolves, these testings are mediated through increasingly anonymous contacts between the members of a society. The I-Thou relationships that sustain the shared reality are replaced by reciprocal anonymous relationships that result from the specialisations attendant in a complex society. The majority of relationships that potentially sustain the social reality are transposed from 'We' to 'They' relationships. How this related specifically to religious meanings is discussed in the next chapter in detail.

This specialisation of purpose leads to a society in which increasingly the majority of relationships are of this form. People become aware that the life world is fragmenting and the stock-of-knowledge is becoming specialised and hence inaccessible in part to all that comprise the perceived social whole. Thus their understanding becomes
partial and their contributions to the social construction of reality are segmented into those areas in which they have a functional competence. In theory this metastock of knowledge is available to all, but its sheer size limits its accessibility.

In the beginning, while the work of Berger and Luckmann extended Schutz's analysis to the conditions of the individual in contemporary life, in particular the religious, their work was seen as tangential to the main thrust of the dissertation. As the grounded theory evolved their work became more central to the evolving theory and an important point of comparison. However, this process began later in the project rather than at its inception and hence further discussion of their work is left to chapter seven. Lastly the work of Harold Garfinkel provided a significant additional source of insight as the work progressed (13).

The domain then of the study is a social construction of reality, or those Christian communities created by individuals in search of personal meaning. As such it contributes to an understanding of Community by an examination of the individuals who construct this social whole - the communitarians. This is not reductionist argument but rather an elementarism that sees wholes and parts as necessarily connected and chooses to address the parts first. The parts specify the whole as a necessary precondition. Marjorie Grene by analogy sums up a similar approach to genetics...
"Divide and conquer! Specify the parts and you have the whole. The parts of an organism are chemical molecules; specify these and you need worry about 'life' no longer. But parts by definition are of a whole and as genetical research proceeds, along with specification, the nature of the whole, too, makes itself felt. The parts are the conditions for the whole, which certainly could not exist suspended in some heaven of essences without them...' (14).

Within this domain this study looks at the social constructions of reality the individual communitarians are participating in and the objective, expressive and evidential meanings that might be construed from their attempts. The study is not particularly interested in structural analyses though such analyses are useful as descriptive tools; nor is it particularly interested in functional accounts, though these concepts are used analytically at the level of expressive meaning. Rather it seeks to specify all of the levels of meaning that the communitarians bring to their social context.

Secondly it avoids the empirical or statistical by seeking verstehen or understanding rather than explanation or verification. Whilst empirical concepts by no means preclude explanation, this orientation to the subject precludes the testing of hypotheses, as the theoretical ground of the study is intuitive. It seeks systematic analysis of the field as the meanings evolve. Intuitions or Merton's serendipity effects, (15) as they evolve, are validated against the meanings of the communitarians themselves as they evolve.

Lastly in terms of grounded theory it seeks to establish substantive rather than generalised formal theory and as a first work in the area is interested in explicating the condition of only those communitarians studied directly. The theoretical apriori as it applies to
those communities studied, allows little to be said beyond the field itself. This is the work of later theorists.

THE METHODOLOGY

These considerations led quickly to the choice of Glaser and Strauss's Grounded Theory (16). This approach stresses the discovery of substantive theory via qualitative research strategies. The primary method is constant comparative juxtaposition of coded data and theoretical insights. The aim of the research methodology is to generate saturated categories and their attendant properties by a constant inspection of the data. The design seeks as much theoretical diversity as possible and derives its ongoing direction from the data itself. In this sense it is grounded in the data and the categories that self-generate as the study progresses. The design is equally flexible in the nature of the theory generated; concentrating on process rather than form...

'Grounded theory, it should be mentioned, may take different forms. And although we consider the process of generating theory as related to its subsequent use and effectiveness, the form in which the theory is presented can be independent of this process by which it was generated (17).

Thus it adapts itself to various styles of presentation as well as the theoretical apriori of the researcher. This does not mean however that Grounded Theory is essentially apriori in the logico-deductive sense, of hypotheses being tested through the research design. Rather it generates propositions or hypotheses as the research proceeds and in this sense is post hoc or theory by process.
The essential outcome of the research methodology is the generation of theory rather than the verifying of hypotheses. The theorists see no contradiction between verification and generation and see their methodology as precursor of further studies which may be either qualitative or quantitative...

'The theory should provide clear enough categories and hypotheses so that crucial ones can be verified in present and future research; they must be clear enough to be readily operationalised in quantitative studies when these are appropriate.' (18)

As the design encourages diversity it is ideally suited to the participant/observer strategy in which the researcher 'immerses himself in the data'. It tolerates a high degree of ambiguity as the comparative method can cope with inaccurate facts as it generates concepts against which they might be compared...

'However even if some of our evidence is not entirely accurate this will not be too troublesome; for in generating theory it is not the fact on which we stand, but the conceptual category (or a conceptual property of the category) that was generated from it. (19)

THE METHOD

Glaser and Strauss detail four stages in the constant comparative method:- Comparing incidents applicable to each category. Integrating categories and their properties. Delimiting the theory. Writing the theory. While this appears a sequential process it may well be a simultaneous development throughout analysis.

'When generation of theory is the aim however, one is constantly alert to emergent perspectives that will change and help develop his theory. These perspectives can easily occur even on the final day of study or when the manuscript is reviewed in proof form: so the published word is not the final one, but only a pause in the never-ending process of generating theory.' (20)
The first stage, comparing incidents applicable to each category, starts with the researcher holding himself open to receive as much input as possible. The aim is to develop some tentative categories that present themselves immediately and form a basis from which comparisons may be made. The raw data of the observations are codified according to the schema used in the design and are then categorised and each successive datum may be compared to these categories. This introduces the first rule of the constant comparative method...

'While coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category.' (21)

As the observer continues to observe the data and compare incidents within the categories established, general theoretical properties of the category begin to emerge. The researcher is able to extrapolate ideal-types, continua, their dimensions and the conditions under which they pronounced minimised or transformed and their relationship to other categories, major consequences and so forth. (22)

As the research continues the categories so developed will be of two types those generated by the researcher and those the social actors establish and report themselves. Glaser and Strauss imply that the researcher's categories will be explanatory, whilst those of the social actors will be essentially labels of social phenomena. As conflicts between categories and the theorist's/researcher's thoughts develop, the second rule of the constant comparative method applies -
'Stop coding and record a memo on your ideas' (23)

The eventual summation of these memos yield important theoretical insights and leads to the next stage of the methodology.

The second stage is that of integrating categories and their properties. As coding continues comparison changes from incident-to-incident, to placing incidents into the categories that result from them. In simple English the properties of the categories shake themselves down into an order that reflects the reality they represent. Additionally the categories themselves soon develop an internal logic that at first orders them and secondly integrates them into a theoretical whole...

'Thus the theory develops, as different categories and their properties tend to become integrated through constant comparisons that force the analyst to make some related theoretical sense of each comparison.' (24)

At this point if the data does not generate integrated theory, then this in itself is an important clue to the directions the research should pursue. The further direction of the research can take the form of either (a) expanding the theoretical inputs of data, (b) further comparison and/or extension of theoretical sampling.

The third stage is the delimiting of the theory. This occurs at two levels...

'The theory and the categories. First the theory solidifies, in the sense that major modifications become fewer and fewer as the analyst compares the next incidents of a category to its properties. Later modifications are mainly on the order of clarifying the logic, taking out nonrelevant properties, integrating elaborating details of properties into the major outline of interrelated categories and - most important - reduction.' (25)
Reduction is the discovery of the common elements of the categories that may be spoken of at a more generalised level and as such with economy of terminology. Glaser and Strauss call these 'higher level concepts'. Reduction is also achieved by the reducing of the absolute number of discrete categories as the boundaries of the theory become apparent. The researcher may become aware that he is generating several theories and may be forced by the needs of brevity to limit the scope of his study. This is particularly the case in discusional theoretical styles.

A further limit will be the theoretical **saturation** of the categories. The greater the saturation of the categories, the less likely the additional data will generate new aspects of the properties. Thus as the design proceeds the amount of new data that is immediately useful declines markedly. This is a sign that the research project is ending the data collection phase. The last stage is the writing of the theory which is essentially the written organisation of the final stages of the delimiting process.

The theory that derives from the above process is a reflection of both the theoretical background from which the research questions have been posed as well as the data of the grounded approach. Thus the collection of data is as important to this approach as are the theoretical insights derived from the comparisons. The data is gained by a process of theoretical sampling...
'Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection ... whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. This process...is controlled by the emerging theory...The initial decisions for theoretical collection of data are based only on a general socio­logical perspective...The initial decisions are not based on a preconceived theoretical framework.' (26)

Sampling starts with whatever orientation the researcher brings to the field under study. Generally the theoretical categories he holds from experience are a starting point but they remain local or questioned concepts (or indeed beginning mental sets) that have to be tested by the emergent categories. Thus at the start of the study the researcher is motivated by his local concepts and the gaps in his knowledge base. As the categories emerge the researcher strives for the maximum diversity of comparisons and may select multiple comparison groups that reflect the types he observes and their scope and conceptual relevance to his project. He remains however at the mercy of the field and is essentially reflexive in his choices. He is not able to specify the number or types of groups to be studied until the research is completed.

Several factors then operate to stop the grounded researcher being swamped by the research data. Firstly is the concept of theoretical satuation discussed above. Further comparisons are selected to saturate the conceptual categories established and thus discordant data point to further categories that may be noted but not pursued as an impasse is reached in saturating the category under study. Thus the selective attention of the researcher is guided both by the emergent theory and by the theoretical purpose and relevance of the study. The second constraint is the need for reflective respite. More so than other methodologies, the grounded approach
requires immediate reflection on the emergent theory to guide further research directions. Thus the researcher is paced by his data and inevitably has to pause and order the design before proceeding. While the project may temporarily stagnate, this internal mechanism makes unsystematic overload unlikely.

The research seeks the maximum diversity of relevant data. The methodology works because some incidents or insights do not fit the emergent conceptual categories and the researcher thus aims at this discordance as a welcome and looked for proof of the ongoing vitality of his study. An obvious corollary is that any data is acceptable and the design should not be limited to one technique of data collection. Equally the researcher looks to a multifaceted, multilevel data base. All is 'grist for the mill' and may include comparisons to other groups, to other theoretical perspectives, library and other documentary sources, indeed anything that might appear relevant. Glaser and Strauss call this process 'getting an adequate slice of the data.'

How valid is this approach? Glaser and Strauss in vigorous defense of their theoretical methodology claim an applicability to any qualitative research design. However it is seen to be particularly relevant to the field study situation and indeed the majority of their practical illustrations are based on this form of research. For studies in which access to the field is restricted and research would need to proceed from secondary sources the design would have its limitations, needing as it does, to be continually grounded in the primary data source. Secondly, it would seem to be ideally suited to first, or exploratory, works rather than ongoing substantive work in a well researched area. This points to a difficulty
the authors are at pains to address but seemingly inadequately. That is the design works well in their estimation to the extent that the researcher is able to avoid ordering data on the basis of pre-existing theory. This is hard if not impossible to achieve in all but first works in an area. The theoretical orientation of the researcher should in their opinion be tested against the emerging categories and thus become grounded, however it seems that this implies a circularity as often the test of groundedness that the researcher brings to the data, is a reflection of his or her theoretical perspectives. It is felt that the authors underestimate the extent the ground, from which the research questions are initially posited, determines the eventual answers, in form, if not in content, and hence the foregoing discussion of the researcher's biographical and theoretical contexts (27).

Glaser and Strauss also avoid the 'charge of being phenomenological' (page 6). However whilst not strictly Kierkegaardian, their strategies rely heavily in a philosophical substrate close to the position outlined in the first section of this chapter. At the very least, it is inductive and intuitional, relying as much on the recognition of theory as on the grounding of theory. It is suggested that the authors should embrace this position rather than adopting the very position they wish to avoid when addressing the issues of verification. However, for the purposes of this study these few comments are indications of the strength and appropriateness of this methodology for the conditions of the present study.
The Paradigm

The paradigm which follows is the 'shoppinglist' or 'recipe' that the researcher follows to plan his research or at the very least against which tests its ongoing relevance. With the adoption of the grounded theory methodology the paradigm is essentially explanatory for the reader rather than providing directions for research. It also establishes clearly those decisions the researcher makes in his research and thus acts as a blueprint against which the methodology may be evaluated. It is in this sense that Glaser and Strauss propose their 'accounting scheme'. However this study follows the paradigm proposed by Matilda White Riley in her book Sociological Research (28) as allowing a more detailed explication of the principles underlying research decision making.

The paradigm has twelve related categories that sketch the alternative choices the researcher faces in designing and implementing his methodology. Of course, the methodology chosen in turn determines the decisions made and as such this paradigm is somewhat artificial on paper, there being a necessary circularity involved in the process. However there follows a brief discussion of the research decisions in the light of this paradigm to set the stage for a discussion of the research actualities in the following section.

P-1 The nature of the research case. The study concentrated on the group within society. The communities that comprised Christian intentional communities within New South Wales. The research case addressed was a collectivity within society, however the primary focus was on the individual in a role, the individuals that comprised the collectivity called community. This followed from the basic research question 'Why community' rather than 'Why communities'.

P-2 The number of cases. The grounded approach adopted did not specify the cases adopted until the conclusion of the study. Out of an estimated 80 plus communities, 23 were visited. The cases self selected from the conceptual categories generated and from opportunity to study them. As the delimiting process proceeded six communities were studied in detail and two were finally chosen for case studies (chapter six).

P-3 Sociotemporal context. The communities studies were from a single Australian geographical area at a single period in time. The research was extended by interstate and overseas comparisons drawn from personal investigations, as well as historical and sociological records of other communal contexts. However the focus delimited itself to the NSW context, because the participant/observer strategy chosen limited the generalisability of the data.

P-4 Primary basis for selecting cases (sampling). This was again governed by the constraints of Grounded Theory. The cases chosen were essentially representational rather than analytic, in the sense of being typical rather than cross sectional.

P-5 The Time Factor. The essence was that of a static or cross sectional project. That is, a cross sectional study of a process as seen by some participants, rather than the longitudinal study of the community process. However, the individual communities' variation, gave a cross sectional analysis yielding a quasi longitudinal picture by studying different institutions of similar type and time, but in different stages of development. Equally the categories that generated were historically dynamic in the
sense that the communitarians felt themselves to be in an evolving process with a history (chapter seven - the paths to community) and a future (chapter eight - the communitarians worldview). Thus the study was both a static and a dynamic representation of community.

P-6 Extent of the researcher's control over the system under study. None apart from those incidental effects of the observer being part of the system under study. The choice of, data and cases were reflexive and, apart from the internal logic of the methodology, unsystematic.

P-7 Basic sources of data. Primarily new data taken from the observations made by the communitarians and including research observations and impressions. To a lesser extent, available data relevant to the Australian context (which was extremely limited given the paucity of interest in Australian communal ventures).

P-8 Method of gathering data. Participant observation and questioning. The basic strategy was supplemented by recorded formal interviews. See appendix for example.

P-9 Number of properties used in research. Again the grounded methodology determined the approach to this part of the paradigm. The study sought the maximum number of conceptual categories (equivalent to Riley's properties) that could be abstracted from the data. As the study proceeded some categories were instrumental to the major theoretical statement of the thesis, those surrounding the desecularisation issue. Some were retained for their descriptive power (chapter five) and some were abandoned. This is the process of delimiting the data.
P-10 Method of handling single properties - AND -

P-11 Method of handling relationships amongst properties. These two areas are combined under the constant comparative method. Whilst single categories (properties) may be dealt with in isolation i.e. the discussion of leadership, the study attempts systematic descriptive analysis rather than measurement or other empirical strategy (though these are used as appropriate).

P-12 Treatment of system properties as unitary or collective.
This category is based on the level of assertion one makes of the data of the design. Are these statements of the group? Or of the individuals that add up to the group? While the study may often speak of 'community' more formally it speaks of the individuals that collectively subscribe to that aspect of their social construction of reality.

The aforegoing is necessarily arbitrary and static. However it sketches the skeletal structure on which further discussion hangs.

The Research Actualities
This section concentrates on what actually happened in the research process. It draws together the preceeding three sections in an ongoing discussion of the theoretical and data based grounds of the study as well as the decisions made along the way.

The scope of the study Peter Cock in his doctoral thesis (29), briefly mentions Intentional Christian Community in Australia as an essentially bourgeois communal phenomenon. He states that the
the ten communities he visited in his research were sufficiently different to warrant a follow up study in their own right (30). To date this has not emerged, and as discussed in Chapter One the confusion that surrounds community as a distinct social phenomenon is increasing. This study seeks to fill the gap in the overall picture of the communal movements in Australia, and is essentially complementary to Cock's work. The first aim is to clearly describe the essential characteristics of Christian Intentional Community in New South Wales as a representative example of that type of community in Australia.

As discussed in Chapter One, Christian community has been theoretically confused with the countercultural, family and survivalist communal movements. The second aim of this study is essentially negative. Like the classic participant observation studies of Whyte and Malinowski (31) this thesis seeks to disprove an assumption, that Christian Intentional Community is just another countercultural alternative. It does this by asserting that they differ, and by building a model of community that would equip those familiar with the countercultural movement with a comparison. It does not directly compare the two beyond an initial discussion and an occasional footnote or aside as the study progresses.

The third and major aim of the study is to address the question: Why community? As discussed above the major theoretical task of this research is to build a substantive sociological theory that addresses why certain individuals decide to construct this form of social reality. It does so through the lens of the phenomenological enquiry. It addresses the meanings individuals bring to
community and thus directly addresses the issue of intentionality, which is so crucial to this study. At the commencement of the research project it was hoped to provide a expository first work on a virtually unresearched aspect of Australian society.

The final purpose was to present case studies to act as an illustration and verification of the other aims. To highlight the research actualities the following account details the decisions made as the study progressed. The account is taken from a 'works in progress' seminar and hence the first person presentation....

THE STRATEGY

I commenced my formal participation studies by announcing that I was going to write a book on community. As I was in a leadership position in my own community and thus had contacts with many other leaders this mild deception led to many invitations to visit various communities. My interests in book writing was treated as another example of my known intellectual idiosyncracies and was further legitimised by my position as an academic. Academics write books. I was thus able to observe widely and question community members because of our shared faith. Most communitarians felt that they were assisting in the production of a book for the communities' movement. Whilst the difference between a sociological investigation and book writing may not appear immense, with the communities studied there was a profound antipathy to the former (32). Sociological investigations were seen as being threatening while as implied above a book might lead to a good press outside and encouragement inside community. In addition this helped to minimise observer control effects which plague this form of research.
In practice, guarantees of communal anonymity were sufficient to ensure that even this mild deception was eventually unnecessary (33).

I then visited twenty-three communities in New South Wales and Interstate. The first delimiting came when I quickly realised the sheer impossibility of investigating the national scene with a participant observation strategy. I chose to limit my study to communities in New South Wales. In doing so I followed Cock, who found that he was restricted to extrapolating from his intensive studies in Victoria and to a lesser extent New South Wales. The casual networks that surround community ensure a high interchange of communitarians between states. In discussions I gained a confidence that my study would reflect the community movement in other states. However my generalisations apply to New South Wales in particular and the nation incidentally.

I adopted a visiting strategy of avoiding initial discussions with the leadership, feeling that as a leader, my understanding of community was sufficiently coloured to reflect a leader's reality. The very first of my conceptual categories was an intuition that communitarians were in distinct groupings and that one, the core, were actually the essentially intentional elements of community as a social form. This insight, which was later confirmed by the research, led me to prefer to visit and integrate into community life as a visitor rather than a leader. The usual approach was to join with the selected community in Sunday worship as the high point of community life and to participate in the meal and social activities that invariably followed. Usually this was in the form of a joint visit by my community to the other community and hence I was submerged in two similar groups interacting. This initial contact
usually broadened into a variety of engagements including: preaching, joint meals, building projects, marriages (I am a licensed celebrant), joint welfare projects, retreats, exchange of members and so on. At a leadership level I was constantly invited to conferences, leaders meetings and other joint community activities.

After a suitable period I was usually able to encourage informal reflections on the community whilst avoiding detailed questioning. I chose the nondirective style of Carl Rogers to develop conversations into areas that the generating theory suggested. As I have had considerable experience in using this psychological technique in my clinical practice, I am reasonably confident that most of my respondents directed the conversations (34). Moreover the bulk of my observations were directed less by myself than the self-disclosing of the communitarians themselves.

The study then paced itself over the next three years. As the basic categories emerged I was able to constantly redirect the focus of the study. So as the communities divided themselves into the two networks, I responded by studying in detail two Related Christian communities and three networks communities. When my exposure was sufficient to distinguish the different purposes of community, I studied welfare, church, parish-related and intercessory communities in turn. Still at a structural level properties that related to accommodation emerged and I examined the three living styles of community and so forth. Gradually phenomenological categories emerged and the demographic focus faded as I concentrated on the individual meanings of communitarians and the shared reality they built up together.
After twelve months I decided to study in detail six communities that represented the best fit to some emergent categories, structural, functional, demographic, expressive and evidential etc. Two of these communities were later chosen as my case studies (Chapter Six). While studying these particular communities I was developing a constant comparative base by extensive reading of the international literature generated by the communitarians themselves, visiting many other communities, writing to various communitarians in other states and overseas for comparative information (see Chapter Five) and generally sampling the diversity of the movement.

As the study proceeded, there were constant breaks to reflect and order the data and develop ongoing directions. Though any methodology seems impressive on paper and yet demonstrates its limitations in practice, I was surprised at the efficiency with which the grounded approach clearly posed further research questions and showed the gaps in understanding of the field. In this respect the constant comparative method yielded many tentative hypotheses which in turn generated further categories. The breaks also acted as a time of respite in which I could test my reflections against those of my supervisor and of my fellow communitarians at Cobbitty Community. Both acted as theoretical comparators yielding many rich insights. The remaining time was spent coding the mass of information into categories, properties, transcripts, that illustrated certain points and in writing memos to myself (35).
The Theoretical Process

I found that the grounded methodology had four natural stages. Firstly there was the immediate period when I plunged into the field and posed a number of local concepts or intuitions about the field. Quickly this changed to an overwhelming input of information that had to be systematised by many breaks from the field. The third stage was a slow evolution of theoretical insights as the field had sorted itself into a map that left me free to look at the individual features of the terrain as I passed along. The third stage finished abruptly when I made the major discovery of the research project. After this breakthrough, the field and the data fell into a pattern that integrated itself around the concept of desecularisation. These stages did in practice, closely follow those suggested by Glaser and Strauss, which in retrospect gives me the confidence in my findings and the methodology.

We turn now to a detailed consideration of the actual process of discovering these insights.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, this study was a continuation of my research which looked at Countercultural Communities as a response to technological change. From this perspective, my first ideas of Christian community were essentially negative, what Christian community wasn't when compared to the larger countercultural movement. Thus at the very start of the project I had had two years of comparing my own two communities to those countercultural groups I was studying. As Christian community
was rudimentary and just developing a sense of self consciousness, my contacts with other Christian groups were few and I did not have much idea of community beyond my own. From this limited perspective my initial or 'local concepts' were as follows:-

As suggested by the first title of my doctoral thesis The Organisational Structure of Christian Intentional Communities in Australia I was very conscious of the structural and demographic differences between the two movements as described in Chapter One. This was my first comparison that the Church was seen as an inappropriate model for expressing Christianity in a technological age and most communitarians that I had dealings with were organising to build different organisational structures to contain Christian practice. I was aware of secularisation theory but did not connect this directly with these attempts. On the surface at least most communitarians were purposeful and highly active Christians who did not seem secularised. Indeed I was struck by their obvious intentionality: that is by the force and clarity with which they expressed their in-order to motives. In the beginning then I saw Christian intentional community as attempts aimed at the church, to remodel and increase the relevance of traditional structures. This was the lens or local concepts through which I saw the movement.

Another precondition of the study, was my intuition that Christian community was clergy rejecting. My limited contacts had shown that most communities were led by lay members and at this stage the differences between the leadership of community and the committed core was not distinctive. I felt that most communitarians were
alternative to the extent they rejected the distinction between ordained and lay ministry. I felt that community was formed and led by the committed core as a rejection of hierarchial structures. My entry into the formal study quickly modified this initial conception. I found there were many communities that had ordained ministers as leaders or were related to the hierarchy via close ties to parishes or other denominational structures. The constant comparisons yielded my first substantive category 'network allegiance'. By asking each communitarian what communities he or she knew of, I was able to map a picture of the movement on a number of properties: members, denominational backgrounds, relation to churches, structure, purposes and so forth. The movement divided itself into those communities, essentially Catholic tied to clergy and parish, in a loose netowrk, and those essentially non-Catholic whIch were even more loosely networked around two communities in New South Wales and Victoria. However as these poles of the category were explored a number of discrepant comparisons were noted. Not all Catholic communities were parish related, not all non-Catholic communities were clergy rejecting and so on.

As my study focused on these discordances a number of ideal-type categories generated. Firstly network allegiance, then a differentiation into purposes. Some were welfare communities, some church related, some churches in their own right and some were intercessory. Seeking to saturate the postulate clergy rejecting lead to its dissolving into other categories which generated from the question broadly posed: How do you see the community's relations with the churches? However these were never satisfactory categories as discordant information remained from the comparisons -
e.g. 'we need ministers but we don't want them'. As this stage of the study threw up so many discrepancies, many had to be noted on the margins and 'rainchecked'.

So in this early stage of the research the overwhelming impressions were essentially group related. I proposed four types of community, three forms of community structure, two networks, many views of community purpose and so on. As this large mass of mainly demographic material shook itself into a form that reflected its reality I was gradually able to concentrate on the individuals in community. Generating from the category clergy rejecting I found that the communitarians typed themselves as they experienced each other. This typology generated from their views of the clergy and the extent they were replaced or ordered in community. Thus I established another category communitarian type which as Glaser and Strauss predicted was one of the many categories that would reflect the labelling of the subjects themselves, i.e., Shepherds, Undershepherds, Sheep, Lambs and Goats. I originally distinguished only two basic types, the Sheep and the Goats, but broadened this typology as the discrepancies made themselves felt. These labels, a self labelling nomenclature, are examined in detail in Chapter Five. This stage was then one of typologies and information gathering and most of the information is systematised and reported in Chapter Five. This happened very quickly and information overload was a constant problem. However as the information sorted itself I became aware of another category that came from the juxtapositions of the categories surrounding purpose. For six months at the start of the research project I was confusing purpose with motivation. When
posing the question 'Why Community' most of the answers reflected the purposes which they brought to their community efforts. Gradually the data threw up conflicting information which reflected their personal reasons for community. The turning point was my recording of conversations with excommunitarians asked to reflect on their reasons for leaving community. I had hoped by this additional 'slice of the data' to illuminate purposes but invariably they spoke of limitations at a personal rather than an intentional level.

This was one of the first 'integrators' (Glaser and Strauss) of the theory being generated. Initially it represented an additional diversity that confused the process once again. However the comparisons of the various communitarian types of reasons for community quickly generated some important insights. Only one group, the committed core, (Sheep), saw community purpose as something external to themselves. The Goats, (those in need), saw reason and purpose as being coextensive. They came to community from personal need and saw community meeting these needs: companionship, shelter, personal dignity or a variety of other reasons. The Lambs, or the younger churched Christians contemplating community, saw it as a vehicle to resolve or modify emerging identity. The leadership whilst clearly acknowledging that community served purposes external to themselves, gave purposive answers that reflected their interests in any number of areas as discussed in the leadership appendix.
The recognition that there were a diversity of reasons for being in community was grounded not only in the data but also in the work of Schutz (as discussed in particular in Chapter Seven) who distinguished the three levels of meaning that might be brought to a social actor's reality; the 'in order to, because and essentially evidential' meanings of an act. This led to an emergent hypothesis:

*That the intentionality of the community structure was essentially a committed core expression.* That the core constructed, maintained and used community for their ends. That community could be understood as an expression of the core's power relationships with the other community types. This insight or hypothesis was generated then from the discovery that only the committed core had clear *because* and *in order to* motives in community formation. The other groups, with the possible exception of the leadership, seemed essentially at the *because* level and their coming to community reflected their needs and their needs' satisfaction. Only the core made any direct statement of purposes external to themselves. This was an important turning point procedurally. The more I sought other slices of the data, and theoretically sampled to address this difference, the more I equated the intentionality aspect of community formation with the core. Eventually I found that the research design was delimiting itself into a study principally of the committed core and their conception of intentionality. Though the remainder of the study continued to look at the other community types, the great bulk of the research material now centred on the committed core. As discussed in the introductory chapter this research project may be seen as a study of the committed core of the intentional Christian community movement.
As the focus narrowed to the core, a number of diverse and tentative categories which I had filed under the title *Themes* began to integrate and become saturated. From the beginning of the study individuals had spoken of the need to 'reform the church', 'live more simply', 'become a family' and other themes as discussed in chapter eight. These did not seem related, in fact often contradictory. Distinguishing firstly the difference in the purposes of the various types and then the differences between *in order to* and *because* motives of the core, led to two related questions:- What are the core attempting to do in community? and 'How are they hoping to do it?'. These questions were posed at the third or evidential level of meaning, that of the observer attributing meaning to the actions and beliefs of the social actors themselves. At this point the contrasting of the themes started to answer these two questions.

I discovered that the themes themselves were largely *in order to* and *because* in nature. Whereas I had filed the themes under a tentative chapter heading Worldview, I now saw that one could see a time element involved. Thus these insights quickly lead to the establishing of categories *Secularisation, Irrelevance* and *The church universal* which related to the churches from which the communitarians derived. I found that other themes *simplicity* and *Social Justice* related potentially to the wider world, but most carried forward *Family, Acts 2* and *Renewal/Ecumenism*; related to the present efforts of the communitarians themselves. Thus I was able to distinguish themes aimed at the church and themes which were concerns to be addressed in the world (which are extensively discussed in chapter eight). It was a short step to seeing the major theoretical statement of this thesis.
I was visiting a member of the Kingsgrove community when in commenting on the place of community in the church she said...

'I think the church is the place we learn to understand the world and it should help us to see it as Christians. But the church is secularised and doesn't see the world as it should. If the church fails then community has to fight this trend and desecularise itself and the church too. Only community can do this as I think its the only remaining structure with any validity.' (transcripts)

This paraphrase from my notes of the conversation was the crucial insight that in early 1983 marked the major integration of the emerging theory. It immediately made sense of the many aspects of the data that had been filed as rainchecked and generated two other categories:-- Contractual gemeinschaft and Desecularisation.

Glaser and Strauss state...

'Why does the researcher trust what he knows?... because he himself knows what he knows about what he has studied and lived through. They are his perceptions, his personal experiences, and his hard won analyses. A field worker knows that he knows, not only because he has been in the field and he had carefully discovered and generated hypotheses, but also because 'in his bones' he feels the worth of his final analysis. ...By the close of his investigation, the researcher's conviction about his own theory will be hard to shake as most field workers would attest. This conviction does not mean that his analysis is the only plausible one that could be based on his data, but only that he has high confidence in its credibility.' (36)

Many theorists have written of the role of insight in theory and many have discussed its methodology (37). This quote illustrates the impact of this conversation on the development of the theory.
Occurring midway through the research, it marked both the turning point of the design from information gathering to hypothesis testing, but as well answered both questions posed above. Community was core members' attempts to desecularise themselves and their churches. The balance of the research was aimed at challenging this perspective and developing categories that would extrapolate it. There are many other reasons for living in a Christian community but as the process unwound theoretically these other categories were 'reduced' as important but not central to the emerging theoretical statement.

This insight prompted yet another major literature review under the heading secularisation theory (Chapter Three). Quickly it became apparent that this issue had been only tangentially discussed in the literature I had read on community, particularly in the Australian context. In this review, community had only been tangentially discussed as a desecularisation device. Indeed few theorists had discussed desecularisation at all, most being content with a few asides. The literature in the secularisation debate provided a rich source of additional qualitative insights which were addressed according to Glaser and Strauss's structures (38).

This led naturally to the final stage of the theory discovery; the elaboration and reduction of the categories to a consistent theoretical statement. The category contractual gemeinschaft centered around the clear emergence of a certain associational form of contract, community, that intentionally sought a gemeinschaft type of lifestyle. The final category Privatisation derived from this as I hypothesised that the success or otherwise of the intentional effort would approximate the degree to which the
communitarians would be able to approximate a de-privatised collectivity. Berger and Luckmann's works on the privatisation of religion as a form of secularisation were an important corollary brought to the emerging theoretical statement.

At this stage the title of the thesis was changed to reflect the discovery of this theoretical porposition and the last part of the research concentrated on the level of the because motivations to community to elaborate the category Paths to community. As with the themes, I had filed from the start various dissatisfactions that the communitarians had reported as reasons for being in community. At an early stage, because I had not differentiated the community types, the motivations of the five groups in community were conflated. As I studied the core and their attempts to deprivatise I was able to propose a continuum from committed church member to committed communitarian, that addressed the important sociological issue of the conditions of change that lead to the social form under study.

The final stage of the research design was to choose two communities as case studies and to extend the analysis to a very detailed examination of the motivations of the members that comprised them. This choice was made on the basis of the final category, that of Privatisation.
CONCLUSION

The actualities section demonstrates clearly the basic proposition advanced at the beginning of this chapter, that the theoretical perspective of the researcher determines the form of the answer if not its contents. The actualities show a clear and consistent orientation to the data that is phenomenological, continually asking: Why community? rather than, Why communities? The answer in reply is governed by the methodology and the theoretical lens of the researcher. The answer 'Community is a vehicle by which individuals desecularise their worldviews and their churches of origin'; is essentially the meanings that the social actors themselves bring to the social reality they are constructing. The meanings are their own. The meanings the researcher brings at the evidential or third level of explanation are his own and may be couched in whatever theoretical perspective he or she subscribes too. In this study they are phenomenological. This does not preclude other syntheses at a functional or structural or power relations level. These are used in part as the study proceeds. As an ethical consideration here, the explanations of community are tested against the communitarians themselves and the strength of this approach is the correspondence it has both with the understandings of the theorist and those of the subjects studied. It thus avoids the worst aspects of attribution, that plague other forms of Methodology and Theory. Ultimately its strength is the very groundedness that underlies it.

What then are its limitations? Methodologically it generates rather than verifies theory. This is acceptable in a first work such as this. However it is felt that it limits subsequent researchers to travelling in its theoretical wake, seeking to verify phenomenological
statements which are heavily dependent on the social actors studied. Intersubjectivity relies on the phenomenon apprehended remaining reasonably constant over time. It is felt that the common stock-of-knowledge that communitarians hold is as unstable as the world they are trying to change. Thus this poses immediate difficulties for those who seek to replicate or verify. Unfortunately this would be a difficulty with whatever methodology was chosen.

Perhaps a more fundamental criticism of this methodology may be made. Unlike Glaser and Strauss, who feel the study will come to its natural conclusion as the 'categories saturate', this study seemed to remain unfinished. While, as has been quoted, they feel that theory generation is ongoing; the very diversity of comparison that is required as a conceptual tool leads to a feeling of incompleteness. Discussions with other researchers who have used this technique, indicated that they too experienced this sense of incompleteness. However this does not detract from the strength of the theoretical statement, rather this reflects the incompleteness of many other avenues that are thrown up by the very diversity required by Glaser and Strauss's approach. Grounded Theory, despite their assertions to the contrary, is not an economical methodology, and where time or resources are limited, may be wasteful. At this stage the feeling of incompleteness is not a reflection of an inadequacy of the design, or thesis, but rather the knowledge that many other avenues, in themselves theoretically interesting, remain half explored, because the grounded theory approach in providing a methodology for the focus of related ideas, must at the same time push others to the periphery where they become the centre of later research.


3. These are the two major confounding sources of error in Participant Observer strategies. Control effect the unsystematic changes which the researcher introduces as he or she participates in the field under study. That is... 'Can't you forget you're a Psychologist and remember that you joined community' (transcripts) demonstrates both the difference between observer and participant in this communitarian's mind and the need to pose a special answer to a question. Biased viewpoint effect is as it suggests the potential limitations that his role imposes on the way he sees the data. His position as participant/observer ensures that biases of perspective arise either from the roles he takes, the alliances he forms as well as his straight theoretical blinkers. It is for these reasons that the methodology chapter concentrates to the extent it does on the participant as an observer.

4. 'Knowing' is perhaps the most important aspect of the sociology of knowledge and a major concern of this study. The work of Marjorie Grene The Knower and the Known University of California Press Berkeley 1974 was a valuable source of insights into this question from a non-phenomenological perspective.

5. That is, the way in which commonsense experience of the world, is fed back by individuals into social action that constructs and modifies both the world and their understanding of it. At a more philosophical level, the attention one pays to this process, bracketing, or reviewing the mind as it constructs.


8. Georges Gurvitch Sociology of Law, Kegan Paul, London, 1947, page 33. It is not implied that Gurvitch's work was wholly elementaristic as he made a transition to holism that eventually abandoned the phenomenological altogether.

9. The important impact Scheler made on a developing perspective was his addressing the gulf between ideals and existential realism. Or put another way, the actions of individuals are as much the cultural values and ideals as the historical present. His cultural Sociology deals with the impact that the ideal has on real factors that derive from our motives or drives.

10. Mannheim op. cit. page 44. These three levels have much in common with Schutz's, both ultimately deriving from those of Husserl. The objective is the ostensible social or immediate meaning; in Mannheim's example giving aid to a vagrant is 'assistance'. This comes closest to the immediately visible characteristics of the situation. The expressive meaning is the intimate individual purpose or what was meant by the act of charity, its feeling or expressive content. The Evidential or documentary meaning is that assigned by the observer to the act of charity or may be inferred according to some other property of the act, from the sociological, historical or other perspective.


12. Solipsism is considered to be the belief that 'nothing really exists but me and my mental states'. The ultimate source of all knowledge is subjective and while the universe may exist one can only know it subjectively. While an extreme philosophical position it is a suitable corrective to the all too common belief that we may know something sociologically without considering either the knower or the conditions of knowing.


15. Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure Free Press, Illinois, 1957. Merton calls this the 'pattern of the serendipity principle', page 103 or basically leaving enough flexibility in your design to include a little ex post facto analysis and rearrangement!

18. Ibid. page 3.
19. Ibid. page 23
20. Ibid. page 40.
21. Ibid. page 106.
22. Ibid. page 107.
23. Ibid. page 107.
24. Ibid. page 109.
25. Ibid. page 110.
26. Ibid. page 45. Note that: 'A preconceived theoretical framework' relates to the research project i.e. no preconceived hypotheses rather than to the theoretical (ideological) background of the researcher and his general sociological perspective.
27. Ibid. page 117 ff.
28. Matilda White Riley, Sociological Research: A Case Approach Harcourt Brace, New York, 1963. This conceptualisation is followed to demonstrate those aspects of the design that usually are taken for granted or remain hidden in the description leaving the reader to guess the researcher's intentions. Riley, a committed empiricist, has nevertheless produced a book that has been invaluable for finding the alternatives available at any point of the research in progress.
31. William Whyte, Street Corner Society, University of Chicago Press, 1943. Whyte's starting point was that the urban slum did not represent social disorganisation 'The trouble with the slum district some say, is that it is a disorganised community. In the case of Cornerville such a diagnosis is extremely misleading.' Page 55 Riley, op. cit. With Malinowski, Crime and Custom in Savage Society, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1926, the starting point is that the current (1920's) opinion that the primitive obeys laws and customs unthinkingly and relatively inflexibly. He challenges this 'But when, immediately, we are told that "These fetters are accepted by him (the savage) as a matter of course; he never seeks to break forth" - we must enter a protest.' Page 34, Riley op. cit. Both theorists start their studies with what amounts to a 'null hypothesis' which they hope to disprove. It is in this sense that the current tendency to conflate the countercultural and the Christian communities movements is disputed.
32. As discussed in Chapter Seven there are very real problems that the sociologist faces in researching a social group that is at least as aware of the sociologist's value system and theoretical orientations as he is of theirs. Add to this the antipathy that innumerable undergraduate surveys, sent summarily through the mail with a 'please fill out and return in the stamped (unstamped) envelope', engenders and this leads to a hostile population. See note one in Chapter Seven for quotes and discussion of these points.

33. A further test and guarantee of the accuracy of these findings was the reflecting or testing of the 'evidential' meanings back on the communitarians themselves. This resolved ethical difficulties, minimised control and bias effects and acted as a valuable comparison. The communitarians did not always agree with assigned meanings or interpretations but they remained a rich source of theoretical elaboration, not to mention accuracy.

34. Carl Rogers, *Counselling and Psychotherapy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1942. A classic text reprinted many times. The process of nondirected counselling is a technique in which the therapist establishes the conditions which allows the client to direct the therapeutic process whilst the therapist 'reflects' content in such a way as to encourage further elaboration and understanding.

35. See appendices for examples.


38. Glaser and Strauss, op. cit. Chapter Seven, 'New Sources for Qualitative Data'.
"As for the masses, God is still there. It is we who have gone away, Pontiff and Pagan alike."

Ronald Conway.
CHAPTER THREE THE SECULARISATION DEBATE

This chapter reviews the many definitions of secularisation theory. It follows the typology established by Peter Glasner in reviewing Institutional, Normative and Cognitive definitions of secularisation. It briefly considers the arguments that surround the issue of whether secularisation is indeed taking place and how it might be measured. Leading definitions within these categories are considered as are their applicability to the communitarians own view of secularisation. The chapter concludes with an assertion that while communitarians may be reacting to Institutional and Normative secularisation, their efforts are best understood from the Cognitive perspective of Thomas Luckmann.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SECULARISATION DEBATE

It has been argued that Christian, as against the Aquarian or Alternative community movement, differs in seeing itself as an essentially conservative force seeking to gain or restore an imagined golden age of Christian faith and practice. Communitarians committed to last days, millenarian, 1st, or even 19th century Christianity, all look to an epoch in which faith and belief in Christ dictated the totality of actions. The sacred and secular were integrated within an imagined overarching frame of values, biblically grounded and expressed lovingly in community practice. Realistic or not, these viewpoints hold a common assumption that Christian belief has somehow become less central to the life of the church and wider society.

In Chapter Eight the worldviews of the communitarians are considered in detail to illustrate how this shift is perceived; however for present purposes it is asserted that communitarians have entered the secularisation debate practically by developing structures to arrest this process. Like the theorists of the secularisation debate their reasons for doing so are diverse and their viewpoints reflect the wide spectrum of informed comment on this most central of all questions in the sociology of religion.

This chapter establishes the theoretical underpinings for the remainder of the dissertation. Logically an assertion that a particular social phenomenon represents a reaction to social forces implies a common understanding of the 'ground' in which the forces arise. This
comes not only from the data but also from the existing body of theory that surrounds the area of interest. Whilst generating a theory involves a process of research, the source of certain ideas, or even models, arises from the context in which the theory is grounded. (1) It becomes necessary then to examine the assumption that Western Christianity is subject to secularisation. To explore definitions of religion and the outcomes that these definitions predicate. In so doing the issues and constraints that the theory must address to become substantive research are established.

Susan Budd states authoritatively:

"Secularisation is the most important issue, theoretically and practically in the sociology of religion." (2)

Whilst most other general theorists of religion would agree, consensus is limited to vague assertions of the importance of 'secularisation' as a theoretical construct. However, at this point all agreement evaporates. Partially this is the perennial Sociological problem of definition, as the term has been used in many ways, and partially a fundamental disagreement on the nature of religion itself. Glock and Stark state:

"Perhaps the most important attribute of those who perceive secularisation to be going on is their commitment to a particular view of the what religion means." (3)

and agreement is not forthcoming. There is a spectrum of definitions that represent a microcosm of sociological thought with such polarities as Luckmann's subsuming religion under the rubric of the sociology of knowledge, to Wilson's studies of institution participation rates. (4)
It is essential to define religion and hence secularisation before one can with any certainty state whether or not secularisation is occurring. Larry Shin et al. in his celebrated attempt to represent the many forms of secularisation stated:

"The lack of agreement on what secularisation is and how to measure it stands out above everything else." (5)

and thus discussions of secularisation must either adopt a discursive typological approach such as Glasner's (6) or plead a partisan definition.

**DEFINITION**

If adopting Durkheim's classic functional definition of religion as a starting point:

"A unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unites into a single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them." (7)

Then secularisation may be defined in Bryan Wilson's terms as:

"The process where by religious thinking, practices and institutions lose social significance." (8)

Whilst these definitions have suffered a complexity of critical comment, they are sustained for this thesis as they represent the felt realities of the communitarians. Western Christianity is the sacred ethos that synthesises all aspects of their life and legitimates their values and orientations towards society as a whole. Thus it is with increasing discomfort that they find their thinking out of step with a rational age, their practices dated and their institutions less powerful than
before. Functionally religion serves to orientate the religionist towards society. As the consensus that maintains this unity shifts, so do the practices that seek to identify and legitimate the worldview. In this sense the communitarian is increasingly at odds in his attempts to maintain society and sustain his commitment to those institutions in which his society preserving efforts are invested.

It must be stated that whether society is becoming secularised in any of its manifold meanings, is largely peripheral to this sense of felt irrelevance. To individual communitarians their felt estrangement from societal norms and purposes is the crucial issue. Further this study suggests that individual communitarians feel estranged for differing reasons and that these reasons approximate most of the theoretical stances of the secularisation debate. Indeed it is hypothesised that intentional community purposes will accurately reflect the position communitarians feel the institutional church should adopt to the secularisation process.

CENTRAL ISSUES

There are many definitions of religion and even more of secularisation. Reproduced below is Glasner's 1977 taxonomy of the secularisation process divided into three empirical definitions of religion: primarily institutional, primarily normative or primarily cognitive. This excellent work has added to debate and represents both an argument for secularisation as a social myth, as well as being the most exhaustive typology to date. Glasner's main thrust is to illustrate secularisation as a mythopoeic process starting from common usage definitions of
religions and moving to reification of ideal-types. He attempts to rescue the term secularisation by re-establishing the distinction between Religion and the religious. Thus typing secularisation as a generic term covering exclusive definitions of the former. Despite the strength of the body of his thesis, his attempts to posit a paradigm of secularisation run into the philosophical problems of the nominalist-universal-realist debate and more importantly the exclusivity of his definition, as Lyon 1980 (9) points out, ignores the impact 'the religious' has on everyday activities, leaves little to be said about religiosity.

However, despite these few critical comments, which really lie outside of the main thrust of his critique, Glasner's categorisation of religious types will be used to illustrate the major issues of the debate. The assumptions of the various typings are addressed rather than adopting a testing of definitions approach, in the belief that this provides the link between what really remain as ideal-type reductionistic categories and the processes that subtend from them.

**MAJOR BASIS OF DEFINITION OF RELIGION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY 1 (primarily institutional)</th>
<th>CATEGORY II (primarily normative)</th>
<th>CATEGORY III (primarily cognitive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Decline</td>
<td>1 Transformation</td>
<td>1 Segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Routinisation</td>
<td>2 Generalisation</td>
<td>2 Secularisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Differentiation</td>
<td>3 Desacralisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Disengagement</td>
<td>4 Secularism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religion may be identified with the major institutional and organisational characteristics of the dominant religious culture in a society. Characteristics may be delineated at an institutional, organisational or even social-role level. Thus religion may be identified with reference to categories such as cults, sects, denominations, and churches; and their contemporary and historical functions. The strength or otherwise of the religious culture rests in the degree of participation by the individuals comprising the social whole. High participation rates equate with the dominance of the religious culture and divisions between the sacred and the secular rely on historical spheres of influence to determine the degree of participation by the individuals comprising the social whole and in turn the degree to which change has occurred. Measurement is thus crucial to this definition and the secularisation question is addressed by measuring such variables as the changing role of the clergy, activities of the local congregations, raw indices of sacramental observance, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals; participation rates in services, sunday schools, and financial contribution to name a few. Obviously this definition has the greatest degree of fit with common usage understandings in the Australian context.

This typing rests on two major assumptions, which in turn rely on the observers' definitions of what constitutes religious society and religiously motivated action. Agreement is not forthcoming though, and the debate swings around the following assumptions.
The golden age. There exists a golden age of religious practice that a baseline might be derived from to identify aspects of the religious culture in decline. This really religious period then establishes a highwater mark for religious observance. Various benchmark ages have been established depending on the vantage point and methodology of the theorists committed to this perspective. They share in common assumptions that 'religiosity can be compared and measured cross-tempoculturally without much alteration to the dimensions used in contemporary society' (Glasner p. 66) and depend on the measurement strategy employed.

This assumption is fraught with difficulty and the majority of critical comment has challenged the historicity of this idealised age. The most serious criticism of the secularisation concept 'lies in the uncertainty of the referents of the concept' (Wilson 1979). Critics such as David Martin challenge 'Where do we find this golden age, the apogee of Western Christendom?' And doubts abound from an increasing number of studies that seriously question an age of faith, Williams 1956, Hill 1964, Laslett 1965, McLeod 1971, Thomas 1971, Yeo 1976, Currie 1977 to name a few.

Related criticisms expand this major challenge. Martin suggests that received impressions of religiosity, confuse an official belief about what was happening, with what actually occurred. Statistics on participation for example may only indicate the degree to which religious participation equals civic advancement. Glasner quoting Thomas suggests another tangent:
"He goes further to note that the hold of orthodox religion on the people of England had never been complete, and that certain sections of the population probably never had been religious at all." (10)

Whilst a distinction between Christianity and magical formulations would have been strenously opposed by the church hierarchy, the masses would not have been aware of the distinctions between Christian observance and folkbelief. Indeed a statistical picture of religious observance might indeed encompass two very diverse meaning structures.

Religious pluralism further seriously questions this assumption. Exponents of the institutional definition of religion rely on assumptions of religious homogeneity. Studies quoted above 'seriously challenge the notion of a received universal unified religious culture and indicate the diverse existence of many subterranean theologies' (Martin 1967). The occult, superstition, magic, common belief, politico-denominational partisanism and skepticism all clearly question a golden age of unified religious practice and belief.

The Notion of Progress. A second major assumption straddles the secularisation debate and definitions of institutional religion. Applying equally to Normative definitions it is implicit in most theorising that religion is a primitive form of epistemological transcendence. Thus the church in all its forms is the visible remnant of an earlier intellectual worldview. The central issue is evolutionary progress. As Edward Tylor theorises, religion arose from Animism, evolutionarily, to its final montheistic form; so other
theorists see the evolutionary imperative replacing all religious expressions, with rationality and scientism.

This ideological stance permeates sociological thought and colours secularism discussion. Stemming from A. Comte's Three stage law:

"Seen in its full completeness the fundamental law of Intellectual Evolution consists of the necessary passage of all human theories through three successive stages: first the Theological, or Ficticious, which is provisional; secondly the Metaphysical or Abstract which is transitional; and thirdly, the Positive or Scientific, which alone is definitive." Comte (11)

The debate assumes religious meaning to be incompatible with a comprehensive experience of an empiricist positivist world. The founding fathers of Sociology have done much to ideologically consign religion to a 'dependent variable status vis-a-vis science' Nolan 1974 (12). Weber pessimistically noted the irreversible processes of rationalistic introspection that would lead to disenchantment and disengagement under the secularising influences of wealth and mechanisation of production. Many theorists have accepted this thesis relatively unquestioningly.

This argument is questionable on any number of grounds that will not be discussed here (13). However, of relevance to the institutional definitions of religion is the assertion that decline is synonymous with societal progress. Progress may well be a social myth of equal standing to Glasner's myth of secularisation (14). It has been argued that religion rather than being replaced with other non religious weltanschauung may in fact coexist and we are experiencing not progressive decline of religion but rather the transformation of religious types. Douglas 1970 (15) has demonstrated the difficulties
that assumptions of modernity bring to 'manifestations of this thesis' and questions both the 'deep religiosity' of primitive man and the unitariness of previous religious belief. What is seen as progress is just a continuing transformation of meaning in historical society.

These two assumptions, the existence of a 'golden age' and the notion of 'progress', permeate the secularisation debate. By exploring the differing types of secularisation attributable to the institutional definition, it will be apparent that a healthy tension exists around the worth of these assumptions. The following discussion concentrates on an exposition of the theoretical types and the communitarians consciousness of the impact on their worldview.

DECLINE

"The Decline of religion. The previously accepted symbols, doctrines and institutions lose their prestige and influence. The culmination of secularisation would be a religionless society". (Shiner) (16)

Perhaps the most persistent and simplistic secularisation thesis, inextricably linked with institutional appreciations of religion. There are less numbers of participants, fewer clergy per head of population, less financial contributions, declining attendance at the sacraments and a general corrosion of commitment. At a less statistical level, decline is seen in ecumenism (strong institutions do not amalgamate, weak ones do), the theological 'Death of God' debate, denominational flock stealing and the ageing Christianitas.

Evidence for the decline thesis is strong in the United Kingdom where Bryan Wilson has documented the decline of the Anglican Church
from the Industrial Revolution. In Australia various theorists have attempted similar analyses on a smaller scale with similar results. Hans Mol (1971) in his pioneering work, established a picture of a quite static society in which seventy-six percent of the population affirmed some belief in a personal God, the creator of the universe (but had much lower rates of religious observance) (17).

By 1980 the situation had changed dramatically and religious affirmation and participation rates declined sharply. Such works as Bruce Wilson's Can God survive in Australia reflects on the march 'From Christian country to secular society' 1983 (18). A somewhat more elaborate analysis was conducted by Michael Hogan 1979 (19) who accessed a variety of statistics to portray the shift to a secular age.

"The A.S.B. (Australian Social Barometer) surveys... suggest that secular Australians are members of the largest 'religious' group in Australia... In the brief time of the ASB surveys the proportions of secular respondents has risen... to 34.8% in 1977. The five years between 1971 and 1976 census show an increase from 13.0% to 20.5%. The evidence for a quite significant increase in secularism in Australia in the 1970's is hard to gainsay - even if the confusions about belief and allegiance still remain."

and raw data from surveys such as Stan Stewart's report to the Australian Council of Churches, indicating substantial declines in Sunday school students numbers over a decade from 1963-1974 typify decline statistics. (20)

How valid is the decline hypothesis? Whilst the commonsense view of religion is associated with prominent buildings scattered across the landscape, it is suggested that it has much heuristic value. However, the question in part determines the answer, and by this definition,
decline has indeed taken place and rapidly over the fifteen years since Mol's seminal work. Unfortunately such a straightforward view has a number of immediate difficulties. Firstly as discussed above, it assumes a baseline of faith that is hard to sustain or even measure from. There are no significant Australian studies that can adequately establish such a baseline, though it is documented that there has been quite an element of official compulsion in participation rates. Shin er notes particularly Le Bras's study of 'Christian' France as an object case of:

"That there were in former times built in premiums and liabilities relating to practice which may have produced large scale conventional acceptance of Christianity but little depth"

It is suggested that this was particularly so in the Australian Case (21).

The decline thesis also faces the challenge of untangling itself from arguments over the secular. Indeed even such a leading exponent of the decline thesis Bryan Wilson points out:

"One (difficulty) has arisen because secularisation as a process continues to be regularly confused with secularism as a creed." (22)

and quoting Robert Bellah, that absolute decline should not be confused with transformations to the civil religion of secularism or, as Shin er adds, to confuse absolute decline with transformations to the extremes of liberal theology. Phenomenologically, it is essential to both discover the meanings of participation, and equally, non-participation. Bellah (23) argues that a decline in institutional religion is not necessarily an indicator of the decline of faith but perhaps a move from collective to privatised worship. Perhaps
following the reasoning of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Friedrich Gogarten or Harvey Cox, the decline in institutional expressions may signal the transformation to a healthier Christianity. (24)

The decline thesis is in part heuristically acceptable to this study to the extent that it meets the tests Metcalf 1984 (25) established to allow the social actors in alternative life style groups to define themselves. On the whole communitarians were uncritically accepting of the decline hypothesis. They felt ambivalent about ostensible decline, vacant pews on the one hand represented a tragic failure of the established denominations to fulfill evangelical imperatives, whilst they somewhat perversely felt this legitimated their community structures and purposes. 'We reach the unchurched and unchurchable'. They concentrated in the main on structural reasons for decline. Thus decline became translated into inappropriate locations of churches, constrained finance, poor training of clergy, artificiality of sitting in 'school like' church pew settings, large congregations that were unable to relate and other such reasons. Though the strongest criticisms of the communitarians were reserved for the normative failures of the church, discussed below, the established church was still equated with the 'Body of Christ'. Their common usage understanding of Christian commitment meant participation in the established denominations, even when they felt themselves to be on the outside of these structures.

The more theologically sophisticated challenged the extent of decline whilst acknowledging that substantial inroads had been made in participation rates. They felt that Australia had never been 'particu-
larly Christian' and it had bec the less fashionable to be 'Church conscious'. However they felt that the church organisationally was on the defensive; not so much from declining numbers but from religious pluralism, particularly of non-Christian ethos. They felt that whilst church participation was down, this indicated increasing numbers of privatised Christians who were disillusioned to the point of practicing Christianity privately. Opinions were mixed on the extent of Christian privatisation and whether or not it represented positive change. However substantial numbers of communitarians felt this was a beneficial 'sorting the sheep from the goats' which would leave Christianity, however conceived, purified and able to reformulate itself to answer the secular age. There were many recommendations to read Bonhoeffer's *Life Together* and Morris Inch's *Christianity without Walls* to pursue this point further.

**ROUTINISATION**

This view of secularisation rests on two major assumptions: that religious organisations emphasising personal religious experience and having high degrees of group inclusiveness equals relative non-secularisation; and groups which emphasise social integration and societal identification, are relatively secularised. (26) Glasner postulates that the Töltisch dichotomy of sect and church may be viewed as a continuum of secularisation between these two assumptions. With a number of extensions of the continuum, (Pfautz 1955, Herbert 1955, Yinger 1957) following Niebuhr (1954), sects would over time lose their distinctive characteristics and socioeconomic bases and go through a process of coming to terms with the world by moving from being centered on the individual to
centering on society, or an institutional routinisation of function.

The somewhat dubious claim that this represents a process of secularisation is predicated on the cult/sect end being more religious, as it is, 'wholly concerned with the problems of the individual, whereas the church end is essentially associational, bureaucratised and part of the dominant social order'. The sect, to avoid becoming secularised, struggles to remain distinctive and cohesive while growing and dealing with the larger society.

Whilst Glasner accords routinisation the status of a social myth, his critique is inadequately limited to questioning Pfautz's general assumptions of American denominationalism being secularised par excellence. There are more serious criticisms. Firstly, this is a further example of ideological/evolutionary progress assumptions and may therefore be subjected to the criticisms made above. Secondly, after Shiner, this is an ambiguous use of the term. What is being lost or secularised? Routinisation equates with secularisation if something integrally religious is being lost or compromised in the move from gemeinschaft to gesellschaft structures. However, it is not necessarily the case and, as Shiner points out, denominationalism may be a shift of emphasis that strengthens rather than weakens 'the religious'. Thirdly, without an adequate definition, it is logically impossible to equate routinisation and secularisation causally in anything other than correlational terms. As Glasner himself points out in his paradigm of secularisation (page 110), 'we cannot define the Religious' and it is difficult to suggest on what other basis a definition could be predicated to equate these processes. Finally, it is questionable whether the cult/sect end of the spectrum does
indeed do what it is purported to do and whether it differs substantially from denominations in the Australian context. For these reasons it is not felt that routinisation may be usefully applied to discussions of communitarians' orientations to religion.

**DIFFERENTIATION - PLURALISM - DISENGAGEMENT**

Glasner discusses differentiation and disengagement as separate areas of secularisation theory, following a polarity most clearly articulated by Parsons. However, it is felt that they represent a continuum or process of structural change. That is, structural differentiation is reflected in the degree of disengagement in society, and that this process represents secularisation. This is the view of Spencer who coined the term, and Durkheim who first extensively analysed it. However Parsons argues as follows:

First, human action is directed by the normative controls promoted by society via beliefs, values, and systems of meaning. These norms are both general orientations to society as well as specific guides to behaviour in all situations. Second, this normative basis provides ultimate meaning for all members of a society, which functionally acts to promote consensus, order, and stability. Third, religion is one cultural system that gives meaning to life and in particular addresses those issues that challenge certainty: evil, suffering, the vicissitudes of personal existence and, ultimately, death. At one time religion was the sole authority in addressing these issues and resolving life's uncertainties and contradictions. Fourth, as society develops and becomes technologically sophisticated, structural differentiation occurs. That is 'a previously less
differentiated structure becomes differentiated into more specialised subsystems.' Fifth, this structural differentiation leads to pluralistic organisation of society, and meaning becomes 'generalised at a higher level'.

At this point the argument over secularisation begins. Parsons maintains that secularisation, if it is occurring, should be understood as a refining of religious values and their role in society, rather than as a loss as such. This leads to 'a purer and more fundamental form of religion' which has by a process of greater adaptation, greater autonomy in society. Robert Bellah in support of Parsons, argues that rather than losing the ability to promote normative social cohesion, this adaptivity leads to specialisation and the performance of fewer functions that may be 'done better'. Thus Parsons refutes that secularisation has occurred and points to semantic difficulties:

'When a previously less differentiated structure becomes differentiated into more specialised subsystems; it is in the nature of the case that, if an earlier and later structural unit bear the same name, the later version will, by comparison with the earlier, be felt to have lost certain functions, and hence, perhaps, from a certain point of view have been weakened." (27)

Budd disagrees:

"Although attractive to theologians (see Winter, 1961; Berger 1969), the argument makes little sociological sense; making values pure and divorcing them from social contexts and pressures seems likely to weaken, not strengthen, the likelihood of them becoming a basis for action." (28)

The difficulties rest with Parsons and followers' assumptions that religious values still direct behaviour in America (or western society) and secondly that religious pluralism does not confuse the
legitimation of belief. Critics would empirically disagree in the first case and would more fundamentally question the whole structural functionalist perspective of progressive equilibrium that underlies the second assumption.

"With its preoccupation with harmony, integration and solidarity, functionalism neglects the many instances where religion can be seen as a divisive and disruptive force. It bypasses the frequent examples of internal divisions within a community over questions of religious dogma and worship, divisions that lead to open conflict." (29)

Glock and Stark state:

"We find it difficult to reconcile the general theory with considerable evidence of religious conflict. On every side it would seem that religion threatens social integration as readily as it contributes to it. The history of Christianity, with its many schisms, manifests the great power of religion not merely to bind but to divide." (30)

Opponents of the 'not secularisation but structural differentiation' position see religious pluralism and ultimately the secularism that results, as evidence for disengagement as a major response to structural differentiation. Bryan Wilson argues, religious pluralism means more denominations, that at best only legitimate the beliefs of a section of the population, and hence cease to be societal values. As differentiation creates increasing pluralism; secularism, be it scientific, humanistic, political or philosophic, leads to a gradual takeover of the ostensible functions of religion by the creation of alternatives; public rather than private religious education, civil marriage and the like. The success of the secular as an alternative further weakens the legitimating functions of religion and in circular fashion hastens further disengagement. This point has been extensively discussed elsewhere. (31) Disengaged secularisation thus leads to the rise of the secular state that gradually
assumes education and welfare functions, once the prerogatives of the church and also to an intellectual/existential privatisation of belief that leads to:

"(A) society that separates itself from the religious understanding which has previously informed it in order to constitute itself an autonomous reality and consequently to limit religion to the sphere of private life. The culmination of this kind of secularisation would be a religion of a purely inward character, influencing neither institutions nor corporate action, and a society in which religion made no appearance outside the sphere of the religious group." (32)

This category of secularisation is extremely useful in the study of Australian Christian community. After the normative orientations to secularisation discussed below, the differentiation and disengagement thesis was the most keenly felt by the communitarians. As discussed in the following chapters, communitarians spent considerable effort in attempting reengagements of social structures and belief. Perhaps reflecting the degree to which Australian society has become privatised, the communitarians felt the religious to be essentially individuated and thus beyond their power to influence. They chose to respond to structural aspects of decline as an alternative to influencing belief, feeling that differentiation had somehow led to Christianity becoming secondary and unimportant in the life of the nation. They felt confused by the tenuous nexus between a belief in Christ, the actions this predicated and relevant structures to contain these actions and hoped that newer structures would somehow arrest the corrosion of belief. Sadly few recognised that the development of alternative community structures was yet another aspect of the differentiation process.

Whilst this is discussed more fully in the chapter 'The worldview
of the Communitarians', sketched below are a few examples of the differentiation-pluralism-disengagement continuum to illustrate the importance of this thesis to the study.

Perhaps the strongest awareness of the communitarians was that church going had become an essentially leisure activity. A recurring complaint was that Christianity competed with other social activities such as bowling, bingo, car racing and philosophical discussion groups, for membership. They often complained that the church had to entertain to hold adherents and this led to a shallowness of discipling which in turn meant that the church was less able to encourage and strengthen belief and to insist on certain contrasocial behaviour patterns. Twice, perceptive communitarians illustrated the process, by pointing out that the essential passivity of church congregations was analogous to the entertainment industry. The minister had become a paid worker to produce 'religious feelings', complete with sermons and goodworks which were passively consumed as products by the congregational audience. In this sense communitarians felt that their 'fundamental meanings' had become debased by a process of differentiation that had left institutional Christianity so unsure of its core functions, that it had to adopt 'worldly functions' to survive.

Religious pluralism equally challenged communitarians but they felt emasculated by the relativism of belief that pluralism entailed. How do you assert the ethical absolutes of Christ's message in the face of sharply divided congregations, denominations, sects, cults, and parareligious beliefs such as astrology; when even the bible is
subject to attack from within the congregation of faith. Social disengagement equally was pessimistically viewed in these terms. There was much discussion of Blaikie's *The Plight of the Australian Clergy* and of the role of the ordained ministry as a crucial test case of disengagement. They felt that without a clear mandate of social action, defined by roles, the clergy were uncertain and if the leadership wavered, the sheep were lost. Many other examples discussed in later chapters point to the crucial importance of the differentiation-pluralism-disengagement thesis to this study.

**NORMATIVE DEFINITIONS**

As with the institutional definition, discussion will concentrate on the major assumptive bases of normative processes of secularisation. Normative definitions depend on the primary assumption that man lives in a universe of transcendent norms, beliefs and understandings that integrate his personal value systems and externally govern his actions. Secondly, that these values are a consensus and are homogenous or permeated throughout society and transcend the individual. When values become privatised, or lack consensus, then we may say that secularisation has occurred. Ultimately the strength of religion rests with its ability to exert social control. When competing meaning systems relativise belief, the strength of religion in society wanes.

Unless one adopts a completely Durkheimian or even phenomenological view of religion and meaning being synonomous, one is left with the perennial problem of measuring loss of social control or decline.
A basic difficulty exists not only in establishing an adequate baseline but also in identifying the religious which is more truly the province of normative than institutional definitions. This is further compounded by the necessity of distinguishing between changes of meaning, as against changes of function. As Marx and others have strenuously argued elsewhere, changes in ideology may do little to alter the way in which people act. Rather the purposes that order society are based on the power relationships that have historically been legitimated by the prevailing ideology, religious or otherwise, but have in principle always been functionally distinct. (33) It has been suggested that the religious, or any other meaning system, changing or otherwise, is social camouflage.

**GENERALISATION**

Parsons noted that as structural differentiation led to pluralism of meaning, the existing beliefs that govern society were generalised into an overarching set of higher metavales. These supra norms, though general, continue to derive their legitimacy from religious conceptions and provide general principles of conduct that may be specified according to any of the relativist positions of competing meanings. Ultimately then according to this view all meaning is religious, at least functionally. For example, the mosaic prescriptions against adultery may be conceived of as a metavalue that legitimates such diverse beliefs as homosexual marriage, commonlaw relationships and the sanctity of the 'threelfold knot'.

However, this approach to secularisation immediately strikes a number of difficulties. Firstly, one must question the usefulness of this
position as its supporters, notably Bellah, have failed to develop an adequate procedural account of how metavalues continue to control specific actions. To what extent does generalisation proceed and at what point does it become too general? How do we operationally define these general values? In a system of ethical relativism, generalisation of specific religious concepts such as the sanctity of life, lose a precise locus of control and hence may become general to the point of absurdity; as in the abortion debate where both sides have recourse to this legitimating concept.

However, before abandoning this concept, whilst it might be argued empirically that one does not have an adequate recourse to the religious in any rigorous manner, it is still, theoretically, a sophisticated approach to secularisation theory, as distinct from process. It contributes substantially to an understanding of how very different value systems religious or otherwise, may coexist in a pluralist society: though both Weber and Parsons feared that particularistic proximate values were becoming more dominant than general ones and hence society ultimately must lose some of its adaptive capacity. The work of Bellah and other sociologists suggests that a new equilibrium is developing. (34)

However, for our Christian communitarians, generalisation is not a particularly relevant variable. They are aware that they live under the vague penumbra of a generalising Christianitas. Their efforts are more concerned with arresting the quantifiable.
TRANSFORMATION

Shiner calls this area of normative secularisation 'transposition', which more accurately conveys the sense of a system of belief having its essential elements transposed into a following system. He quotes Adalbert Klempt by way of definition:

"Secularisation as the "transformation of conceptions and modes of thought which were originally developed by the Christian salvation belief and its theology, into ones of a world based outlook."

and Troeltsch by way of example:

'Who spoke for example of "the complete severence of sexual feelings from the thought of original sin" which has been effected "by modern art and poetry" as "nothing else than the secularisation of intense religious emotions."' (35)

Perhaps the most noted form of this thesis is Weber's Protestant Ethic ... which has as one of its themes the transformation of the values of ascetic protestantism into western capitalism. Weber saw that an existing belief system had within itself the seeds of transformation into the succeeding belief system. Thus ascetic protestantism encouraged initiative, involvement and success in the world, and as mentioned above, wealth and mechanisation, led to a success that eventually secularised the values that promoted success in the first place.

Another major example of this thesis is 'the Marxist version of the revolution as coming from Christian eschatology'. H.J. Blackham suggests that far from religion being the opiate of the masses, that Marxism represents a sustained transposition of Christianity into Socialism. Further we suggest that Marx, Engels and Lenin all wrote on the historical necessity of religion as a dialectical
or transforming response in the historical process. Thus Selsam and Martel suggests:

"The founders of Marxism did not believe they brought religion into the class struggle; but found it there." (36)

Thus Marx saw religion as a necessary though primitive ideological precursor of socialist enlightenment and the tasks of Socialism were to transpose religious thought into scientific materialism:

"The task of history, therefore, once the world beyond the truth has disappeared, is to establish the truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy, which is at the service of history... thus the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of the earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of "the" right and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics." (37)

Shiner has three major criticisms of this thesis, which are well sustained. Firstly, this ex post facto analysis, whilst interesting historical description, has low predictive value and there is little proof of causal dependence between variously identified supposed transformations. Secondly, and flowing from the first, is the problem of identifying transpositions. Do we confuse 'something of separate origin and conception that has taken over some of the functions of the former religious phenomena?' Thirdly, we return once again to ideological notion of progress that supplants religious meanings with evolutionary suppositions. Thus whilst the transformation thesis is of interest and has historical value it has little direct relevance to this study.

**DESACRILISATION AND SECULARISM**

These areas, as with differentiation and disengagement, are treated as a continuum rather than as Glasners' separate categories. Shiner
defines these areas as:

"Desacrilization of the world. The world is gradually deprived of its sacred character as man and nature become the object of rational-causal explanation and manipulation. The culmination of secularisation would be a completely "rational" world society in which the phenomenon of the supernatural or even of mystery" would play no part." (38)

Thus the continuum might range from a sacred conception of the world to a completely secular belief with desacrilization representing the process of change.

Of Glasner's ten definitions of secularisation theory, these two represent the major orientations of the communitarians. Nearly every communitarian articulate enough to reflect on the need for community implicated the loss of the sacred cosmos and the coming of the secular age as major reasons for the rise of community. One communitarian went so far as to suggest that community is an expression of the Christian ghetto mentality that erects walls to protect the residue of Christianity from the real world. Whilst they might express their concerns with the secular age, by reference to decline, structural disengagement or loss of religious meaning; they felt that the ultimate challenge was the pervasive belief that Christianity was an unnecessary causal explanation in a scientific rational age. Much debate, writing and personal searching went into establishing what essential residuum Christianity could claim as uniquely its own and of more importance of necessity to the world at large. The sacred no longer operates as an avenue of first interest in orienting unbelievers to Christ and the communitarians felt much frustration at the matter-of-factness of the secular age.
Engels noted:

"God is nowhere treated worse than by natural scientists, who believe in him... what God has had to suffer at the hands of his defenders! In the history of natural science... one fortress after another capitulates before the march of science, until at last the whole infinite realm of nature is conquered by science, and there is no place left in it for the creator." (39)

Many have argued, as has Weber, that the progress of industrial society and its scientific technical base is ultimately a process of 'rationalisation' 'intellectualisation' and the 'demystification' of the world. Society has moved from a world in which the locus of control was God centred, 'What man proposes God disposes', to a world in which, at least in principle, we can understand and control predictively the natural order. At the bottom of this change in worldview is an equally transcendant and remote belief in the power of technical science to rescue us from uncertainties, of which religious belief once gave us assurance, if not insurance. The material benefits of technical science have ensured that many of the areas of human uncertainty have been reduced to unremarkable commonplaces.

Attendant on this transformation has been a change from other worldly to this worldly orientations. As society increasingly seeks answers in the natural world and as margins of certainty are increased by technical controls, we correspondingly limit the scope to which religion addresses itself. Byran Wilson has proposed a four step sequence by which western Christianity has become secularised: (40)

First, 'ascetic protestantism created an ethic which was pragmatic,
rationally controlled and antiemotional. Secondly, society responded by becoming rationally organised, which led men to sustained involvement in rational organisations - firms, public service, educational institutions, government, the State - which imposed rational behaviour on them. Third, a greater understanding of the world based on reason not faith. 'Science not only explained many facets of life and the material environment in a more satisfactory way but also provided confirmation of its explanation in a more satisfactory way'. Fourth, as Charles Glock (1971) has also suggested, we develop rational ideologies such as Humanism, Secularism, Communism and the like, to produce this-worldly tangible orderings.

What role then remains for religion in a desacrilising world? Weber noted that increasing rationality was an irreversible process under the impact of differentiation and would entail a gradual segmentation of belief to those areas of life that science had not yet addressed. One area became a concern with personal salvation and the problem of death, and another with the ultimate meanings of earthly purpose. These metaphysical concerns bore little relationship to a western world that was increasingly materialistic and death denying.

As Martin pointed out above, one of the major failings of secularisation theory is to confuse secularism and secularisation. At an extreme of the desacrilization continuum we have impartial, disinterested scientism, or a vague belief that science ultimately has the answers. At the other end, in absolute contradiction of the sacred, is the creed of secularism, which may be viewed as a transformation of sacred values into those based on a number of
philosophical positions spawned by the Enlightenment. Arising from
the Aufklärung of the German eighteenth century philosophers,
secularism has had many supporters such as C.J. Holyoake, and has
founded many expressions of civic religions such as those of St.
Simon, Comte, Owens, Fourier and ultimately as many theorists have
thought, Marx. (Though it must be recognised that Engels critically
attacked most philosophers - who held this view - "They likewise
could (not) conceive of a man without religion ... and used to say
'Well then atheism is your religion.' (41)) However, it is here
asserted that secularism as a creed represents a transformation type
of secularisation.

Glock suggests that 'unbelief' is perhaps a more descriptive term
that reduces the confusion over these two meanings of secularism.
He notes that unbelief can have a variety of meanings. (42) As
mentioned above; the rise of science as an alternative belief
system is uncritically accepted by the majority of secular society.
Most would not accept that they hold this position. Susan Budd
suggests:

"It is inaccurate to attribute this to a rise in secular
consciousness... since, as has often been remarked, most
people now trust and believe in Science without understanding
it in the same way they might once have assumed that religion
can explain it' or 'god must have had a reason.'" (43)

The concern of the communitarians over the rise of the secular age
may in part be seen as a fourfold response to Budd's point:

First, they strongly felt that secular belief was an uncritical
assumption of sciences' preeminence in generating ultimate meaning.
However, they strove desperately with the same unconcern that made
Christianity nominal in a previous age and found they could not
generate enough community interest in belief to challenge the
assumptions of either science or religion. They evinced a desperateness
to challenge science on its own ground and to prove that the
ideologicality of scientism was at variance with the tenets of
natural science. Many communitarians quoted at length eminent
physical scientists as 'proof cases' of the natural sciences' recogni­
tion of their own limitations. (44) In one community I was given
a years supply of Ex Nihilo (45) magazines. In another I was given
a copy of W.R. Mathews 1920 Boyle Lectures (46) all in support of
a 'science for the scientific,' 'religion for the religious'.

Second, a strong countervailing force in community was an intellec­
tual 're-drawing of boundaries between the religious and the remainder.'
Curiously this represented an 'otherworldly mysticism' on the one
hand and on the other a calculated resacrilisation of daily actions.
Thus many communitarians were intellectually engaged in attempting
to answer the self posed question of 'What would Jesus have to say
to this'. The very matter-of-factness of the every day world
became the every day matter-of-factness of the religious. In one
community the failure of a garbage disposal service was not a
matter of electricity or mechanical failure but rather a much prayed
over matter whether this represented a 'sign' on the communities
progressive journey to a simple lifestyle. Another community leader
was engaged in Socratically doubting every area of his life that
might have succumbed to the secular.
Third, there was concern to illustrate the extent to which structural differentiation had led to an inadvertent desacrilisation of practice within the community of faith. This showed itself in a number of ways. Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy were seen to permeate what had been once 'purely religious'. The clergy were particularly vulnerable to this communal inspection and numerous complaints were made that they practiced Pastoral (i.e. psychological) rather than spiritual counselling: that they saw themselves as socially religious rather than spiritually religious, and explanation was often in secular rather than revealed terms. Sociological investigation of community was seen as another example of the extent to which secular understandings were replacing sacred ones. A number of other researchers who shared a common faith with the communitarians, were admonished that sociology could not lead to an understanding of community and that experiential merging with the sacred was the only matter-of-fact way of understanding this social phenomenon. Noel Preston's work on Australian Christian community (47) was much criticised in this regard.

Last, communitarians would agree with Budd 'God once must have had a reason' was vague assurance that the world is an orderly place. Communitarians increasingly have sought to Sacrilise the secular by a historical analysis of God's purposes in contemporary society. Thus they have an inordinate interest in 'last days' issues of \textit{Last Days Ministries} (48) and see normative secularisation as an expression of the fall from faith predicted in the scriptures. An understanding of the decline of Christianity is thus an internal mechanism to reconcile the sacred and secular.
These few brief illustrative points have demonstrated the importance of the desacrilization-secularism area of the study of community purpose. They are discussed in more detail in the succeeding chapters, however, this area would be the most commonly understood community reason for secularisation having occurred. From a conceptual or theoretical position they have similar methodological difficulties as have the other normative definition of secularisation. Thus each analysis works form the assumption that contemporary society is the most secular (notions of progress), that individual cases are generalisable to other situations, or they speak at a level of generality that limits them to purely historical analyses.

COGNITIVE DEFINITIONS

This final area of Glasner's classification has been dubbed Cognitive. However, segmentation - essentially the work of Berger and Luckmann and 'secularisation' the work of Tonnies and successors, are two diverse theories that may be called 'global sociological'. They share little but a critical sociological response to social pressures such as industrialisation, urbanisation and modernity; of which Glasner attempts a critique in relation to Tonnies work. They are essentially larger scale theories of social change and its impact on religion, rather than aspects of the secularisation process per se. Thus in essence they approach a similar sociological end in quite dissimilar ways. Berger and Luckmann subsume religion under the rubric of the sociology of knowledge. Luckmann in particular addresses the question of changing perceptions of meaning of
social reality and:

"whether anything that could be called religion in the framework of sociological analysis replaced traditional church religion in modern society." (49)

Tonnies and his successors concentrated on articulating an ideal-type continuum of the 'natural will' as expressed in gemeinschaft terms and the rational will as expressed in gesellschaft; to articulate societal transformations. As such both groups of theorists are oriented to larger scale social change.

As this level of social theorising was not reflected in the conscious reactivity of the social actors of community it is not pursued here. Discussion of Tonnies work is briefly mentioned in Chapter Four and, as a detailed exposition of Berger's and Luckmann's works is used as a major vehicle of analysis in Chapters 7, 8, 9, a further discussion of their work is left till that point.

CONCLUSIONS

Glasner's examination of the types of secularisation process has been a useful vehicle for establishing the ground in which any attempt at a theory of secularisation must exist. This chapter outlined the major assumptional bases of the two more detailed areas of analysis: the institutional and the normative, both to illustrate the major context of each process as well as the methodological and theoretical underpinnings and limitations. At the same time it indicated briefly and anecdotally the degree to which the communitarians recognised and reacted to each category. As with any review this has necessarily been an overview rather than a detailed
analysis and the reader is referred to the accompanying bibliography for further analysis. However, it is useful at this point to look at the field of secularisation theory to abstract any common themes before arriving at a definition for the study.

If any conclusion should represent a telescopic overview of an area, it might be said that this analysis has illustrated three major forms of change process: **Structural Differentiation** by which institutions, social roles and belief are gradually differentiated into some specialised subunits. The pluralism that this entails leads to **Relativism** in which there no longer exists a homogenous transcendent coherent unified belief structure. This ultimately leads to the **Individuation** or **Privatisation** of belief. It is to this last concept that the remaining remarks are addressed.

As discussed in Chapter Four, community as an attempt at desecularisation is an essentially privatised attempt. That is in Tonnies terms it represents a contractual or associational structuring that is organised to approximate a gemeinschaft structure. However, the degree to which intentional community meets its intentions is **inversely proportional** to the degree to which the communitarians remain privatised within the community structures. Thus community is at its essence an associational attempt to become de-privatised.

Most theorists have addressed the individuation or privatisation of religious experience. However, the works of Berger and particularly Luckmann have been the most substantial to date to the extent they address this issue of privatisation. For this reason their formulations have been chosen as a vehicle for the remaining analysis of
secularisation in chapter seven. Their most significant contribution has been the elaboration of the process by which the hitherto external and objective social reality of the individual is transformed into an internal and privatised set of personal meanings.
NOTES CHAPTER THREE


11. Quoted in Glasner op.cit., page 43.

12. Randal Nolan, Unpublished research manuscript Beyond Capitalism: The Implications of the Jesus Movement for Secularisation Theory, University of NSW Sociology Dept., 1974, pages 6-8 for discussion of this concept.

14. Glasner op.cit., makes this point in his introductory chapter quoting a number of other studies of social myth.

15. Ibid, page 45.


18. Bruce Wilson, Can God Survive in Australia? Albatross, Sydney, 1983. Wilson's somewhat simplistic account is based on his honours thesis at University of N.S.W. This book has had a wide currency in the community movement and has been used ex tempore as defence of Christianity.


20. Stanley James Stewart, The Church's Ministry with Children Report to the Australian Council of Churches Commission on Christian Education, Melbourne, 1976. Whilst empirical studies of the church are limited in Australia, the decline area has received the most attention, particularly from the Catholic Church, who particularly interested in the decline in vocations, have produced a number of illuminating reports and commentaries. For example see: Reflections on a survey: Australian Religious Personnel 1978. National Assembly of Major Superiors of the religious of Australia, Sydney, 1979.


23. Bellah (see note 13 above) is not alone in arguing thus. Indeed most theorists have addressed this issue from various perspectives.


25. William J. Metcalf 'A Classification of Alternative Lifestyle Groups' ANZJS, Vol. 20, No.1, 1984. Metcalf lists four tests: 1. That all participants must be subsumed by the classifica-
tions. 2. Must be based on real distinctions as seen by the social actors themselves. 3. Must use categories recognisable to the social actors and acceptable to them. 4. Must have heuristic value. From this perspective most communitarians would see community as a response to ostensible decline.


28. Budd, op.cit., page 121.


31. Disengagement may be seen as the institutional face of normative desacrilization g.v. Weber calls this 'the disenchantment of the world' the process by which the benefits of technical science become self legitimating. See 'Science as a vocation' in Kornman A.T., Max Weber, Stanford Uni. Press, 1978, chapter 8.

32. Shin er, op.cit., page 212.

33. Marx had more than a few words to say on this subject.

34. Parsons in characteristic contradictory style was often optimistic and pessimistic on this point. Later theorists such as Herberg (1967) Kundten (1967) and Bellah (1965) op.cit., point to the emergence of an integrating civic religion.


37. Karl Marx and F. Engels On Religion (pp.41ff) in Selsam and Martel op.cit., page 227.


41. Engels Ludwig Feuerbach (1888) page 35. Engels goes on to roundly criticise not only socialist activists such as Louis Blanc but also Feuerbach himself who suggested such a transformation.

"If Feuerbach wishes to establish a true religion upon the basis of an essentially materialist conception of nature, that is the same as regarding modern chemistry as true alchemy." Selsam and Martel, op.cit., page 232.


43. Budd, op.cit., page 143.

44. For example, a Zoologist referred to the work of Professor Sir Alister Hardy of Oxford University's Religious Experience Unit, who has been arguing in zoological circles, that Darwinism is not ideologically equivalent to religion. Nor should religious experience be ignored, as ultimately all knowledge is experiential, and thus religion is a valid area for scientific enquiry. Bruce Wilson quotes Professor Brown of the Astronomy Dept. of Sydney University (Can God Survive in Australia? page 17) on the mystery of creation and so forth.

45. The major thrust of this magazine is creation science and the scientific and empirical difficulties of evolutionary theory.

46. From my readings it would seem that a major concern of the 1920 Boyle lecture series was the rebuttal of incursions into Christian faith and practice, e.g.

"On the one hand, thoughtful Christians have come to realise that many biblical narratives, which conflict with the results of natural science are no part of the essential Christian belief, while, on the other hand, a much more accurate notion of the function and limitations of the scientific method have been reached."


47. Noel Preston, Christian Communities in Australia. A report of the Continuing Education Commission of the Uniting Church in Victoria, November 1982. It must be pointed out that Preston had no intention of producing more than an annotated directory.

48. Last Days Ministries is an international newsletter of the Christian Intentional Community of the same name situated in Lindale Texas. It publishes revivalist, charismatic and apocalyptic articles with a decided 'end times' emphasis.

Young people have been to a Catholic School, have received or imbibed a basic Religiosity, and believe in God. Yet we cannot in many cases carry it through. They don't seem to find the Church what their Catholic School has helped them to look for and desire.

Of course our young people are confused - it's because of the world they are living in. They are forced to make their own personal journey of faith. In all this confusion they have to find God, they want God, they are looking for God and you can't simply use authority to tell them where God is. They are confused by authority itself."

- Archbishop Clancy
Chapter Four begins the introduction and consideration of the research findings of the study with an examination of the historical, cultural and situational contexts of Australian Christian Community. It commences with a historical overview of the communal form in Australia and a brief look at the 1960's counter-cultural communities to establish a comparative baseline for differentiating the Christian form. Building on these antecedents it sketches the significant features of Christian community in the 1980's as a historical consequence. The chapter then explores the attributed cultural antecedents the communitarians bring with them as part of the baggage of community, before concluding with a situational analysis using Troeltsch's Church-Sect typology as a theoretical tool. The discussion ends with a brief consideration of community as Association.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE RISE OF AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Australia has a long communal history. Within a pioneering tradition the communal form has often been, of necessity, the best type of social organisation to develop new areas. From the beginning of the colony these unconscious communes were paralleled by the rapid expansion of the monastic orders which brought education and social services to stabilise many otherwise ephemeral settlements. The rise of the utopian ideology, socialist in outlook and communal in form, had such European prophets as Charles Fourier, St. Simon, Etienne Cabet and Robert Owen. Not to be outdone, in nineteenth century Australia, such diverse figures as Charles Cameron, leader of the Liberal Progressives and South Australian Premier, and William Lane Queensland communist, anarchist and labor organiser, proposed communal ventures to colonise the inland and 'cure' social ills such as unemployment.

Many of these utopian stirrings came together in the 1890's with the establishment of the Village Settlement Bill (S.A.) 1893. L.A. Kerr, in the first (unpublished) research on the communal movement in Australia (1), explored the establishment of communal settlements in South Australia and the political underpinnings that led to the passage of legislation to give effect to the first government communal initiative. In 1894 the first contingent of communal settlers travelled up the Murray River to establish settlements first at Lyrup and then Mt. Remarkable. Fueled by the Great Agricultural
Depression and the failure of the 'blocker' land settlement policy, this communal venture peaked at 10,000 participants in the late 1890's. Lack of capital, lack of agricultural expertise amongst the urban unemployed that comprised the bulk of the settlers, and most importantly, according to Kerr's study, the lack of a common regulatory purpose, led to the collapse of this venture.

However this movement left significant legacies. Many communal ventures gradually regulated themselves legally and a few exist today as loose farming co-operatives. The spread of the agricultural co-operatives up the Murray into New South Wales and Victoria brought about the various State Closer Settlement Acts that provided a legal basis for further communal ventures in times of economic hardship. Significantly it encouraged the spread of utopian or at least arcadian communal ideals amongst the labour movement. As yet there have been few studies of the utopian ideal in Australia (2).

The establishment of the Soldier settlements in the 1920's and the rural survival communes of the Great Depression mark two other significant experiences of the communal in Australia (3). Many rural communes of the late 1930's had a religious basis but little work has been done on the communal history of this period (4). However, the rising prosperity of the post war years gave little incentive to the establishment of the communal until the rise of the countercultural movement of the early 1960's - 1970's. Peter Cock has exhaustively researched and presented his finding of this period, which will not be repeated here (5). However, briefly this movement took three distinct forms. Firstly was the countercultural urban communities which saw their raison d'être as alternative social construction, a reformation of the existing social order and largely a social protest
against capitalism and its consequences. A second expression was the parallel development of communes that were either survivalist, or challenged by ecoimperatives to be more conserving of resources. A third strand of the communal movement was the rise of Urban Bourgeois communities, that sought alternatives within the existing social order to enhance personal development, economic advantage, or to restructure the family and its consequences. These communal movements continue to today in reasonably good health and various estimates suggest that up to 200,000 Australians are actively engaged in such ventures.

While the sixties communes were establishing themselves and gaining media attention as 'alternative realities', there was a much smaller stirring without Christian circles that took first steps towards Christian community. Pioneers such as the Bundeena Fellowship, Leo Ball in Melbourne and Rene Samuelson in Queensland, all became interested in the possibilities of Christian community in the Australian context. They were challenged by international Christian communities such as the Society of Brothers (6) and other groups that were living a First Century Christianity within a Twentieth Century context. As Rene Samuelson wrote...

'You ask me why we moved into community. Well this was partially my reading about the Hutterite communities and partly an interest in Lutheranism becoming more responsive to the Christian message. I had studied the South Australian experience of Lutheranism and co-operative farming in the Barossa Valley. I felt that these German migrants were well served by their Church and faith as they moved into a new country.

This seemed to suggest that we could do something similar in the 1950's to integrate newer migrants who had a similar faith but the disadvantage of not being particularly popular migrants. I hoped this would be a stimulus to a Church I loved but felt was quite moribund. ...Our community ... became a means to both ends.' (7)
These first efforts in the 1950's were responses to particular issues that engaged the cores of the various communal ventures. With Samuelson it was assimilating German and Austrian migrants into a largely hostile postwar society. The Bundeena Fellowship found the communal form an ideal vehicle for caring for ex-institutional inmates while other groups of this vintage had similar purposes that made the communal incidental rather than an end in itself. The degree of self consciousness was limited to a reactive feeling that the established Church had not grappled with their particular interests adequately. As such their communal efforts were essential parachurch or supplementary to the Church. While many, particularly those in evangelisation and direct ministry, were dissatisfied with the Church as an institution that met their own needs, this did not equate directly with any feelings of secularisation.

In New South Wales the Bundeena Fellowship, dating from the late 1940's has the title of longest surviving Christian Community. However, the significant rise, in a newer form, of community that saw itself as a consciousness, must start with the formation of the House of The New World. In 1970 a Baptist Minister gathered together a group of young Baptist and Churches of Christ 'Jesus People' at Ryde to engage in the Evangelisation of High School Students, conduct counselling courses and a residential programme aimed at equipping young Christian Adults with personal evangelisation skills. The House had a core group who lived in and ran the various programmes of the organisation.

At first the House saw itself as a parachurch organisation that aimed at evangelisation of the youth culture and as an 'alternative arm of the Church' in reaching out to the countercultural. From this perspective the House was necessarily 'countercultural' and hosted
several subcultural groups such as the 'God Squad' bikies group and the 'Christian Boardriders Group'-a loose collective of surfies. It was involved in the 'coffee-shop movement' and published a newsletter the Free Slave which had a distinctly countercultural flavour. This was aided by the internal programmes 'The School of the Prophets' and numerous 'Jesus Family Teach-Ins'. This was in some ways a veneer that enabled the House to evangelise the growing youth-culture and to 'Go Back' to the mainline denominations. This reflected the fundamentalist 'Baptist Consciousness' of the founders, who saw the House primarily as a vehicle of social enculturation to Christian norms and belief. ... 

'In the earlier days -and indeed for most of its history- the emphasis has been on encouraging people to go back into their Churches rather than opt out.' (8)

However the House found that it fitted a need within the youthculture and steadily attracted subcultural groups and young students from nearby Macquarie University who settled into households surrounding the House. This peaked in 1974 when there were approximately 22 households and 140 people residually associated with the House. The House had experienced from the outset a certain hostility from mainline Churches. This was partially because the House was vocal in asserting that the Church was middleclass and incapable of reaching radical youth or reacting to the problems they were protesting against...

'The Church was seen as middleclass and hence impotent to deal with the problems facing society. At this stage, however, the emphasis was more on changing the Church than going it alone.' (9)

and partially the result of its 'target group' not fitting easily into middleclass Christianity.
These factors combined to lead the House away from its close Church contacts and to a more autonomous existence as a Church in its own right. As its founder John Hirt stated ...

'... The Jesus People are not exactly forming themselves up into denominations, they are questioning the rules of the game, they are forming their own colonies. Their own communities, they are visiting and relating to local denominations and yet they don't belong to any one denomination... But there are two circles, a hard core group who are committed to each other in lifestyle and Worldview and there's another outer circle ... who worship in average middle class Churches but who are associated with and getting fuel and stimulus from hard core Jesus People.' (10)

This is a significant quote. There was a growing 'we consciousness' amongst Christian communitarians that they were embarking on a significant alternative to the established Churches. In the 1972-1974 period there arose many other communities of Christians, which saw themselves as alternative or countercultural or Youth related, in contrast to the established Churches. Such ventures included the House of Freedom in Brisbane in 1973, the Buttery at Bangalow in 1972, the Glebe Zoo at Glebe in 1972 and the House of Faith at Turramurra in 1974. These communities developed a sense of self consciousness that helped them survive the collapse of the House of the New World, and to grow as direct alternatives to the Church.

However at the same time there was a parallel growth of other communities composed of Christians that had 'worshiped in average middleclass churches but who were associated with and getting fuel and stimulus from these 'countercultural' communities.' These Christians were substantially different from others in earlier community ventures and were attracted from the growing charismatic and ecumenical movements. They were more conservative, older and essentially middle-class and had not only an exposure to the communal ventures of the
younger christians, but also the historical perspective of the wider international Anabaptist communal movement. The coincidence of the gradually increasing media awareness of the extent of countercultural experiments, particularly middleclass bourgeois alternatives; the experimentation of the younger more countercultural Christian communities; and the historical traditions of Christian communality, combined to produce a newer type of Christian community that rapidly outstripped the younger more countercultural version. Such communities as Redeemer Baptist and Emmanuel Covenant Community became archetypes of the Christian Communities of the eighties.

Between 1975 and 1985 there has been a gradual evolution towards a more conservative form of Christian community, but this evolution has not been necessarily unidirectional. Thus the present communities represent a broad range of community styles that vary from the Christian countercultural to the ultraconservative Closed Brethren variety. However, there has been a distinct overall shift towards a more conservative style. This shift has a number of features and these are discussed in considering Christian Community in the 1980's.
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN THE 1980's

As has been discussed in detail in the Introduction, one of the most significant features in distinguishing between the Christian and other communal forms is its essentially conservative orientation. Conservatism, seen at the start of the research project as an orientation to a supposedly 'golden age of faith and practice'; quickly took on other dimensions as the study proceeded. The researcher found that structural aspects of community life were as much a causal dynamic of the conservative shift in Christian community, as were the values and orientations of the social actors themselves. Detailed below are some of the factors that contributed to this conservative shift and their examination completes the historical overview by sketching some of the non-demographic features of community in the 1980's. However it is worth pointing out that while these aspects emerged from the research strategy, they were equally commonly acknowledged social mechanisms freely discussed by the communitarians themselves.

Perhaps the most significant factor in shifting Christian community away from the 'alternative' or 'countercultural' movement was the counterculturality of community as a lifestyle in the broadest sense. The rigors of a communal lifestyle were such as to divorce communitarians from mainstream society and in turn led to many community failures. In the case of Christian community this meant that a certain, more conservative type of community survived. To complete the picture of community these factors are discussed below.

Community, a non-mainstream lifestyle, involves a mutuality and sense of sharing that stands in direct contrast to the wider society's
commitment to individualism, competition and material acquisition. Privacy, a wider social virtue of high premium, is necessarily low in a community; as is personal freedom given the accountability of communal life. All of these factors militate against community being a lifestyle that would survive in mainstream society. The lifespan of communal ventures is extremely short; most last six to nine months. Studies of ex-communities illustrate the very real problems of community survival. In addition the poor capital base of most communities, the lack of suitable housing structures to promote mutuality without overcrowding, ensures that the survival rate worsens. These features combine to keep the turnover of communities high.

Again from the data and the assertions of the communitarians themselves, it seemed that for communities to resist these pressures they must have a strong commitment amongst the core members and a degree of sharing that often causes financial hardship. The values that sustain community life were in need of continual reinforcement, particularly from sources outside of the community. These factors combined to move community towards a more conservative base. The Christian countercultural communities were composed of younger adults many of whom were in a transition stage between the family and independent life (they were often students). Correspondingly their assets had not developed to the point where they were able to finance community ventures adequately. An important source of stability seemed to be the common ownership of communal property. The importance of communal property in this respect may be gauged by reading through the "connexions" sections of the alternative press.

Christian community has also become more conservative in part because it has selfselected. From those communities which...
material assets, are composed of older and more settled adults, who have much more to lose in adopting a communal lifestyle; such communities have a proportionally higher survival rate. The degree of planning and intentionality of purpose as well as the more adequate capital base, combine to give the type of community that survives a certain recognisable style. This has a mutually reinforcing aspect. Younger communities starting out look to these communities as models and are patterned by advice, and sometimes interchange of members, into similar styles.

Similarly the very purposiveness of the more conservative community would seem to ensure its continuance. The countercultural Christian communities were essentially communities that had protest as a large segment of their raison d'etre. This is a reaction against not an action towards. The survival of a community seemed in part the degree of other directedness or purposiveness that may act as a means of minimising internal conflict by directing the energies of the communitarians outwards. The degree of detailed specificity of purpose increases this survival mechanism. Thus communities that confine themselves to protest against generalities like 'the social order' may be less clear about their immediate goals because they cannot adequately operationalise their concerns in terms of attainable ends.

The decade also was one of economic downturn with high levels of unemployment and economic uncertainty. This had an element of conservatism built into it, with more people concerned with employment and career aspirations than strictly countercultural concerns.
This conservative shift may be seen in the absolute numbers of Christian communities of this type and also in the change within those communities that were once strictly countercultural. Many communities found that they were becoming more conservative as a reaction against the pressures of community life, particularly when the core of the community began to couple and start families. Thus the Think Pink Christian Commune, a short lived community in Sydney's inner west, eventually became very conservative in order to survive after a quite 'liberal and accepting beginning/happening'. The conservative shift of these communities also derived from their increasing sense of being a distinct social phenomenon in their own right. At earlier stages of historical development, Christian community was most identified with the secular, as the number of communities increased they could identify with and relate to each other in their own right.

Lastly this conservative shift was imported. The seventies brought with it an explosion of media interest in communities of all types. There was a degree of circularity built into this process. The more the press or researchers published about community, the more communitarians published about themselves in self defense. The communal movement is now more developed internationally with a linking community of communities network. The published material that was imported into Australia tended to reflect the Anabaptist heritage of community and the more established (conservative) communities. Similarly it was found as the research project continued that many communitarians who later formed communities had visited and brought with them material and ideas (and often people) from communities they had stayed in overseas. This was particularly the case with X Street one of the casestudies in Chapter Six.
This study is not alone in finding this type of communal activity conservative. William Metcalf in his *ANZJS* article 'A Classification of Alternative Lifestyle Groups' describes the essential features of Christian community. Whilst seemingly conflating Christian and non-Christian communal groups, he finds them:–

'Hierarchical and Authoritarian, high sexual inequality, politically to the right, traditional family structures, frequent interconnections with other groups, often difficult to join even if easy to research with a high communal ownership of property.' (11)

Together with Cock's work, Metcalf develops a picture of a conservative religious group by comparison to the other communal forms. Though there are areas of disagreement between Metcalf's findings and this study (12), it provides important confirmation of the essential differences between this form of community and others.

**A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

Before passing to a consideration of the structures this historical process of development entails, it is important to note that the communitarians are directly influenced by an Anabaptist cultural heritage that is a significant source of legitimation for Christian Communitarians. The Anabaptist tradition has a considerable communal history and the present day Christian communitarians, many from Anabaptist backgrounds, have adopted this tradition as a significant force in legitimating and directing their present activities. The influence of a Christian communal cultural heritage is thus as powerful a force in shaping the structures of community as are the circumstances of an immediate Australian history. Both combine to influence the form community takes in developing as a social process. Therefore this cultural heritage is briefly considered as it relates
to Australian Christian Community.

One quite distinctive feature that emerged from the study was the extensive awareness of the Anabaptist communal heritage throughout the range of denominational backgrounds comprising community. The process of ongoing legitimation benefits enormously from historical antecedents, especially when some direct lineal succession may be traced. Thus it was only somewhat surprising to hear a Catholic community comparing itself with the Moravian tradition of communal life rather than the more denominationally immediate monasticism of the Church. There seemed a curious reluctance to equate community with the monastic, even when the community was monastic in form, as was the case with the Mary Sisters and the De Borres. One communitarian summed up this reluctance...

'Religious live in houses with high walls locked away from the real world. I guess they want this sort of life but it is not realistic you know? The Church is gradually ripping the walls down and pulling them out into the cold ... and you can see just how world-denying they were by their efforts to crawl back inside ... Christian community hasn't any walls or at least shouldn't. We have to grapple or go down in a heap.'

(Transcripts)

The Anabaptist movement traces its roots to the 1525 Anabaptist Church of the Brethren founded in Zurich by the followers of the Swiss reformer Zwingli. In the following year they moved to Nikolsburg in Moravia to avoid persecution and established their first communal settlement. Dissension arose and divided the group into two strands which still continue. The main group, the radical elements characterised by communalism and pacifism, moved to Austerlitz. On the road the refugee Anabaptists established the form of community that persists to today...
'While camping in Bogenitz, the Brethren elected four of their group to assist their leader. The chosen four spread out a mantle and directed each member to place thereon all his worldly possessions. This sixteenth century roadside drama established a precedent for the Hutterite Branch of the Anabaptists: all their property is held in common to the present day.' (13)

The Hutterite Branch of this movement derive their name and traditions from forms instituted by Jacob Hutter, a leader of a Tyrolese Branch of the movement. Principally these traditions entail the abolition of private property and unlimited co-operation within the group; the goals of the group taking precedence over individual purposes. When branches of the group moved to the United States in 1874 they expressed their intentionality in their articles of incorporation as a religious organisation ...

'... promoting, engaging in and carrying on the Christian Religion, Christian worship and religious education and teachings according to our religious belief that all members should act together as one being, and have, hold, use, possess, and enjoy all things in common, we all being of one mind, heart and soul according to the word of God revealed to us.' (14)

The Hutterites continue today in direct descent from this group. Their communities, principally in the Americas, the United Kingdom and Western Europe continue these principles. Their faith is characterised by the elements of the wider Anabaptist traditions, a distributed leadership of elders; avoidance of ordained ministers; the communality of faith with each adult member being an ultimate source of revealed truth; Bible literalness and scriptural authority being paramount; pacifism; avoidance of oaths and secular governmental responsibilities; a rejection of the sacerdotalism of the elements of faith-eucharist, baptism and orders; and the institution of believer's baptism from whence they derive their appellation (rebaptisers).
These elements to greater and lesser extent characterise the Anabaptist movement worldwide. Two other strands of the movement have significance. The Mennonite tradition and the more direct Baptist denominational movements characterised as the 'believers churches'. The Mennonite groups, another important communal form derived from the teachings of Menno Simons, a Dutch reformation reformer who in 1536 left the Catholic priesthood to become an elder of the Melchorites (15). In the nineteenth century they combined with the Swiss Brethren, the conservative elements of the Zwingli movement led by Conrad Grebel, who remained after the Hutterite exodus. Elements of this Mennonite tradition moved to the American Colonies in 1683 and later differentiated into the four main communal expressions of the Anabaptist tradition - The Old Order Amish, the Hutterites, the General Conference Mennonites and the Mennonite Brethren.

A wider expression of the Anabaptist Movement non-communally is the Brethren-Baptist denominational spectrum. Practicing the broad principles of non-conformity, these Churches shade off into the Protestant movement though often having a distinct aversion to the title 'Protestant'. Within Australian Christian communities the incidence of communitarians who have denominational roots within the Anabaptist traditions is quite marked. After the Catholic communitarians who come to community from within the charismatic movement, communitarians that derive from Baptist, Independent Baptist, Brethren, Churches of Christ or smaller Churches; number approximately 60 percent of the remainder. They are also inordinately over represented amongst the eldership of community. This illustrates both the cultural heritage of the Anabaptist Communal tradition as
well as the relative freedom enjoyed by these denominations in directing their own actions without benefit of clergy.

This brief history illustrates the elements of a communal movement that dates in direct succession from the sixteenth century. Though the Anabaptist communal movement has a limited history in Australia, there is a consciousness on the part of the denominational Anabaptists that they have a rich international cultural heritage in this direction. The step to community approximates the ideals of the original Anabaptists who formed community as a means of expressing their particular form of Christianity after the persecutions from the Orthodox and Protestant Churches of the sixteenth century. They hoped to encourage the similarity of purposes that bound the original communicants together in a hostile world and to regain a consciousness of the essential differences that characterised this 'third force' of Christianity.

This search for consciousness expresses itself in many ways. The currency of this tradition is wider than the traditional heirs of the position. The shrinkage of the Christian base of society, as well as an absolute decline in numbers, encourages the recognition of the similarities between Christian traditions and hence the adoption of previously non-traditional forms of Christian expression becomes more likely. Thus a Catholic community invited Churches of Christ elders to address the community on the common elements of the Christian communal heritage. Many communities were researching the Anabaptist movements (16) to directly glean pointers for a present day model of communal direction and purpose as well as an ongoing source of legitimacy. At another ecumenical conference, a communitarian hotly argued the authenticity of the Christian communal with a
skeptic church communicant citing 'The Moravians, Old Order River Brethren and Hahndorfians' as valid examples of mainstream Christian construction!

A STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Chapter Five outlines the basic structures and assumed functions of community as a form, as well as proposing several ideal types to explicate an essentially descriptive demographic work. However to bed that discussion firmly within its antecedents and to aid understanding this final section considers various aspects of structure. Structure within this context is taken to mean both the form of community as well as the aims, ostensible or otherwise that underlie them. In considering structure this section bridges between historical and cultural antecedents and the social forms that result. Community is as much a structure built of past experiences as it is of present and future intentions.

Perhaps the most noticeable differential characteristic is the degree of intentionality of these communities. This took two forms, a specific in order to purpose that is operationalised into targets and the high internal structure, that allows these goals to be achieved. Cock, Metcalf, Rigby, Skolnick, Abrams and McCulloch and others have all commented on the degree to which purpose characterises the religious community and the degree to which all other considerations are subordinate to these purposes. Christian Community is thus essentially other directed. Community is formed for the purpose of achieving an end that is aimed at the wider society. Whilst it is true that the individual communitarians form community from past because motives (and this is the main thrust of this
investigation); it is equally true that these communities are often extremely self denying in the pursuit of their ostensible purposes. As Abrams and McCulloch point out...

'In religious communes ... it always seemed to be understood that in the last resort communality was subordinate to the interests of faith ... and ... many of the religious communities we visited make helping others the test of Faith to such an extent that their religion often seems to depend on their relationships.' (17)

The purposive community and particularly the Christian ones have the communal as a means to an end and often this means is seen as less desirable than some other alternative not yet attainable. Thus many Christian communitarians felt that community was an artificial social structure pursued for a purpose as the 'best of all possible worst structures'! Again theorists have commented that religious communities are less interested in seeing the communal as a valid social outcome, than in promoting an environment where specific purposes may be achieved ...

"Communities aren't the way the Church should be but a way they might become something different. I hope that my parishoners would see community therefore as the vehicle to godliness rather than godliness itself. In the final instance, community is just one other way of achieving our purposes, the evangelisation of Christ's Kingdom." (Transcripts)

Christian community seemed quite self denying. As noted above in Abrams quote, often the test of faith was the extent of put-outness that the communitarian would endure to facilitate the purposes of the community. The suffering servanthood of the communal faith often equaled acceptance and adoption into the core and its purposes. The second aspect of this intentionality was the degree of internal structure this self denial permitted. Christian Community existed for some intention as discussed in Chapter Five. These differing
purposes reflect the structures of sacrifice required by each community. Some required an approximation of the three monastic vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, others some rigorous spiritual regimen, all involved considerable financial commitment. Therefore the structures, at a surface level, existed for someone else's benefit before the communitarian.

To maintain this purposiveness, commitment and structure, often communities seemed quite authoritarian. Interestingly this authoritarianness resided less with leadership and more with the core of community and it was often quite evident that the community as a whole had a well articulated code of social practices, in which all members of the community practice explicit social control over each other. Thus a larger community studied had an elaborate internal checking scheme where all core members had a 'shepherding function', that involved spying on each other to avoid lapses into 'ungodliness'. Another community operated on the common slogan 'we take you out of the world, to take the world out of you, so you can be in the world, not of it'; as a justification for rigid relationship codes. Another large Catholic community had a person whose function could only be described as community moral watchdog. The larger the community the more authoritarian the rule, yet all communities had a strong controlling element with often quite explicit sanctions against 'offenders'.

This authoritarianness was not so much a spiritual, as a social mechanism. In only the larger fundamentalist communities were there any actions that approached 'thought control'. Indeed most communities showed quite high degrees of doctrinal flexibility,
partially ecumenicism and partially the essentially cognitive privatisation of the individual communitarians. However most communities realised their modelling potential and insisted on explicit social conformity to avoid censure from 'the world', (particularly in sexual relationships) and also to further the community purpose by conformity. Most communitarians felt their efforts were under constant critical scrutiny and as such internal dissension should be minimised by conformity.

This highlights yet another aspect of the essential conservativism of Christian community, that of hierarchy. Communitarians felt they lived in a hierarchical relationship to each other, the Church, the spiritual guardians of the faith, to the secular world and most importantly to God. This located them in specific contexts and led to a subordination of individual interest to the communal whole. Community was a means of locating oneself within a set of religious aspirations that put all other interests before one's own, at least in theory. The individual communitarian felt he should be subordinate to others but was paradoxically in community as he felt he had been failed by his leaders. The individual thus saw community as a means of potentially restoring the necessary aspects of the Christian hierarchy (18).

Communitarians, like Cock's bourgeois communities, were essentially located within the existing social structures of the larger society. They sought to adapt rather than change the world around them and to gain some relative advantage from the communal form. Most communities were relatively happy with the level of material progress of western industrial society, but were unhappy with its social consequences:-
secularisation, ecological degradation, the weakening of the family and a complexity of other perceived disadvantages. They sought to restore and support existing social structures rather than be alternative to them.

Thus most communities were middleclass and displayed all of the bourgeois tendencies outlined in Cock's study. They were supportive of the government and politically to the right of the ideological divide. They often involved themselves in conservative groups that were seeking the restoration of social controls such as the supression of homosexuality, pornography and abortion. They encouraged and supported broad initiatives that challenged the directions of society and preferred alternatives based in the past. In several communities there was support for A.B. Santamaria, The League of Rights and other notable conservative positions.

Communities were affluent. They were capital conserving and based on the economics of the family, were able to obtain considerable financial advantage from communal purchasing. Most communities encouraged home ownership and the steady accumulation of assets. Though most communities were at pains to engage the rhetoric of the simple lifestyle and most communities were financially stressed by their many activities, they never the less enjoyed an affluent lifestyle within the limits of the community purpose. One community visited had a conservatively estimated 2.5 million dollars worth of property assets. Another community was preoccupied with the relative merits of a $2,500 home computer system verses an equivalent amount of living room furniture. In this respect alone, the affluence of the Christian communities as against the secular was very notable. (19)
The individuals within these communities reflected the essential conservativism of the groups they formed. They came from typically working or lower middleclass families and were upwardly mobile. They valued education as a means of personal advancement and viewed the accepted goals of Middle Australia as something to be aimed for and achieved. They were thus essentially conformity oriented and by definition conformed to the existing social order and its authority relations. They were sexually conservative, monogamous and supported the family as the basic unit of society. They felt that their personal relationships should reflect biblical ideals and as a result sexual inequality was desired and approved. (20)

These notes illustrate the essentially conservative nature of Christian community in the Australian context, and contrast it with secular community. There emerges a picture of essentially bourgeois community with one important exception...

'Religious communities ... what distinguished them from both of the first two types (the bourgeois or counter-cultural) was their religious aspirations from which they derived their alternative existence. Religious communities derived their inspiration from largely outside the boundaries of existing individual or cultural realities.' (21)

This provides the first answer to the basic question of this research project, Why Community? Why should a conservative group of individuals committed to, and with a lot to gain from society as it exists, adopt a lifestyle at odds with both their cultural expectations and individual aspirations. The answer may lie with the overriding importance of their Christian beliefs in sustaining and ordering their social reality and the degree of comfort they experience living out these aspirations in secular society.
However why they choose community remains one further area of research that will have to be addressed outside of this theoretical statement. As the research proceeded many other outcomes arose that were functional equivalents to community for individuals with a similar history to the communitarians studied. The House Church movement and the Parachurch are two current examples of alternatives as was the Jesus Movement in the 1960's and 1970's (22). Whether these phenomena are equivalent desecularisation strategies awaits another paper (23). It would seem that similar individuals differed in outcomes as much from first opportunity as from any other factor. Equally not all communitarians chose to desecularise in the same way and another aspect of this study awaiting further research is the style differences in the cognitive shifts of the communitarians. Some desecularised by becoming more fundamentalist and others by increasing their overall levels of skepticism. However the process of the shift is evident across all individuals, within the limitations of ideal-typing.

**CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AS A SOCIAL FORM**

Inevitably one must grapple with the Christian communal form and its place in social theory. We consider the contributions of Troeltsch, in assessing an observation often made of Christian community - that it is essentially a sectarian response to institutional expressions of Christianity. Troeltsch's *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* has been a powerful influence amongst well read commentators on community and has led to comment amongst communitarians themselves (24). One Anabaptist writer on community, Art Gish, firmly locates the Christian communal within the Troeltschian view of sects as alternative Christian expressssions...
'The perspective from which we approach these questions (Christian community) comes out of the believers church, free church, Anabaptist tradition of Christianity, sometimes also called the gathered church, the radical church or sectarian Troeltsch Christianity.' (25)

Whether Christian community is, as Gish suggests, essentially sectarian, provides an interesting theoretical vehicle to conclude this chapter. Troeltsch's formulations are examined as they relate to Christian community to provide an insight into the social form of community. Owen Dent, quoting Troeltsch, sees the sect and the church as differing types of historical encapsulation of Christianity which ...

'Troeltsch insists... the early Church ... 'fluctuated a great deal between the sect and the Church-Type'... neither type developed out of the other but both had their origins in the Gospel and Primitive Church: 'The important point is this: that both types are a logical result of the Gospel and only conjointly do they exhaust the whole range of its sociological influence' ... For Troeltsch the sect type is not an offspring of the Church-type neither is (a church) a sect come of age.' (26)

Troeltsch further clarifies this position ...

'The word 'sect' however, does not mean that these movements are undeveloped expressions of the Church-type; it stands for an independent sociological type of Christian thought.' (27)

This view of sects posits a separation of the church and the sect that establishes each in its separate realm. This has immediately interesting features for this study. It demonstrates the importance of ideologically having a clear descent of each Christian form, to ensure historical legitimacy.

Communitarians are at pains to establish the lineal descent of the sectarian, or from this perspective, Anabaptist tradition; direct
from the early church (28). As indicated earlier the communitarians may thus make this transition from church to community with the same degree of comfort or difficulty that denominational switching entails. The sect is thus not an 'offspring' but a historical alternative.

However there is a divergent conceptualisation of Sectarianism which sees the Sect-Church polarity as more of a continuum that religious groups pass through in becoming established denominations. This is Niebuhr's position. Quoting Dent again ... (29)

'Niebuhr contributed two important ideas (to Troeltsch's position); that sects are essentially transitory organisations, and that there exists a continuum lying between the polar 'types' of 'sect' and 'church'. Contrary to Troeltsch's view he saw sects as splinter groups splitting off from churches when the latter failed to meet the needs of certain of their members.'

To Niebuhr these schismatic groups are inherently vulnerable to re-absorption into the parent bodies or modified over time into newer denominations.

'The sociological character of Sectarianism, however, is always modified in the course of time by the natural processes of birth and death, and on this change in structure changes in doctrine and ethics inevitably follow. By its very nature the sectarian type of organisation is valid for one Generation.' (30)

This point is discussed by Glasner in the secularisation debate context and has been discussed in more detail in Chapter Three of this study under the heading of Routinisation. For present purposes the position is taken that Christian community, if it is sectarian as discussed below, would conform to Niebuhr's position as being a reaction to the perceived deficits of the denominational
expressions of Christianity the communitarians derived from. As such the shift from church to community may possibly be a Niebuhr-like sectarian shift as well as a desecularisation process. This has important theoretical implications as it implies that sects are also desecularisation devices. Whether this is so is beyond the scope of this study. However it is clear that some writers would make this point at least by implication. For example Gish discusses the sect-cycle in his closing admonishment of those who following the Christian communal path, seek to renew the church. (31)

Whether a sect is in Troeltschian terms a separate identity with historical roots independant of the churches; or in Niebuhr's terms a transformation, there is a measure of agreement on what constitutes a sect. Discussing the typology established by Troeltsch will address whether community is a sect. Dent's condensation of this typology is used to consider the essential differences and similarities of the Christian communal to either end of the Church-Sect polarity (32). By this process of contrasting the three organisational types, an answer may be gained as to the sectarianness of community, as well as continuing to illustrate some distinctive features of community. This is an important process for if community is essentially sectarian then further discussion of community would need to encompass the large body of work that surrounds sects. The following discussion follows Dent's work. Italics indicate direct paraphrases.

The Religious Historical roots. The starting point is the Apostolic message of the Church and Christ as the Redeemer. This characterises the churches' historical roots. The sect is more interested in the
teaching and example of Jesus and the subjective work of the Apostles. Community is unequivocally sectarian in this aspect. The communities concentrate on the historical persona of Christ and the Apostles, as a direct exemplar for community action at an individual level. They see their historical roots firmly in the biblical, rather than apostolic, succession.

**Means of access to the Divine and Religious Truth.** Access through objective possession of the elements of faith, grace, tradition and sacraments characterises a church. The sect seeks truth through religious striving, subjective holiness and direct man-God contact. Rejection of the sacraments. The communities tend towards the Sect and in as much as they tend to reject sacerdotalism and stress the subjective person-god contact as a means of holiness. However the communities are constrained to the extent they still see themselves linked to the denominations from which they derive. This is particularly the case of sacramental denominations such as in the Catholic and Anglican communities.

**Eschatology** To the church the secular order is seen as a preparation for the supernatural aim of life. Sects refer directly to supernatural aim of life, biblical eschatology revived and a direct expectation of the end of the age. Communities again were a continuation of these sectarian aspects, being closer in general to the sect, than church, end. Most communities were conscious of community life as a better and more conscious preparation for personal eschatology.

**Source of Legitimacy** The churches appeal from tradition, objective possession of grace, the concrete holiness of the sacerdotal office,
Apostolic Succession and to a wider conception of the Body of Christ. The sects appeal to scripture, the primitive church and the ever new common performance of moral demands. In this aspect only the sacramental communities made even a pretense of a legitimacy external to the scriptures or the efforts of the communitarians. Indeed the intentional expression of the sectarian position of legitimacy, was the most striking characteristic of this communal form.

Nature of religious office. The church is ecclesiastical, based on tradition, Apostolic Succession and hierarchy. The sects had loose co-ordination based on individual religious service and ethical excellence. Again the communities in referring to tradition and in some cases even claiming Apostolic Succession, were decidedly sectarian.

Religious office holders. Priests or other ordained ministers as religious professionals dominate the church form. Sects have holders of whatever religious office as laymen without special religious training. Official spiritual guides and theologians are criticised. Communities were divided on this issue. Most communities were controlled by the laity whilst still having access to religious specialists, many of whom were outside of the community and often in the churches, again particularly in the more sacramental communities. The communitarians felt that the ministry as such was a difficult, even if not impossible task, and often divorced the task of spiritual guide from that of secular organiser. Most communitarians respected theologians and other religious professionals whilst not being sure if they were necessary. On this point community was quite ambivalent and it is a major issue throughout this discussion. Perhaps the most common position was to support rather than supplant the professional;
while still being unsure of their necessity.

**Individual spiritual progress.** Troeltsch sees the church as imparting grace through the objective sacraments. This is a questionable view of the church that communitarians are reacting against in the 1980's. Some of the churches the communitarians come from would be strictly non-sacramental. Troeltsch's sect position is the subjective realisation of grace with an emphasis on personal effort. Again communitarians are divided with the majority coming from Catholic (60 percent) backgrounds and hence feeling that grace is inherent in the taking of various sacraments. However there is a clear shift across all communitarians towards a more subjective appreciation of 'the gift of grace' rather than the attaining of it by formal observances. Thus we have the situation where a clear majority of communitarians were committed to the sacraments even if a majority of the churches they criticised were less sacramental than themselves. Again somewhat paradoxically they were more inclined to an individual path to spiritual attainment, despite their sacramental background.

**Asceticism.** Churches see Asceticism as an ideal to be attained and a high water mark of religious achievement. Connected chiefly with a suppression of the senses and engaged in for purposes of supererogation. Sects saw this as potentially attainable by all and consisting in individual piety and detachment from the world, practical austerity and a religious attitude towards life. Communities were not especially encouraging of asceticism while encouraging pragmatically certain aspects such as austerity and a purposive reconstruction of the communal life to achieve religious ends. They approximated the churches in viewing asceticism as an ideal whilst in practice going
closer to this ideal than the churches. However this was essentially an artifact of the 'in order to' motivations of the communal purpose than a strictly individual goal. All communities encouraged a 'whole of life' attitude to religion even when not particularly encouraging the ascetic part.

Universalism. Churches have a universalistic desire to cover the whole life of humanity and dominate the hearts of men. Sects renounce the idea of world domination and stress direct personal individualistic religious relations. Communities were emphatic that the churches should dominate the minds of men and that the Church was still the 'best bet' to achieve this end. However they realise that the church's attempts to achieve this end have become peripheral in a secular age and that their claims to still hold this aim are seen as rhetoric. Community is thus an attempt to create an individualistic environment in which a personal desecularisation may be achieved. However unlike the sectarian aim the communities still hope this will be a model of relevance to the wider church and hence society and hence potentially still lead to a domination of men's minds.

Attitude to enironing society. The churches are embedded in their secular contexts and compromise with the state and the secular order of the environment is accepted for the most part. The Church is an integral part of the existing order, utilises the state and co-operates with the ruling classes. The sect is essentially the reverse. The secular order is avoided or tested against the interests and standards of the group. Community goes in a completely different direction. Whilst recognising the secularity of the churches communities are trying to find a point of contact with the secular
that will reinforce the Christian view of the world and develop a
newer weltanschauung that will be appropriate to life in a secular
age. This implies an engagement with the secular world and an
attempt to work out a more reflexive Christian form.

Membership. In churches membership is ascribed. The individual is
born into the church. In the sect membership is voluntary. The
individual joins of his or her free will through a conscious process.
In this communities are sectarian like.

Relations amongst members. In churches membership is external and
institutionalised. The church is an objective organism. A sect is a
community in which each individual plays his part in a close fellowship
of love. Union is on the basis of personal intimacy. In this
community approximates the sectarian form.

Size of Membership. Churches are large collectivities approximating
or coextensive with their wider society. Sects are comparatively
small groups, as are communities.

Attitude to education. Church is the great educator of nations.
Sects rather gather small select groups for personal experience.
Sects also reject theology and spiritual guides. Communities are as
selective and small as sects but attempt, at least in principle, to
have a wider educational function. Indeed this is a major purpose of
community, 'modelling relevant desecularised Christianity' to the
churches. They are on the whole informed by the ongoing theological
context of the wider Christendom.
Conservatism-Radicalism. The churches are overwhelmingly conservative. Sects stress radical individualism of the Gospel and urge an utmost of personal achievement and radical fellowship of love. If conservatism is understood as conformity to the status quo the communities are betwixt and between these poles. They are less conservative than the church to the extent that they are small and informal and encourage change. However they are essentially more conservative than most sects in seeing privatisation and the individualisation this entails as an evil to be resisted. Unlike other expressions of Christianity, the Parachurch or Jesus Movements for example, community tends towards the conservative stressing conformity via mutuality and the deprivatisation of individual belief. Ultimately community would rather be within than without the churches.

Class consciousness. Churches are dependent on the upper classes, utilise the state and are associated with the ruling classes. Sects are essentially working or oppressed class conscious and indifferent to the ends of the ruling classes. Communities are composed of upwardly mobile conformity-to-authority oriented individuals that seek to rejuvenate the existing order by re-enculturating it within the Christian ethos. As such they are oriented towards the ruling structures (which provides another striking contrast between religious and non-religious community).

While it is possible to take exception to some of Troeltsch's conceptualisations of the church pole of the continuum particularly; this is a valuable summary of the essences of both ends of the continuum. Later theorists have argued inclusions and deletions and the overall debate has not advanced much from the mid-nineteen
This typology has been used for two reasons, to illustrate the features of community as they correspond to either end of the polarity and to act as a referent to the wider body of theory that surrounds the sectarian debate. It can be seen that community has many of the features of the sectarian, whilst having distinctly differing characteristics also. In part this is the diversity expected of any comparison to an ideal-type and partially to the real internal diversity of community types and purposes.

However it also points to substantial differences from the polarity as portrayed. Community is neither sect nor church and indeed may be another form of Christian expression which seeks to engage the authority and universality potentials of the church by approximating the closeness and immediacy of the sect. It is the degree of outward intentionality of the communal form that acts as the chief divide between the community and sect. As discussed in the following chapters this intentionality has been seen as the process of coming to terms with the world that gradually shifts a group along the continuum towards churchness. Most theorists see this as an essentially sect to church direction and many see this as evidence of routinisation secularisation. The implication that this shift equals secularisation is as dubious as the argument that sects have any distinctive features that are of essence more 'religious' or 'godly', than the churches. Perhaps it is this realisation that leads to community intentionally seeking to combine those aspects of both that give the most favourable outcome within the present social context.

COMMUNITY OR ASSOCIATION?

It may be argued that community is sectarian in its concentration on
the individual and subjective organicity, and associational in its intentionality. What then is community?

As Glasner has pointed out perhaps the most overworked distinction in the sociology of religion is that which distinguishes a secular from a religious reality (34). The historical difficulties of specifying 'the religious' have always been a major difficulty of any work that makes this distinction, not the least Glasner's work. However it has been almost traditional to regard the process of secularisation as an inevitable shift from the religious to the secular. Perhaps however there is a form of secularisation that was a shift from the religious to the religious. This is an extension of the primary insight of those phenomenological theorists after Schutz and in particular, Thomas Luckmann's Invisible Religion. A contemporary transformation of 'the religious' or the personal/experiential component of religious practice. Community may well be a transformation of the church from a gesellschaft to a gemeinschaft structure to achieve this end.

Tonnies in introducing the distinction between community and association, continues the polarity and inevitability of secularisation being linked with the increasing rationality of society, under the underpinning logics of Urbanisation, Industrialisation and Modernisation. The movement from a natural will to contractual necessity, parallels Durkheim's shift from mechanical to organic solidarity (35). Within this context a Christian communal expression may be seen as a cognitive response to cognitive secularisation; the response to a privatised view of religion in the world. Perhaps then this response is a conscious desire to return to a gemeinschaft religious expression in which 'the religious' is grounded in feelings of mutuality, harmony
and communality. The success or otherwise of community is thus the extent to which the community can reverse this tendency towards increasing rationality.

However this view has a major difficulty. Community is of essence achieving a mutuality that overcomes the individual. However the communities that formed the basis of this study were, and are, extremely associational in their intentionality. Thus community is composed of individuals that attempt to deprivatise by forming an intentional association to achieve these ends. In its formation community becomes an expression of the very processes that it seeks to arrest and restructure. To be successful according to the purposes of community, it must transcend the very processes by which community is established. Within the context of community success becomes the extent to which the association form may be used to overcome associational consequences (36).

As Tonnies has pointed out the concept of Gesellschaft is essentially contractual and lasts as long as the purposes that underlie the contract are sustainable by the parties to the agreement. This involves a necessary element of continuing purposiveness that is external to the contractees and as such a degree of superordinating control that each subscribes to with due forethought. The individuality of association that sustains these purposes acts as a major barrier to true communality.

Thus community is an association that has the intentionality of transcending itself and becoming true community. Thus it is neither fish nor fowl, neither church nor sect, rather it is a tertium quid: A
distinctly different thing that combines the 'best elements' of the church, the sect, the association, the community. Werner Stark in his first appendix to his five volume work on the sociology of religion quotes Hermann Schmalenbach, a vociferous critic of Ferdinand Tonnies who suggests the sect is neither association or community but rather associations seeking the communal (37). By analogy it may be said that Christian community is equally an association in search of the communal. However it is maintained that no clearer indication of the strength of the desecularisation thesis here presented, could be given than the assertion that communitarians would attempt by associational means to return to the gemeinschaft of another age.

   
   
   
   
3. As well as the earlier migrations to the Barossa region of South Australian which were communal in form if not intent, see T. Herbert, The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia, 1838-1938, Lutheran Book Depot, Adelaide, 1938 (microfiche held University of Adelaide).

4. Most of these communal efforts were agrarian and only incidentally communal in form. Turner op cit. quotes from various sources the ethos of these communal ventures which had a strong 'city avoidance' aspect. See particularly page 332.
   
   See also Ralph Borsodi, Flight from the City - An Experiment in Creative Living on the Land, Araluen Melbourne, 1948.


6. The Society of Brothers, an Anabaptist communal group established by Arnold Eberhard in Sannerz, Germany in the 1920's has been instrumental in popularising the Anabaptist communal movement since the early sixties via their Press, The Plough Publishing House.
   
   See Arnold Eberhard, The Early Christians: After the Death of the Apostles, The Plough Publishing House, New York, 1970; a compilation of early Christian sources from AD 70-180 that makes the point that the early Church was community.

   See Arnold Eberhard, History of the Baptizers Movement, Plough Pub. N.Y., 1970; a historical appologia for the Anabaptist movement from AD 315. Influential in establishing a lineal descent from the early Acts Two, Church and other historical roots for these expressions. See also bibliography for a wider reading in this area.
7. Personal communication. Rene Samuelson established Lutheran communal groups as points of entry for Axis migrants from 1952 to 1956 until moving from Queensland to Victoria.


9. Ibid., page 23.


'A distinction between eastern and western religion while seen as significant, was not found to be so important as to require inclusion', quoted from page 78.

12. Principally, Metcalf sees Christian community as having strong leadership. This is disputed (see Appendix Number One).


15. The Melchiorities were a group, who derived their name from Melchior Hofman, an early Anabaptist leader. Menno left in 1537 with Obbe Philips and in 1540 assumed overall leadership and hence the name Mennonite.

16. For instance Noel Cannon, Pastoral elder of Redeemer Baptist Community has been researching and speaking on the Anabaptist tradition and its historical roots as they apply to community.


18. The communards were ambivalent on this point. They felt confused about the role that leaders should play in community and the relationships they should form, hierarchical or egalitarian. This is discussed further in the first appendix on the Leadership. They felt that scripture involved Headship (Ephesians 5 and 6) Leadership (Timothy) and distributed hierarchical roles.
(I Corinthians 12, particularly verses 27-31) but also felt that leadership as conceived in the churches was essentially unscriptural in as much as it contradicted the principles of mutual submission and suffering servanthood.

19. There is a degree of paradox involved here. Most communities afforded their members a very comfortable standard of living while maintaining high levels of economic 'sacrifice'. All communities stressed the economic benefits of community that made this possible while at the same time pointing out that only by sharing was this possible, and that a division of assets between members would net each less than an average family. However this was seen as an advantage. Most communities aimed at a comfortable lifestyle and saw no contradiction between this and frugality, as the sharing aspect was seen as being the essential frugality.

20. The sexual relations of community were conservative by design. Following the presumed prescriptions of the Pauline Epistles many communities refused any leadership or religious office to women members. In some communities this differentiation was institutionalised by the appointment of a 'Handmaid' or women's leader who 'took care of' women's matters for the male leadership.


23. It is maintained that they represent desecularisation alternatives. As this is beyond the scope of the study it awaits a follow up work.


28. This is Troeltsch's point as quoted but should be seen as a very strong belief on the part of the communitarians that they are the direct descendants of a Baptist Underground that has existed since Constantine. For instance David and Neta Jackson in Living Together in a World Falling Apart, Creation House Illinois, 1974, annotates another work in these terms...

'The study charts various church-communities even prior to the emergence of the Baptizers from their underground status. The Waldensian movement, for instance, simply calling itself 'Christian Brothers', is said to date from AD 315 when it split off from the official church which had prostituted itself to the state and the Emperor Constantine. The Hutterite communities, which began in the sixteenth century are still with us today... one can trace the repeated emergence of church-communities from the time of the Apostles until now. There are three notable peculiarities about these groups; they practiced community, insisted upon believer's baptism and were pacifist.' page 299.


31. Gish, op. cit., page 312. While most of Gish's work is Troeltschian in insisting on the historical separation of the 'believers Churches' he recognises the 'dangers of acculturation' in becoming 'worldly'.

32. Italicising indicates direct quotes from Dent, op. cit. pages 22-23.

33. This of course is the major point of Dent's article.


35. Ibid., page 56. The discussion here follows Glasner's points.
36. This is not a new contribution and has been discussed by Werner Stark in the concluding chapter of his five volume work, *The Sociology of Religion*, Routledge Kegan Paul, London, 1972 - titled 'The Age of Association and its Secular Civilization'. In this chapter and the first appendix 'The Culture of the Sect', Stark details the many difficulties such a transformation must face.

37. Ibid., page 428.
'It is not the things in themselves which trouble us but the opinions we have about these things.'

Epictetus
CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF COMMUNITY LIFE

This chapter describes the form of Christian Intentional community life in New South Wales on a number of demographic variables, numbers, location, age, socioeconomic status; as well as giving a brief structural and functional overview of major typings. As a first work in the area this chapter descriptively explores the nature of Christian Community to establish typologies for further research.
AN ANNOTATED LIST OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN N.S.W.

Here follows a list of communities studied and/or visited in the course of the research project. They are a representative sample of the range of communities in New South Wales. The annotation is accurate to the date the communities were last contacted. Given the instability of the Christian Communal movement this list is now dated. Where a community has folded this is indicated. To protect the privacy of communitarians who were willing to contribute to the research project but less willing to be exposed to public scrutiny, some communities are designated as merely X Street, R Street etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Type and Form</th>
<th>Links</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development.</td>
<td>Community Christian Cooliaah.</td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner city work with youth. Evangelisation</td>
<td>Non-denominational Welfare (cluster)</td>
<td>Inner city work with ex institutional. Evangelisation</td>
<td>Inner city work with ex institutional. Evangelisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large cluster Church community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inner city work with ex institutional. Evangelisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Community (folded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Related</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Type and Form</td>
<td>Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Folding</td>
<td>Grow from church manse based youth households.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Folding</td>
<td>Involvement in youthwork refuge movement.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Communities Network.</td>
<td>Large community part of the related dispossessed. Ministry of reconciliation of inner city.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Type and Form</th>
<th>Links</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Folding</td>
<td>Grow from church manse based youth households.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Folding</td>
<td>Involvement in youthwork refuge movement.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Communities Network.</td>
<td>Large community part of the related dispossessed. Ministry of reconciliation of inner city.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Type and Form</td>
<td>Denominational Links</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one house, (community folded) Housechurch type community with six members</td>
<td>Church Community</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Auburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined purpose, (community folded) collapsed after one year of trying to reduced scale. Community folded since restarted on much larger youth group based community.</td>
<td>Church (households)</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated to Intercessory Prayer: Recycled Catholic organisation. Community</td>
<td>(Institutional)</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Kogarah Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kingsgrove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goulburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>House of Prayer St. Joseph's</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

149
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Type and Form</th>
<th>Links</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>STRATHFIELD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House church type community of five members.</td>
<td>Church community</td>
<td>Anabaptist</td>
<td>'R, STREET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach in community living.</td>
<td>(Single household)</td>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation of the Malabar Parish Community.</td>
<td>(Single household)</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>PHILIP BAy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>network. Charismatic Renewal, evangelisation.</td>
<td>(Households)</td>
<td>Ecumenical</td>
<td>CAMPBELL TOWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of the related Christian communities.</td>
<td>Parish Related</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>NEW ISRAEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arts and crafts. (Community Folded)</td>
<td>(Households)</td>
<td>Mixed Welfare</td>
<td>MANLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work, community development, coffee shop, activities.</td>
<td>(Households)</td>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>MIDDLE EARTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>(Community Folded)</td>
<td>MARY Wombi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monastic Female Community.</td>
<td>Farm household</td>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td>MARY SISTERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of the International Evangelical</td>
<td>Intercessory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Type and Form</td>
<td>Links</td>
<td>Denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support of Christian aid projects.</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Community Brethren</td>
<td>CAMPERAY X' STREET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelisation, Welfare, Youthwork.</td>
<td>Church community</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>GODAN BAY - GOLDEN BEACH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster in the upper north coast area.</td>
<td>Multiple clusters</td>
<td>Assemblies of TRUE VINE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest New South Wales community, multiple</td>
<td>Church community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to be, alternative, (community folded)</td>
<td>Church community</td>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>ANANDAAL COMMUNE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large family, Catholic, Community collapsed after</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>CHRISTIAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community influenced by alternatives network,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelisation.</td>
<td>Cluster community</td>
<td></td>
<td>PINK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links, School, Community businesses,</td>
<td>Church community</td>
<td></td>
<td>CASTLE HILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large active community with International</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BAPTIST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>REDEemer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF COMMUNITY LIFE

This chapter attempts a demographic analysis of Christian Intentional Community in New South Wales. Such a task is not easy given the many attempts in the international literature that have stratified communities on structural or functional lines according to ostensible purposes. However as has been discussed in the preceding chapters the meanings that draw people to community may be substantially different from the purposes that they bring to their community building. The intentionality of the community venture may have a social or group *in-order-to* meaning that is future orientated to ostensible purposes; that may possibly have little to do with the individual *because* motives that drew each communitarian to community. Indeed Christian communitarians unlike their secular counterparts, view community *purpose* as an essentially outward activity aimed at target groups rather than an activity undertaken for their own benefit. Thus classification according to intentionality or ostensible purpose may present only a limited though valuable slice of the data.

It may be argued that there are as many community forms as there are communities. Indeed any classification system may be seen as an unnecessary ossification of the field under study. However this chapter attempts to classify community and communitarians on a number of demographic variables and proposes several ideal-types to clarify the diversity of this social form. It does so in the knowledge that such a classification is at best arbitrary and partial, particularly at the level of because motives.
There exists no definitive survey of community membership in Australia and this remains a rich area for further research. As discussed earlier, differing definitions of community lead to various estimates that reflect the classification system of the theorist, and the real difficulties of questionnaire survey methods. Thus the paucity of research confuses rather than edifies and it is not unusual to have such diverse estimates as that of Cock, who without specifying his quantitative methods, guessed that:

"Australia now has about 600 alternative communities. ... Overall those who were, are, or sought to be involved in alternative living efforts comprised at least 100,000 people. The number actually living in some kind of alternative community would be less than half this number." (1)

Harris, in a detailed survey of the planning implications of alternative lifestyles, with particular reference to Christian groups in South Australia, conducted a nationwide survey of all alternative communities and estimated that there were 1,200 people involved in approximately 80 communities! (2)

It should be noted that though both researchers surveyed in the same period, Cock, 1971 to 1975, and Harris, May 1974 to August 1975; Cock excluded student households and bourgeois religious communities, whilst Harris included both and had a much broader definition including groups such as Prisoners Aid and rehabilitation hostels. It seems that Cock's estimate of less than 50,000 is improbably high for that period, Harris' estimate is perhaps closer to the mark. Extrapolating from Harris' figures it would appear that a more likely estimate of total community populations in Australia at that
time would be in the order of 4,000 participants in 200 communities.

Of immediate interest to this study is Harris' detailed breakdown of Christian Intentional community numbers to 39% of that alternative population of which 17% were in N.S.W. It is estimated that in 1974 there were approximately 500 Christian communitarians in N.S.W. and using this somewhat speculative statistic it is possible to assume that there were approximately 1,400 Christian communitarians in 1974 in Australia.

In the ensuing decade various incomplete statistical indices have attempted to estimate the extent of Christian community. The Related Christian Communities network estimates 2,300 in the network and both the House of the Gentle Bunyip, Melbourne 1981 and Noel Preston in 1982 (3) attempted listings that are as yet incomplete. The following distribution of intentional communities in Australia was reached by asking informed correspondents in all states to estimate both absolute numbers of communitarians and communities in their immediate networks. As most communities that are geographically close relate informally (given both ecumenism and a shared lifestyle) it is hoped that this is a reasonably accurate approximation. It should be stressed that the following statistics are for all community occupants and does not differentiate between children and other dependents, committed membership and those 'being ministered to'. It is estimated that there are approximately 4,300 communitarians in Christian community as at November 1984 in the following breakup:-
As can be seen from the table the majority of the communities are located in capital cities on the eastern seaboard. Ninety percent of all communities are within, or adjacent to, cities with populations in excess of 10,000. This emphasises the essentially urban nature of this phenomenon, with membership largely drawn from urban backgrounds and occupations. Though both Cock and Metcalf (4) distinguish between urban and rural religious communities (following the trend of overseas theorists), this would seem to be a fine distinction in Australia where few rural Christian communities would have an agrarian base. The marginality of farming land and the high price for sufficient arable acreage in N.S.W., limit those communities that farm the land to a survivalist or economic ethos rather than a purely Christian one. Indeed Cornerstone Community at Bourke, a Brethren group who actively farm the land to support students, constantly find that farming conflicts with the more immediate task of breeding religiously self sufficient communitarians.
The absolute number of communitarians is even harder to estimate given the state of flux of community, emphasis on open house hospitality and a general vagueness as to what constitutes membership. Most, but not all communities, would include dependant children in their totals. This analysis often struck many instances of individuals with multiple membership of two or more communities. Again the difficulty of forming a firm estimate lies with the transitory nature of many small community groupings, who combine, split up, cease and migrate with a bewildering frequency. For example a small Related Christian Communities grouping on the outskirts of Perth felt the call to migrate to the 'motherhouse' Emmanuel Covenant Community in the Greater Brisbane area. Many of the small Sydney suburban house communities have formed and reformed such that a group studied in 1980 had reformed into six different locations and membership lineups. In 1984 upon re-enquiry, the original 1980 members had regrouped in the first location of the community!

Australia's largest community is the Emmanuel Covenant Community in the Greater Brisbane area with an extended membership in excess of 1,300. There are 12 groups with a membership in excess of 50. However, whilst an average estimate would be of approximately 35 members per group, a median figure would more accurately portray community with 5-6 adults per grouping. Thus while there are large communities, the typical grouping is an extended family form living in a large suburban house. This reflects both the lack of larger institutional settings that would encourage bigger groupings and a commitment to smaller cell groups where intimacy might be more easily engendered amongst members. Harris in 1976 estimated an average of between 7-9 persons per household unit regardless of the
organisational size and it would seem that there has been little change in size over the past decade.

Within N.S.W., the largest community was located on the far north coast within, and adjacent to, Byron Bay. True Vine Community in excess of 300 members, followed by two Sydney communities, Redeemer Baptist community at Castle Hill and the Bundeena Fellowship, Bundeena, both with approximately 120 members. Next the four Related Christian Communities grouping, with membership from 80-30 persons, a number of other non-related communities ranging from 40-7 members; with the balance being single household communities, averaging 5-6 adults throughout the greater Sydney Metropolitan area. Within the country districts, communities range from True Vine size down to The Ark at Milthorpe, which with two married couples, is arguably the smallest country community.

DENOMINATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

The majority of communitarians come from the Roman Catholic faith - approximately 60%. This reflects the several larger Catholic communities that have networked around Emmanuel Covenant Community into the still essentially Catholic Related Christian Communities Network (R.C.C.). There are also substantial numbers of Catholic communities outside of this network and also substantial proportions of Catholics in the other communities. However the interest shown by the R.C.C. network to struggling small communities has also incidentally increased the overall proportion of Catholics in the sample.
The second largest group reflects a common Anabaptist heritage as discussed in the preceding chapter. These communitarians derive from Brethren, Baptist and Church of Christ denominations as well as the many Independent Baptist Congregation. Many of these communities have networked around the Australian Network of Christian Communities. This network is co-extensive with the R.C.C. network with many communities having joint membership.

STRUCTURAL GROUPINGS

There are three distinct living patterns which reflect architecture, budget, and aspirations to community life, in fairly equal proportions. Most communities visited felt that the high cost of home ownership in N.S.W. was by far the biggest obstacle to community and combined with a traditional landlord prejudice against unrelated adults renting, served to severely limit the forms it could take. Most communities, actively recruiting additional members, reported turning away potential members on occasion because of limited space and overcrowding. Where possible, communities had sought out and recycled institutional settings to further the expansion of the group, and others were engaged in clustering to stimulate 'true community'.

FAMILY GROUPINGS

By far the most common form of community is the extended family grouping of 5-6 adults plus children, who live in one large house or two suburban houses close to each other. Often this type of community arises from a growing sense of awareness of student or parish-based congregation houses. Typically the bonds formed from an originally economic grouping become semi-institutionalised by the recognition
that community meets more than domestic needs. Thus the Beach St. Community at Kogarah, originally a married couple sharing their home with two other young adults to share expenses; grew to become a self aware intentional community effort that later had sufficient impact to promote other community activities in the local Baptist church. As a sense of commitment develops amongst members so does a sense of mission, sharing of finances, adoption of an increasingly open house policy, and other trappings of community. It is not unusual for such a community to jointly purchase a house as was the case when the Cobbitty Community expanded to two house-holds.

Within the household grouping the primary bond is that of an extended family, and members attempt to regulate the life of the community in a human relations model (5) as detailed by Clark. Thus leadership is informal and resides with those who have an economic interest in the households, mortgage or lease holders, or is distributed informally amongst the members on the basis of interest or expertise. Decision making is often the responsibility of the distributed group and often weekly 'at home' nights serve the dual purpose of reinforcing the bonds of community, via worship and the Eucharist, and act as plenary sessions for community management.

Often the family grouping is based on actual bonds of marriage or blood ties. The commonest pattern is for a married couple to open their home to others, often close friends previously, or to another married couple. The nuclear family bonds are extended to include the newcomers, often not without considerable friction in redefining the structures of the extended family. Often the intimacy of the communal bond leads to members marrying each other and this reinforces the family bonds of the grouping. Additionally the
Christian imperative to care for the aged or dependent members of the immediate extended family and the familial ties are further reinforced by the addition of parents and elderly and/or infirm relatives. Thus Cobbitty Community became in its final form, a married couple that originated the community, a further couple that had met and married within the community plus a dependent parent; and three other adults with two additional children. This familial flavouring from both natural and assumed family ties leads to a certain stability as it approximates the wider society's ideal of family bonds, but limits the openness by which other persons become assimilated into the community structures.

Of less stability are the more independent communities that are either single sex or composed of unrelated adults. Such communities because of their small size are unable to effectively distribute within themselves the necessary bureaucratic trappings or symbolism to institutionalise community meaning. Often such groupings are extremely vulnerable to outside pressure and are unable to legitimate themselves internally. Thus they are characterised by high levels of doubt and their attempts to stimulate extended family structures are doubly difficult given their distributed leadership. Those communities that do attain reasonable stability are those who develop strong ties with other larger communities or local churches and are able to draw a sense of legitimacy and direction for themselves externally. Partially in recognition of this need, there has come about the development of communities networks that seek to encourage and support attempts at community by demonstrating the validity of the life style, by social interchanges, pastoral oversight and head­ship, and often economic support. This is discussed further in Chapter Seven.
CLUSTER GROUPINGS

The larger community structures normally seek to geographically cluster and contain within a neighbourhood a variety of communal household arrangements. Predominantly the basic unit of such communities is the nuclear family with perhaps another relative or unrelated adult. As most, if not all, communities stress the family as a God given pattern, and protect the family unit, this is the preferred structure and is actively encouraged. Such communities reinforce the immediacy of communal life by seeking to buy houses that adjoin each other, and by encouraging economic interdependency. Thus Redeemer Baptist Community has bought a number of houses that abut each other, surrounding the original residence of one of the founders in Castle Hill, and have torn down fences, landscaped the common areas and built various other buildings across property boundaries. While this clustering is preferred, the mechanics of supply and demand in a market economy quickly inflates the value of adjoining property and larger communities have found themselves forced to cluster in groupings in an area rather than continue to expand in the one place.

Many other communities are composed of family groupings that have arisen through a common contact point rather than a geographic locality. The New Israel Covenant Community at Campbelltown, which had its genesis in a charismatic renewal group in a Catholic parish, is perhaps a typical example of a group whose members all live within a mile of each other in nuclear families and who seek to build community via a number of non-residential mechanisms. The community has a number of formal meetings each week, with community
worship on Sundays. They adopt an open house drop-in policy, and actively encourage economic dependency. Much community feeling generates from the family camps that are regularly held for recreation purposes and for strengthening the communal bond. However at the time of writing the New Israel Community were actively seeking to sell their homes and cluster, seeing this as the ultimate expression of their commitment as a community. Other communities such as the Kingsgrove Community, which was largely composed of young adults still economically dependent on their parents and living in the family homes, used similar non-residential mechanisms to stimulate a community feeling.

Cluster communities are not limited to family housing and in the larger groupings have a diversity of households. Often married couples will join with other couples to build a single house structure that would accommodate both families and provide space for other activities. At Redeemer Baptist two couples in their fifties sold their houses and built a larger structure that had two self contained flats, a large meeting hall for the community and offices for community businesses and school. This structure called Koinonia, served as the focal point of the community as well as a purely residential structure. This pattern has been duplicated elsewhere in a number of combinations. Another residential structure that has an almost traditional aspect, is the single sex boys and girls houses which act as temporary (and often rented) accommodation for those unmarried and 'serving their time' until marriage eventuates.

These larger communities closely follow the typology outlined by Metcalf (6). They are hierarchical and have a well developed
authoritarian leadership structure that is essentially male though often with a sexual dualism that has separate leadership for the women. Thus the Related Christian Communities groupings have 'Handmaids', who are responsible to the male leadership for the education and fellowship of the women members. Leadership is typically theologically well educated and often consists of ordained clergy who have left the confines of the parish structure, whilst still remaining in good standing within their denomination. Alternatively, leadership arises from alienated subordinate males who held minor office in traditional churches and were quickly removed from the mainstream by their inability to modify institutional structures. In either case leadership is assumed on non-democratic lines and is generally legitimated externally to the community. This point is discussed further in the Leadership Appendix.

Cluster communities are by far the most conservative of the three community groupings and with the conservatism that larger structures entail, often has quite daunting membership requirements both formal and informal. As these groups place a high value on home ownership, full acceptance is often functionally dependant on sufficient assets to match the community norm. Conversely, the often high communal ownership of property reinforces this division by diverting the often minimal assets that some members bring, into joint ownership projects, which do not give as much psychological bonding as one's own property. Whilst access to these communities is invariably quite easy, membership is often dependent on an apprenticeship that involves resocialisation to the theological and socially conservative norms of the community. For example within a larger Sydney community, in the interests of evangelisation most community aspirants are required
to complete a six months training course. The course which includes many of the aspects of a bible college curriculum, is also a vehicle for resocialising a diverse group of people into the quite affluent uppermiddle class milieu of the Fellowship. (Parenthetically this was graphically demonstrated one Sunday while visiting and encountering some decidedly working class ex-institutional inmates and former drug addicts dressed in three piece suits on the beach in mid-January. However, this community has a therapeutic programme with impressive results.)

**INSTITUTIONAL GROUPINGS**

By far the most diverse of the three community groupings, this form of community is associated, more often than not, with the Institutional Church or its agencies. They are typed institutional, not for their contact with the organised church, or their often organisational structure, but rather for their preference for recycling old institutional buildings. Often Catholic and often associated with monastic groupings they are structural (material) reflections of their environments. St. Joseph's House of Prayer, Kenmore, has - as an example, recycled the old Catholic orphanage at Goulburn, and the community has developed many structures that have a similarity with the monastic practices of the sisters that formerly inhabited the buildings. The House is devoted to intercessory prayer and has the formality of a liturgy that contrasts with the informality of its membership.

It is difficult to typify the institutional groupings on many dimensions as they are a diverse group and could be seen as any structural arrangement not subsumed under the two above groups.
However, a commonality amongst the differing forms of community is their adherence to a reason for existing, beyond themselves, and, as such, usually having less self awareness as a community, seeing the communal form as the best means to an end, rather than as an end in itself. Thus these communities are much more purpose oriented and outward than the other two groupings, with few concessions to a corporate life. This is discussed in some detail below.

THE PEOPLE

What typifies the average community member? Whilst individual communities may differ widely from each other, as a whole they represent a broad cross section of the wider Australian population. Unlike the countercultural communities which are typically young 18-35 years, single, affluent, highly educated and socially mobile (Cock, C.), the Christian communities consciously recruit a much wider age and socioeconomic mix.

Membership of community is, at least in theory, open to all who subscribe to the ideals of the particular grouping and most communities have as an article of faith that an evangelical outlook to the world should include all comers. However in practice communitarians divide themselves into five groupings and allocate differential status according to well worked out and quite articulated if unstated categories.

THE GOATS (Those seen as being in need)

"Well, some of us are the sheep Ba, Ba, but we're not entirely sheep. Some of us are goats bludging from community to community." (Transcripts)
In the Gospel of Matthew 25, vs 31-46, Jesus speaking of the end times, divides people into the sheep and the goats, figuratively separating those who are blessed and those who are on the way to perdition - the goats. Extending the analogy, this is a primary division. Those who form community as an intentional way of life and those who are targeted as the groups to be 'done unto'. The analogy extends even further to specifying why they are to be done unto:--

"I tell you this: anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me." (7)

One of the centrally unifying themes of most communities is their care and concern for those who are perceived as being in need of that care and concern. This concern expresses itself in a number of differing ways dependent on the perceived purposes of the community (which are discussed later in this chapter). However as all Christians are bound by the need to disciple all men ... the primary ostensible consideration is to those who are not yet Christian. All communities studied had some provision for evangelistic care and concern. Often this took the form of a residential option, many communities feeling that they had a continuing responsibility to those people they had proselytised. Indeed a major criticism of the institutional church was one-shot evangelisation, without committed follow through. Ideally then, most communities felt that the best option in the process of conversion and continuing discipling was to share their lives with the 'unsaved', 'unchurched', and often 'unrepentant', sinners.

Again following the guidance of Mathew 25, most communitarians felt
the need to 'do the two coats routine', or provide basic welfare care and assistance to those who were disadvantaged. Often this became the central concern of the community and groups such as the De Porres sisters actively identified with the poor and sought to provide hospitality and dignity to those homeless in the Sydney inner city. Most communities approached the 'needy' in a much more haphazard way, with a welfare effort to those who self referred, providing residential and other care as space and resources permitted.

Inevitably community attracted a wide variety of people whose primary reasons for community were not those of the intentional group. The data showed that by far the largest group were those who were genuinely attracted by the caring and evident compassion of the communitarians. Most of these people had experienced some significant psychological event in their lives that had estranged them from expected societal outcomes. The bulk were on some form of Social Security benefit and had become attracted by the obvious economic advantages of a communal lifestyle. Many had experienced the warmth of the communal bond and were attracted by the family orientation. A significant number of communitarians were single parents and the community often acted as a surrogate alternative parent. Often these communitarians were in community at the express wish of a court order. For whatever reason this group of non-intentional participants placed a major strain on the resources of communities and in some cases actually outnumbered the core members.

Those perceived as being in need were subject to a range of pressures intended to transform them. The most obvious transformation was that of belief and the structures of most communities were
such that this was a major and obvious division. Communities often restricted certain religious practices to believers and covenant members and in Brethren and other groupings, often excluded non-believers from fellowship meetings. Success for communitarians often was seen as 'being able to convert' the non-believer and often this far from subtle pressure found a reciprocal feeling of obligation to respond, or 'pay back' the community by believing.

Belief was not the only barrier that divided the 'goats' from the 'sheep'. Because of limited resources, these basically dependent people were asked to contribute to the communities by working at a variety of domestic and other tasks. A division was developed between those with skills, capital or jobs who worked outside of the communities and those without, who were expected to productively fill their days on the basis 'if they don't work don't feed them'. Even in communities where common ownership and common purse were group goals, there were obvious divisions between those with purpose who came to community to extend and support its intentionality and those existing in need without a direct intentional commitment. The expectation that personal worth was dependent on being productive was a major source of resentment to many people in this position and had led to several community closures. This has become an increasingly difficult problem. Communitarians who had brought capital and skills to the community and contributed above the average, felt put upon; those without skills and capital resented the subordinate position this inevitably produced.

In a limited number of cases there were 'professional' community participants who wandered from community to community until they had
outstayed their welcome. As most communities are related formally or informally and interchanges are common, the scope for an existence as a community hopper are limited. However one particularly famous lady was, at five of the communities visited a 'committed core member'.

**THE SHEEP (The committed intentional core)**

"I'm a woman and my being in community is recognising my needs as a woman."

"I need to feel that I'm under the authority of godly men. There aren't many in the Churches."

(Transcripts)

The committed core are those who subscribe to the ideals of the community without being in a leadership position. They are a broad age range, with many members past retirement. As communities encourage family relationships and protect the family unit, there is a much higher family membership than in secular communities. Approximately 60% of committed participants are single and the remainder in some form of marital arrangement (a significant proportion of communities limit the remarriage of divorcees). However this does not suggest that community is a singles phenomenon, but rather represents a sex imbalance towards females. Indeed in absolute terms females outnumber males significantly in community. Luckmann (8) as just one of many theorists has commented on the absolute numbers of women in the institutional church; and community is perhaps even more female than the average church. Thus the preponderance of single women aged 25-40 in the core, reflects both a national population imbalance and the much greater numbers of women than men actively engaged in religion. The overall median age of community members would peak at 25 and 45 years.
The range of socioeconomic status in Christian communities was significantly different to that found in countercultural communities. In the former the majority had completed their schooling at Intermediate/School Certificate level. Further education, strongly valued, was characterised by immediate vocational benefit: trades, secretarial training, short management courses and other inservice promotional schemes. Quite a sizeable proportion had attempted theological studies at Bible Colleges or schools-for-mission at a non-accredited level. A common theme with many was the experience of having been unable to gain admission to more rigorous theological courses through not having met entry requirements. This strengthened their appreciation of formal qualifications and though the core did not aspire personally to higher education, they had this expectation for their children. Indeed the core grouping were an upwardly mobile body whose membership was based on acquisition rather than education.

Occupationally the core groups again differed from their countercultural counterparts. Overall, Christian communities have much higher levels of economic dependency than the community generally, with often 80% of their overall membership on a social welfare benefit. However despite this similarity with their countercultural counterparts the Christian communitarians were drawn from a significantly different occupational strata. Breadwinners worked at jobs appropriate to their level of qualifications with a concentration in skilled blue collar, clerical and small business areas. Income levels differed widely from group to group depending on the economic arrangements of the community. Often the economic recession had limited the incomes of the core as occupationally they were a vulnerable group. Increasingly, many members were forming
community based businesses both to offset the economic effects of unemployment and to provide jobs. Some community groups practiced some measure of common purse, whilst practically all communities had some form of economic sharing and quite a few communities employed some of their members fulltime.

THE LAMBS (The uncommitted cryptocore)

"I'm not sure why I'm here. I hoped you wouldn't ask me that Jim. I'm not sure if Community is my thing or if you would accept me if you really knew me."

(Transcripts)

Unlike the 'goats' the uncommitted were not seen by the core or leadership as dependent. Rather they were institutionalised as 'seekers'. Considerably younger than the community average and composed of equal numbers of males and females, this group represented young adults, attracted to community from the institutional church. They were seeking an alternative to institutional church structure but were uncertain if they could sustain the level of commitment required to become part of the core of community. These young adults were tolerated and actively encouraged by the more committed communitarians. Australia has not yet generated a second generation of communitarians, born to community and committing themselves as adults (9), for this reason the core and leadership see the uncommitted from the churches as their logical successors. Another potent factor, the sense of mission communitarians feel to the institutional church, serves to legitimate the communitarians drive to recruit younger 'churched' adults. In any case there are quite sharp distinctions made between these younger adults and those seen as being in need.
The uncommitted adults were grappling with the psychosocial challenges of late adolescence and early adulthood and were seeking to establish independent vocational and intellectual identities outside of their homes and home churches. Most were grappling with the difficulties of practicing appropriate relevant Christianity in seemingly largely disengaged secular churches. They had, as a group, considered various resolutions of this identity problem including bible colleges and schools-for-mission, social welfare tertiary qualifications, teaching or missionary service. Often community was just another attractive alternative being explored. However most were ambivalent about committing themselves to community as the responsibilities of contractual or covenant commitment represented a submerging of their recently acquired and often tenuous identities into the group purpose. Many larger communities recognised this and sought to extend this period of searching by encouraging young adults to explore differing communal and non-communal options.

Noel Canon, Pastoral elder at Redeemer Baptist Community, a group with a rapidly emerging younger generation, spoke of the practice of older communities in the United Kingdom and the United States where members approaching adulthood are encouraged to educate themselves away from the community. His community had sent a group of younger members out for a six months tour of the communities in the United States and hoped to formalise a similar arrangement for people attracted from outside of the community.

Other communities however took the opposite view and sought to strengthen rather than question commitment by encouraging a variety of semiformal courses designed to build strong communitarians.
Cornerstone Community at Bourke represents an outstanding example of this approach as they see their purpose primarily to discipline younger churched adults into committed core communitarians who could establish evangelical communities in the N.S.W. countryside.

THE UNDERSHEPHERDS (The Developing Leadership)

"Testing the call of God's choices takes a while. That's why Undershepherds..."

(Transcripts)

The smallest group of communitarians are those aspiring to leadership. Caught in a twilight between the Sheep and the Shepherds they serve their time in a variety of pursuits that reflect their ambivalent status in their community groupings. Almost exclusively male they are found in the larger communities that have sufficient numbers to differentiate leadership functions. Preferred by a variety of processes they serve their apprenticeship as leaders of home fellowships, pastors, or occasionally as preachers. However they are quite distinctly different from the leadership group, coming from the ranks of the committed core and not having the educational or occupational prerequisites of the leadership.

THE SHEPHERDS (The Leadership)

"We recognise the call of God on men's lives in the gifts that set them apart... Though I'm not suggesting an ordained ministry, God calls some as leaders and others as apostles, teachers and you know, pastors."

(Brethren Community Leader)

Almost exclusively male or recognising their subordinate position as women, the shepherds follow a common path to community that includes
a substantial past commitment to leadership positions within the institutional church. These communitarians, given the short history of community in N.S.W., commonly have had a major involvement in the establishing of the communities they lead. However they owe their leadership position only partially to history but more so to the respect they enjoy from the committed core. The leadership of Christian community comes from a higher socioeconomic background than the core and seem to be partially recruited for their qualifications and theological experience. Indeed it seemed that often leadership held office because of the reverence from the rank and file to qualifications and the expectation that clergy substitutes had better be educated. This somewhat paradoxical position is discussed in Appendix One.

From the vantage point of continuing contacts with the countercultural movement it seemed that the leadership of Christian community shares much with the leadership of secular groupings. Articulate, well educated, from upper middleclass families, the leadership had often been exposed educationally to the ideals of community prior to their present community attempts. Often they had experience of communal life in student households or in secular communities or alternatively had held substantial positions in the institutional church. Often they had lived in another Christian Community before establishing their own.

Demographically the leadership was by far the most homogenous grouping within community. Though they may be divided into two basic types, the young sole leader and the middle aged leadership team, both were surprisingly similar on most significant variables. Again from a
continuing vantage point within both the Christian and Countercultural communities movement, there were obvious similarities of leadership style and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The formal leadership of most communities was overwhelmingly male. Where women were in leadership positions this was most commonly in a team where they were responsible for women's ministries. They rarely held outright leadership and then most often within the few all-female communities. The formal exclusion of women from leadership positions is justified by the conservative Christian principle of 'headship' in which women are forbidden to be in authority over men. However, informally women often exerted direct leadership, more commonly in the smaller consensus model communities. In many cases women had been instrumental in forming communities and maintained significant economic and administrative powers i.e. St. Joseph's House of Prayer, Hudson St. and the Mary Sisters. However even in those communities, there were recognisable male leaders who were deferred to, at least in principle, though these male leaders were often external to the community and equally often, titular leaders only.

The larger communities, those with more than fifteen members, had distributed leadership. This seemed to follow a pattern of one leader for every 10-15 members. The typical pattern was hierarchical with members organised into 'home fellowships' or 'prayer groups' with a leader or married couple on the first rung of leadership. In the communities with 15-40 members these leaders were usually 'elders' and part of the ultimate decision making group of the community. In larger communities they were an intermediate grouping and more
typically were Undershepherds often with specialist titles like Youthleader, Ladies Home Fellowship Organiser. However in most communities smaller numbers gave this group full leadership functions.

At the next level were the direct eldership. This group, often theologically trained generally comfortably middle aged and exclusively male, distributed leadership functions amongst themselves on the basis of perceived gifts (10). Thus some were pastors, others teachers, evangelists, prophets, administrators etc. Interestingly though most communities did not subscribe to non-conformist opposition to an ordained ministry, in practice they approximated the non-conformist ideal of a mutually sustaining and self regulating ministry group. Thus though an appreciable proportion of the eldership were ordained, they subordinated this typically controlling function, to the group as a whole. In some communities the leadership team had a central figure who was formally or informally designated pastor or minister or leader. In practice this was either a reflection of that person being paid to perform a leadership function; being recognised as such and licensed by the State to perform marriages; or being designated by the community to provide a connection with and at the same time protection from society. This designation however is usually more apparent than real and most leadership teams have a genuinely distributed leadership.

In some communities the designated leader is outside of the formal community structure. Particularly in those communities from sacramental denominations or those that see themselves as being an adjunct of an established church, an ordained minister or his representative is seen as the person to whom the community is
subordinate. In practice this arrangement is very problematic as most of the non-sacramental functions of community are retained within the structures. This point is discussed in detail in the Leadership Appendix.

Age and social background strongly characterise the leadership team. Most elders were at least 40 and it would seem that age is at least a partial qualification for leadership. This again reflects the biblical concern that leaders should be seasoned men of sound mind (11). Most leaders either came from comfortable middleclass backgrounds or had successfully achieved uppermiddleclass status for a considerable part of their working lives. Social status seemed to be very important not only to the leadership team but also to the committed core. Often, despite an avowed conviction that all men were equal in God's sight, it was clearly the case that success in secular life reflected itself in fitness for leadership positions. Amongst the leadership studied over a five year period there were:-

- 12 teachers - 7 at subject master level or above, 5 University or C.A.E. academics, 4 senior public servants, 10 ministers (most with post-graduate degrees), one physicist, 2 architects, 4 doctors, 3 surveyors or consulting engineers and 5 other professionals, and 2 extremely successful businessmen; as against 3 clerical and 4 trades background. These figures from studies in New South Wales, to a lesser extent other States and the United Kingdom - reflect the concentration in leadership of occupationally successful, usually university educated, men.

THE YOUNGER SOLE LEADER. Smaller communities do not have the luxury of leadership teams and usually the founding members have an
informal leader amongst them who owes his position to strong motivation, which is reflected in his initiative in being the leader in establishing the community and also having a substantial financial equity in the community. Leadership is thus a reflection of the initiator's drive to found a community. Unlike the countercultural communities which often were started after a group had tested compatibility and commitment the Christian communities more typically started from the vision or call of an individual. The leader of the smaller community was then typically a strong personality who was able to attract and inspire a committed core. More typically men, though often women, these leaders are similar to the leadership teams on most variables though often much younger, 25-35, and hence less established in their secular careers. Perhaps occupationally they differed in containing larger numbers with training in the welfare and helping professions and many had experience of counter-cultural community life.

PURPOSES

"This community serves the parish, I serve the community but that's not why I'm here."

(Transcripts)

At the beginning of this chapter the point was made that the ostensible purposes of community are often very different from the reasons of individual community members for joining. Partially from an idealised commitment to serve others and deny self and partially because the individual Christian communitarian has less say than his counter-cultural counterpart forming community, there is a distinct dichotomy between purposes and meanings. Meanings, perceived and apparent are considered in Chapter Eight which concentrates on the
worldview of the communitarians. The remainder of this chapter will
detail descriptively the perceived purposes for which community has
been established. It does so uncritically, reserving comment for the
detailed case study analysis of two communities in Chapter 6 which
illustrate these differing purposes.

There are four distinct purposes for community which are by no means
mutually exclusive:-

Welfare related communities that actively undertake social
welfare assistance and encourage needy or 'at risk' people who often
reside within the community;

Parish related communities that exist within established
parish structures and seek to serve by example and action the wider
local congregation;

Church communities - communities that have adopted all of the
functions of a denominational church whilst strongly emphasising the
communality of life.

Intercessory communities - these communities smallest in
number, exist to take a social responsibility through action and
intercessory prayer.

WELFARE COMMUNITIES. Christianity is a welfare religion. The
highest imperative is to 'love the Lord with all your heart', to which
is added the injunction 'and your neighbour as yourself' (12). The
strength of the social welfare imperative of Christianity is not to
be underestimated within the community movement.
"If our communities are Christian, there is no question how we will respond to the needs of the world. We will be servant communities. The basin and towel will be the sign of our relationship to the world.

Someone has suggested that we are not called to be Good Samaritans, but innkeepers. Jesus is the Good Samaritan who brings people to us. God is then seeking innkeepers."

(Art Gish, Living in Christian Community) (13)

All communities are then by definition welfare communities. However some communities specifically feel the need to residentially address the Christian imperative to 'love your brother'. These communities feel dissatisfied with the response of the institutional church to the welfare imperative. They feel that single purpose caring agencies or even larger multifaceted St. Vincent de Paul approaches miss the mark. Christians are called to share lives in caring. They (often vehemently) assert that the institutional dualism of worshipping churches, but separate caring agencies, has the primary function of protecting middleclass church members from the very people they are commanded to serve. Perhaps the most widely quoted scripture in the welfare communities visited was Isaiah 58:7:

"Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and to bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"

(14)

These communitarians were extremely critical of 'one shot' evangelisation programmes that sought conversion of the soul but ignored the needs of the person. They felt that the surest way to proselytise the unchurched was by an active life commitment to the needy. It must be stressed that welfare communities saw their primary task in reaching out to all persons and saw welfare in the broadest of terms. Whilst they attempted, in many differing ways to meet these needs,
the commonality amongst all welfare communities was their attempt to integrate and reverse the split between faith and active, caring concern.

Art Gish quoted above, identifies six problems that face the church when attempting to serve others (15). Four of these are particularly the concern of welfare communities. Firstly the risk of do-goodism; second, the church's historical record of paternalism; third, the offering of conditional aid with strings attached and fourth, a very real danger of bandaiding rather than addressing real needs. Though Gish addresses these concerns to communitarians, the communities in New South Wales that attempted active welfare programmes, saw these first four points as specific to local congregations. They had converted a healthy involvement in the world to a concern held at a financial arms length via specialist agencies, which then had difficulty avoiding these faults. Community thus became an attempt to not only meet the very real needs of the disadvantaged, but also a critical comment on the church's inability to meet the welfare imperative. A comment often made within these groups suggests that one reason for existence is to embarrass the local churches into a more caring and committed role.

All communities felt the welfare imperative strongly and often it was only lack of resources that limited many from a more active commitment to this area. Those groups that specifically founded themselves as caring communities attracted more committed core members with backgrounds in the welfare areas and were less concerned with being a rounded fellowship in their own right. Thus they drew their member-
ship from wider denominational backgrounds and often were committed to a variety of local fellowships. Little attempt was made to meet the totality of the needs of the membership and these communities were much more reliant on other bodies to help in times of stress.

In absolute numbers, welfare communities would represent less than one sixth of the N.S.W. communities and would be the least stable, with a median lifespan of less than nine months. Those communities that survived beyond the inevitable burnout phase, had strong outside input from other communities or churches and had the resources to provide a retreat for membership in times of need.

PARISH RELATED COMMUNITIES. The most numerous and most ambiguous of Christian communities, these groups exist within the structures of the denominational churches. Often membership of the community is contingent on communicant status in the local church and is in all cases subordinate to the institutional structures of the parish. These communities seek to serve the parish by providing a range of services that meet perceived deficits in the local congregation. Inevitably this implies that the community structure and the communityarians themselves are better placed or more capable of providing a service than the local structures. This leads to an uneasy relationship between community and congregation, that is intensified by the dualism that comes into existence when not all of the local congregation are members of the community. These communities have by far the most arduous task of any community structure as they are often unwanted and viewed with suspicion (and the researcher is unaware of any local congregation having requested the formation of such communities).
Why then parish related communities? This type of community is more common amongst those denominations that have a sacramental or orthodox view of faith. Thus most of the Catholic and Anglican communities are parish related of necessity. An integral part of worship and a common life together is bound to sacramental obligations and to the parish structure in which they occur. Thus within the Catholic confession, the mass is obligatory, sacramental and tied to a consecrated priestly function. As yet the mainstream denominations do not have ministers specifically called to community (16) and as such these groups are necessarily parish based. Therefore the more sacramental the practice of faith is, the more tied to a parish the community becomes. The non-conforming and non-sacramental churches do not have this obligatory tie to the parish and most church communities discussed below come from these traditions.

However this very real constraint on community freedom is often seen as a virtue. The majority of communitarians within parish churches feel that church fragmentation is increasingly questionable given the marginality of the institutional church to society. They see ecumenism as a viable strengthening of the church’s ability to resist secularisation and argue that community away from the mainstream churches is a weakening of an already eroded position. Thus the major purpose of the parish related community is to strengthen 'that which remains'. Community for the sake of community is seen as egocentric and ultimately against the whole 'Body of Christ' i.e. the totality of Christian believers.

Most of the parish related communities have well developed purposes or a sense of mission towards the local congregation. By far the
commonest thread, particularly in Catholic communities, was the stressing of a 'conversion experience' and commitment to Christ. Communitarians explained that too often in the orthodox churches one became socialised into belief without ever 'encountering Christ'. The evangelical Christian tradition stresses the need to arrive at a definite point of commitment to the person of Christ and to experience as a result the 'gifts of grace' - a sense of personal assurance of salvation, a growing intimacy with the person of Christ and the 'equipping of the Holy Spirit'. Sociologically as well as theologically, this evangelical route to faith is alien to Catholicism, which stresses a sacramental route based on obedience to the church's forms: Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, The Eucharist etc. Thus the Catholic communitarians were quite 'Protestant' in their criticisms of Catholicism as a socialising experience that had no reality in the experience of Christ. For further discussion see 'Ecumenism' Chapter Eight. Thus their sense of mission, particularly evident in the Kingsgrove community, was firstly to ensure that the parish they served, experienced this personal salvation experience and 'didn't just drift through Catholicism rather than Christianity'.
this 'real experience of Christ'. Many of the leaders had formed community as a response to the marginality of the Pentecost experience in the parish setting and had first gathered together groups of like minded individuals into 'Renewal prayer groups' and the like. These groups quickly gained social cohesion by experiencing rejection from the parish structures and developed a special sense of self from their attempts to proselytise which quickly led to an 'us and them' stance. Thus the boundaries of the group were reinforced and defined by the marginality of the members. The special intimacy of this outside group within the parish attracted those other alienated or marginal persons, who found a warmth and sense of camaraderie often difficult to find in a large congregation.

Most of these parish related communities had their genesis in other parish related structures, evolving gradually into community as they felt a growing sense of identity, and as the Christian community concept became publicised and legitimated internationally. In the case of the New Israel Community, a Charismatic renewal group gradually evolved to a covenant commitment and a large motivator to community was their involvement in organising and running 'New Life in the Spirit' programmes (18). These programmes aimed at 'renewing via a Pentecost experience', served both as a sense of mission to the parish and also as a vehicle of recruitment into the group. Community in part then became a means of further disciplining these 'new converts'.

**CHURCH COMMUNITIES.** Paradoxically these communities are the largest in membership and the smallest in numbers in N.S.W. Like the Intercessory Communities that follow, they are clear in purpose and
Their structures are designed to one end, to demonstrate to a largely bureaucratic and secular Church, the 'fullness that Christ's Body might be on earth' (19). Thus they see themselves as complete local congregations and have all of the functions of an institutional church as well as many of the structures. They have State recognised clergy substitutes, often meeting halls, Sunday School programmes, youth groups, bible studies and often employ fulltime parish workers. Their worship meetings are open to the public, are evangelical and often they have a dual membership of committed communitarians and often equally committed adherents who are part of the fellowship but not of the community. These communities are active and engaged in the local areas with special projects that approximate the more active churches. Thus Redeemer Baptist runs a School and Bundeena fellowship a residential programme for mission. On Sundays these groups 'pass the plate'. What then distinguishes them from other church groups?

A sense of being a community. These groups, largely drawn from non-conforming traditions, assert that the local church is the highest form of the Body of Christ and reject all hierarchies, see The Church as Community and Community as Church. Church then does not become a secular disengaged bureaucratic structure but rather a full blown Tonnien Gemeinschaft, in which the members of the church are meshed and their lives reflect 'appropriate Christianity'. Like their welfare community counterparts they see the authentic role of the Church to be an engaged local structure, that not only preaches Christianity but actively demonstrates it by the neighbourhhoodness of their actions. They are extremely critical of the organised Church seeing it as 'lights under a bushel' rather than as 'lights on
a hill' (20). Thus it is important for these groups to present a picture of the Church as a Community of Faith, responsive to the 'leadings of the Spirit' with structures that reflect Christian imperatives rather than the secular world.

"The struggle between structure based on faithfulness to the leading of the Holy Spirit and structure based on rationality and competence is still with us. Today in a world of bureaucratic relationships, the church has tended to follow the corporate, bureaucratic model and become a secular democratic..."

(Art Gish) (21)

It is important to note that the Church Communities relate primarily to the whole Church structure in making their point. They seek to pattern an appropriate model to the whole institutional church and see their purpose in a global rather than individual sense, as with the welfare communities, or a parish sense, as with the parish related communities. For this reason they tend to be visible, vocal, and content to be as conservative or radical, as suits this purpose.

INTERCESSORY COMMUNITIES. Second smallest in numbers after the Church communities these groups seek to serve humanity in a number of ways that are not strictly welfare related. They include such diverse groups as The Mary Sisters at Theresa Park, an evangelical group of sisters who follow the three monastic vows and seek to reconcile the world through prayer and a printing press. The House of Prayer whose name reflects its primary purpose, as well as hospitality and retreat functions. The Ark at Milthorpe which acts as a retreat centre for burning out community groups. Y.W.A.M. at Goulburn and Cornerstone at Bourke dedicated to producing strongly evangelical youth through the pursuit of the scriptures and the rigours of community. Or transitory groups such as Brook St. which
pursue social action and simplicity of lifestyles as a rebuke to complacent middleclass churches.

Though these groups are diverse they are not just the "others", who may not be neatly typed, but rather share an orientation to care for a loosely defined others by purposes that may be defined as 'supportive of humanity' or 'caring for the human condition'. They seek to influence humanity by indirect means. Thus they provide four basic functions:- Some communities seek to influence the course of world events or local problems by intercessory prayer. Christians are commanded to 'pray without ceasing'. Such communities feel this is a much neglected area of Christian responsibility and seek to redress the balance. Other Christians obey the imperative to care for the brotherhood by actively supporting the church structures or other community groups by providing time out hospitality or retreat centres. These groups are small and often would not necessarily view themselves as 'full' communities seeing themselves as adjuncts or extensions of other communities. Another purpose is to 'equip the saints for the building up of the body of Christ'. To provide community conditions for the purposes of strengthening Christians for service in other areas in which community structures are both the preferred model and the most practical i.e. the mission field, innerurban ministry, pastoral support or even further community building. Thus these communities seek to influence the world indirectly through those people passing through the community. Lastly the communities for social responsibility, which are similar to the praying communities, though they prefer direct means to intercede on behalf of humanity. Thus the now defunct House of the New World staged demonstrations and a rally at Parliament House.
Canberra or Brook St. Communitarians who chained themselves to Cathedral railings in support of their issue of the moment.

SUMMARY

This chapter has sought to descriptively type community on a number of demographic variables in order to provide a largely demographic account of Christian Intentional Community in N.S.W. As this is to elucidate the purposes of community as well as to provide a systematic account of the movement, it is necessarily brief and would well benefit from the work of other researchers (22). Chapter Six concludes the demographic analysis of community by investigating two communities in detail.

What then typifies Christian Community? The forms of community life are so diverse as to defy systematic description. However there are patterns and discernable similarities across most communities. Firstly, they are intentional, formed for a purpose rather than organic growths. They generally consist of unrelated adults who come together to approximate larger family structures. They seek to encourage spiritual development and growth amongst members who come from similar denominational backgrounds and most members of the smaller communities knew each other prior to entering community life. All communities have a sense of mission and exist for purposes beyond themselves. Perhaps their most prominent characteristic is that their members have been active far beyond the norm in the congregations they derive from.

How useful are typologies? As one communitarian said 'there are as many reasons for communities as hairs on a dog'. Any classification
system should develop some criteria for ordering observations and building theory, as well as facilitating further research. This Chapter has attempted to construct two ideal type classificatory structures. First communities may be simply typed structurally and divided into three models based on living arrangements. Secondly, members of communities may be classified into four distinct types of communitarian:— The leaders and the subgroup the undershepherds, the committed core, the undecided cryptocore and the welfare recipients. These two classifications are essentially descriptive/analytical tools.

This chapter also indicated that communities may be typed according to their ostensible purposes. The introduction distinguished between the purposes that communitarians bring to community and the meanings that hold them there. As discussed in the previous chapters it is possible to construct another typology that explicates this dichotomy. Thus it distinguishes between in order to motivations which may be seen as the ostensible purposes communitarians construct their communities to serve: The welfare, church, parish-related and intercessory communities. Also, and intimately connected, may be distinguished the because or psychosocial motivations that provide the personal relevances that underlay the former motivations. This distinction is explored in Chapters Seven and Eight which look at these motivations in detail. This typology is essentially reflexive and has a refluence to the communitarians themselves; explanation being grounded in the meanings the social actors themselves place on their actions.
However explanation may be posited at another level. The interpretive or sociological. As has been maintained this construction or explanation must ultimately have a similar grounding in the meanings the observer brings to his field of study. As the participant observer is necessarily subjective, particularly when addressing a phenomenon of which he was once an uncritical part, this meaning must be based in grounded comparisons and the tests of grounded theory construction. As Mannheim has suggested, it is possible to see things 'from the inside' or 'from the outside' as a 'reflection of the societal process in which the thinker is inevitably meshed. In this perspective, knowledge is conceived as existentially determined.' (23) With these precautions in mind another typology is proposed: the continuum of privatisation.

It has been suggested that many communitarians view the success or otherwise of their community building efforts as the extent to which they are successful in desecularising their world. Adopting Luckmann's cognitive segmentation as a theoretical vehicle for analysing community, it is possible to broaden his understanding of privatisation into a continuum that underlies these efforts. As Mason points out in his excellent assessment of Luckmann's work (24) the persistence of a particularly Christian symbolism points to a continuing transformation of old cultural forms of religious meaning into new expressions. Thus communitarians in seeking to desecularise their worldview may well be attempting to transform themselves from essentially privatised individuals into a new collectivity that has ...
'... an alteration in the cognitive style of the religious finite province of meaning, and ... not a sufficient change to transform its character and function, but a shift of nuance and perhaps even a restriction of scope.' (25)

Thus communitarians may be attempting to find new legitimation for their existing social constructions of reality. To the extent they develop a newer religious worldview that at once addresses the many institutional and normative challenges that lead to cognitive segmentation, and is collective rather than individual; they have as a group, deprivatised. To the extent that they have managed to demonstrate the wider applicability of this newer transformation, they have desecularised themselves. Thus may be postulated a continuum of privatisation which is at one pole individual, privatised and disengaged and at the other collective and engaged.

We turn now to a consideration of two very different communities that whilst still essentially privatised, have opposing views on the best way to desecularise.
NOTES CHAPTER FIVE

1. Peter Cock Alternative Australia, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1979. Cock's work is the definitive study of secular communities in Australia. Based on his 1977 PhD. thesis it briefly discusses religious communities, recognising that they differ substantially enough to warrant a separate work, which has not yet been forthcoming. In this study a certain familiarity with his work has been assumed to avoid continuing cross comparisons. In this chapter when a comparison is made to the 'countercultural communities' it rests principally on Cock's works.

2. Trevor E. Harris The Urban and Regional Planning Implications of Alternative Lifestyles Involving Community Living, with particular reference to Christian groups in South Australia, unpublished Master of Town Planning Thesis University of Adelaide, 1976. These figures were abstracted from Harris' appendices detailing his attempts at mapping communities in Australia. Appendix J and K, pp. 237-242. They should not be taken as more than an approximation.

3. Noel Preston Christian Communities in Australia: A Study in the development of Christian Communities within the Australian Context 1982. A report to the Commission for Continuing Education of the Uniting Church Victoria, 1982. In 1981 The House of the Gentle Bunyip circulated a questionnaire to all known communities in an attempt to map this rapidly growing phenomenon. Noel Preston's report contains most of the information gained from that listing. The Related Christian Communities Network has an extensive list of communities within their network as does the Australian Network of Christian Communities. However these lists are cursory at best. Fusion, as recently as December 1984, have taken up the challenge to produce an exhaustive list.


5. David Clark Basic Communities Towards an Alternative Society SPCK, London, 1977, Chapter Seven. Clark details four models or styles of community. The Traditional, the Charismatic, the Institutional and the Human Relations models. He suggests that the human relations or consensus model most graphically illustrates most communities.


9. Again and again, here and overseas it was stated that 'the test of community was ultimately whether or not it would hold significant numbers of second generation communitarians'. This, for the majority, would finally determine if community was a solid social movement or essentially an epiphenomenon - 'steam above the factory' in Huxley's terms. The longest lived community studied dates from the late 1940's and most from the mid 1970's. Few show any signs yet of significant retention rates.

10. 1 Corinthians Ch. 12, particularly Verse 28, is used as the legitimating basis for this functional division.

11. 1 Timothy Ch. 3, Verses 1-7. Whilst not specifically suggesting that leaders should be in their forties, the tests ensure a certain age relatedness. The elders are specifically enjoined not to prefer relatively new converts or to act too hastily in laying on of hands i.e. confirming leadership. This functionally separates the eldership team from the undershepherds as well as legitimates their position.


16. Uniting Church in Australia N.S.W. Synod called the researcher to the United Theological College for a community based ministry, at the same time Noel Preston was recommending a settlement be established for a Victorian U.C.A. Minister to be appointed to the community movement. At present there are two candidates for the Ministry of the Word in community, in training. It would seem that the Uniting Church is responding to the need by developing a specific ministry in this area. Most other denominations have ministers actively involved in an essentially reflexive way.

17. This was a source of considerable tension in the Related Christian Communities network where they were often up against a church hierarchy that objected to both the 'evangelical' nature of the movement as well as the specifically Charismatic element that underlaid it. In one case at least this led to a curate being summarily transferred.

18. Based broadly on a refleshing of the dry bones of the established church they were based on Ezekiel Chapters 36 and 37. Having heard that most R.C.C. groups were using this programme in 1982 the researcher went through the programme (in part) at New Israel Community. The programme is prophetic; Israel, the institutional church, is to be renewed for His Name's sake; Chapter 36 and the dry bones being refleshed, the 'gifts of the spirit' (Chapter 37). This programme would seem to act as much as a recruitment mechanism, as a means of influencing their parish structures.

19. I.e. desecularised.

20. So much so that most communities gave qualified support to the Festival of Light, feeling that even if this ultraconservative organisation did not completely represent them, it at least acted as a corrective to the relatively apathetic churches.


22. At present two other researchers are looking in detail at the Related Christian Communities Network. Leo Ball of the House of the Gentle Bunyip is preparing a book on the demographic aspects of community. Australian Christian Communities, a newly emerging network, hope to develop a regular bulletin.


25. Mason op.cit. page 244 ff.
'Human beings awake to consciousness to find themselves in Chaos. They then try to impose order on this chaos in order to make life endurable... We cannot verify whether the chart that we make of the mysterious universe corresponds to elusive reality; but in order to live we have to make this chart, realising it is an act of faith which is also an act of self preservation.'

Arnold Toynbee
'When a man is dutifully deceiving himself he will often admit the truth of his metaphors.'

William Empson
CHAPTER SIX CASE STUDIES

This chapter discusses two small communities that represent poles of a continuum of engaged-disengaged privatisation. X Street a six member house-church community is examined as a model of disengaged privatised isolation. Cobbitty Community, a two household welfare community, is examined as an example of engaged active modelling. Both communities are seen to be marginal from the churches and actively seeking to desecularise their members worldviews; though in essentially differing ways which highlight the poles of the continuum.

The case studies avoid detailed explanation of community structures, concentrating on the biographical and intentional motivations of individuals that comprise community. This illustrates the meanings of community as well as explices the desecularisation process discussed in detail in chapters seven and eight.
CHAPTER SIX
CASE STUDIES

This chapter examines two communities in detail. The conclusion to chapter five postulated a dimension or continuum of privatisation that stretches from a disengaged isolation to an engaged relevance seeking. The two communities presented as case studies illustrate the poles of this continuum. X Street a small single house Anabaptist community remains essentially private in practice and privatised in the individual beliefs that compose its members' views of Christianity, Cobbity community, whilst equally marginal to the established church, seeks to engage the churches and to model appropriate Christianity. The views of its members whilst still essentially privatised, are nevertheless seeking to become less private. The continuum in its essence then, is the extent to which the community seeks to transform both its members' lives as a desecularisation device, as well as desecularise the surrounding Christian confraternity. Both communities, though very similar in form and with members from similar backgrounds, differ substantially in the way they view the Body of Christ and the individual communitarian's responsibility to the wider community of faith.

X Street has been chosen as it is quintessentially the archetype of many small communities that avoid publicity, and exist solely for the benefit of their members. Perhaps fifty percent of Christian communities in New South Wales, would approximate the essential forms, though not the luxury, of X Street. They are hard to see, even harder to access and in many ways invisible to the wider body of the established church. Cobbity Community is both in form and function the opposite. Visible, it suffers the pangs of unrequited love, seeking to effect change in largely unresponsive established churches.
Our first case study looks at X Street, a small five to six member community in Sydney's northern suburbs. It demonstrates par excellence, a group that is highly isolated from established church structures with a high degree of internal privatisation. This community though linked with other groups on the lower north shore, values privacy and limits its accessibility to invited guests. Unlike most communities, it has learnt the high cost of being visible and has chosen a lower profile, both to the established church and local community. I met Andrew at the 1982 A.F.E.S. Conference on 'Community' and in conversation he outlined X Street's structure. This was a doubly fortuitous meeting as it eventually secured an invitation to a relatively inaccessible community and sorted out vague reports, of a small community, that had shifted many times. I spent considerable time discussing the community with each of its members, generally at other functions, and visited the house on six occasions. Though this is a relatively limited exposure to such an important community-type, it is discussed here as the most privatised of the twenty-three communities studies in this research. The six communitarians doubted the value of sociological enquiry, and I consider myself lucky to have spent as much time with the community as I have.

The Community History

Andrew, the community's informal organiser, shared a house with two other University of New South Wales students in 1978. One of the other students, Roger, has spent time in the United States and had visited several communities over a three month period. Roger's enthusiasm for community lifestyle gradually interested Andrew, who
visited the few existing communities in Sydney in 1978. In February 1979, when Andrew and Roger returned to their respective courses, they decided to share a house and attempt community. They found a three bedroom detached cottage in Kingsford and advertised in the counter-cultural press for other interested Christians to:–

'Share a house with two conservative sciences students who are endeavouring to seek the Lord Jesus Christ and his earthly kingdom.'

This was an unmitigated disaster as they were inundated by 'Jesus freaks looking for a home', 'Asian students needing accommodation' and 'trippers of every sort'. They shared the house with several possible communitarians only to find that their own haziness over community ideals and expectations 'stuffed around everyone who didn't understand that we didn't realise what we were on about'. At this point Andrew gradually adopted an administrative role as he asked the various enquirers to leave. Though he would resist the title leader, Andrew was instrumental in defining community purpose and direction:

"Both Roger and myself are not your typical commune members. We both went to University as mature age students. You know this attracted us to each other, early on, as we both came from straight backgrounds, in straight churches. I'd been working in industry and gave up a lot to risk University studies. Roger, the same I guess.

Well we made the mistake of advertising in the 'underground' as we aren't really that type, but I guess we didn't want to get people in to share the rent and I thought that only people in the communes' scene would be interested. Well we didn't advertise in the Church scene as we were both shatoff with the churches and we ended up with a lot of unsuitable people, who you know, were into drugs, protest, and other trips. I decided we needed to be a little more choosy."

(Transcripts)
Roger was instrumental in attracting Shelley a screenprinter, who had had contacts with the House of the New World but had been gently put off by the countercultural aspects of the House. She had tried to put down roots in other churches but as a 'reasonably shy person' was unable to 'crack the ingroups'. She met Roger at a BYF (Baptist Youth Fellowship) rally, was interested in their community experiment, was invited home, and 'just stayed'. She subsequently married Roger in 1982.

Shelley and Andrew spent six months attempting to draft a covenant to express the house's purpose. However, the three were unable to agree because 'anything written limited us'. They defined community as an 'Acts Two experiment with the Bible as our guide'. At this stage of their evolution personal ties were the contractual cement of the community. Roger explained that 'we didn't worry about most things that get communities down, as we didn't have a thing anyway. They shared all expenses and as Shelley had the sole income she 'tended to do the male and female bit too!'

In 1980 Roger graduated as an Industrial Chemist, Andrew was in his final year of Physics and Shelley was offered a job on the North Coast. This change in life circumstances 'almost ruined the community as we had to decide whether our common life was more important than our careers'. At this stage Vaughan joined the community. Vaughan, a mastermechanic taught in a local technical college and had met Roger as a student doing a few evening courses to supplement his university studies. Vaughan had been recently widowed and at 37 found himself totally lost. As Vaughan and Roger's friendship developed they found they had much in common, as both came from similar family and social backgrounds. As Vaughan's wife had died of cancer and he had few social contacts, he was isolated in his bereavement. Their friendship
became increasingly important and Vaughan visited the Kingsford house and often slept over on weekends. Both Andrew and Shelley felt that Vaughan would benefit from a closer contact with the community and asked him to join. Vaughan sold his house, paid his debts and the group looked for another house. As Andrew was in his honours year they decided to rent in the Randwick district and found a large house that was easilyconverted into a four bedroom home.

Vaughan's entry into the community changed the dynamics considerably. As he was in need of close companionship, neither Roger or Shelley felt they could move away and they experienced for the first time 'the welfare imperative'. As Roger said . . .

'I found I loved this person. He meant a lot to us all and suddenly the Bible came alive. I had never felt I had a gift until I met Vaughan and then I felt I could really be a friend. This opened my eyes to real Christian love and commitment. None of us could leave and none would want to.'

(Transcripts)

As Vaughan had sold up his previous life, to make a break with a painful past, he was committing himself to an existing community structure that to him seemed to have more structural and organisational reality than the other three communitarians felt really existed. Consequently the group suddenly found themselves 'much more of a community'. They had to systematise cooking and other domestic arrangements and Shelley was vocal in pointing out the need to 'share the shit work'. Vaughan wrote the first covenant, to express his commitment to the others and this was accepted as the basis of the community until 1983 . . .
We are called together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, to be his people and to express his love to each other. I pledge myself to be obedient to you my brothers and sisters. I pledge to love you, care for you and to put you first. Please help me to do these things well.

Signed .......................  

At this stage the group were evicted from their house at Randwick as the site was being redeveloped. They briefly rented at Kensington, and again shifted to Alexandria during 1980. In 1981 the community faced a decision as to their continuing purpose. After two years together, Shelley, Andrew and Roger were feeling they needed to justify their existence by having some purpose outside the house. This became 'our giddy phase'. Though none of the community were in any sense people orientated, they felt the welfare imperative acutely. In Alexandria Andrew said ... 'I saw real poverty for the first time in my life'. Roger particularly felt the need to be responsible to the wider local community and they explored ways of 'being relevant'. Gradually they took in people that were in need of immediate welfare assistance and provided an open house for the local Protestant Churches. Quickly they realised they were not equipped to give frontline welfare assistance and as Shelley said ... 

'We ended up a real dive. Our house was pretty grotty to start with but you should have seen it after twenty people decided to visit us. I couldn't cope and it interfered with Roger and my relationship. I guess we all realised we weren't coping and after a while just closed it all down.'

(Transcripts)

Andrew felt they were not equipped to be a welfare community and that the community must have a purpose external to itself to 'meaningfully relate to the world'. He suggested they involve themselves in various Christian concerns financially, so they were caring but not
overwhelmed . . . 'I realised we would have a relatively high income as a community and as we shared everything, well, we could share with others'.

In January 1982 Roger and Shelly married. They felt that God had 'given them the gift of marriage' and that this would give the community an extra room! The community discussed the developing relationship over 1981 and decided to pray the relationship through. Roger and Shelley felt they would have abided with the decision of the community if marriage was not felt the right outcome. However Vaughan particularly felt both should marry and the community should be a secondary consideration in this matter.

February 1982 was a period of rapid change. With Roger and Shelley on honeymoon (at a community on the northcoast) Andrew and Vaughan were faced with yet another move. They were asked to move from the Alexandria terrace as the house was sold and the buyer wanted immediate vacant possession. Vaughan eventually found the community's present house in Cammeray. To forestall further abrupt moves, they negotiated a three year lease and an option to buy the property. Compensation from the previous landlord provided sufficient funds to negotiate the lease and option. Without informing Shelly and Roger the community moved house.

In February 1982 the community gained its extra two members. George a general practitioner, who knew both Roger and Andrew and who had visited the community on many occasions, asked to join. Maude, Andrew's long term girlfriend proposed to him and was surprised to be accepted. After Shelly and Roger returned, somewhat surprised to have shifted so abruptly, they discussed and accepted Maude and George on a trial basis. As of October 1984 the Cammeray house contains Andrew, Vaughan, Roger, Shelly and George. Maude who had lived with the community from April 1982 had moved out in September 1984 to prepare for her marriage to Andrew in November 1984.
The People

The following pages discuss the people in X Street in more detail. To systematise discussion each person is first biographically located, their reasons for joining community discussed, their purposes in community and lastly their hopes for the future. This will illustrate both the communitarians themselves and also the *in order to* and *because* motivations as discussed previously. This breakdown will be continued in subsequent discussion of Cobbitty Community by way of contrast.

Andrew

Andrew was born in the United Kingdom and migrated at age 29. His motivations to migrate reflected his general dissatisfaction with the opportunities available in the economically depressed Bradford area. His elder brother had migrated to Australia in 1974 and Andrew joined him in 1976. Andrew is the youngest of four children, his father a textile worker had encouraged his children to become upwardly mobile and saw education as the main vehicle for advancement. Andrew had completed his GCE, and saw his major reason for moving, the opportunity to gain a quality education at low cost. He had become a Christian at age nine in the local Baptist Church of which his father was a deacon. He felt his brother and family, plus the local Baptist community would provide sufficient social supports to hold him in Australia. He describes himself as a 'conservative, sciences type person who doesn't really understand people and prefers things.'

Why community? Andrew felt his major motivation was loneliness. His brother struggling to make his way in the outer western suburbs of Sydney was too busy to appreciate the changes in his life and the extent of his homesickness. 'Things just didn't work out', and Andrew left and drifted from job to job eventually gaining entry to a Sciences course
at University of New South Wales in 1977. He felt that university was the only option. 'I needed to throw myself into something and I was getting older'. He felt bitter that he had not found the acceptance he felt he needed from the local Baptist Church he attended whilst living at his brother's and was extremely critical of 'plastic Christianity'.

'This church was supposed to help each other. My brother was a deacon and I hoped to fit into the church scene as I had in England, but they weren't interested. The church here isn't a community and even a committed Christian like me didn't fit in. If I couldn't then what hope have non Christians ...

(Transcripts)

Andrew was emphatic that his lack of acceptance was not due to his personality, as he had made 'a sustained effort' to make social contacts. He felt that the church should primarily love its own and gradually grew disgusted when he saw others that did not fit into the 'young married scene' being isolated. His personal disappointment became more general when he tried other churches and found a similar degree of 'social club Christianity'. He acknowledged that his primary interest in the church as a social group would probably reinforce the very pattern he reacted against if he had been accepted. Thus, accidentally his rejection demonstrated the real differences between a social group and a Christian lifestyle. His efforts to alert various congregations to these shortcomings did little for his continuing acceptance. Thus his first efforts to community, with Roger were on the basis of need and to have an alternative venue for expressing Christianity.

Andrew sees community as the only hope for disabled Christians. Those who like himself come to appreciate the real differences between social Christianity and 'real commitment', need protection as they are 'isolated and vulnerable'. Community is thus primarily the site at
which Christian love and brotherhood is demonstrated. Andrew rejects categorically, that the church could ever be anything than the small local fellowship in which each member is intimately accountable to each other member. He holds that the 'Body of Christ' is ultimately all of those professing Christians that relate to each other in this way. Community is thus the antithesis of the established church which is in essence 'an organisation not a collectivity'. He feels that joining any structure larger than twelve people is equivalent to being 'spiritually neutered'. For this reason Andrew has maintained that X Street should relate only to other smaller communities and the house church network on the lower north shore. Whilst he maintains that established churches have 'many real Christians', their small group cannot afford 'the contagion' that results from the need to organise more than twelve members.

For the future Andrew hopes their group will stabilise at its current membership with Vaughan, and George, marrying and the community becoming a number of common boundary properties which are family centered. At thirty-seven he acutely feels the need to establish a family and is looking forward to his marriage to Maude, as a further development of the community.

Roger

Roger is by far the most sophisticated communitarian at X Street having an exposure to community on three continents. Born in Tamworth, New South Wales, he comes from a working class background, the youngest of six children of a farm labourer and a meatworks packer. Always inquisitive, he left school at fifteen and joined the Nimbin 'happening'.

He existed on several rural survival communes before ending up at a community where he 'contracted Hepatitis and a born again Christianity' from the same person. Although describing himself as 'essentially conservative' he was sufficiently 'radical' to not find even limited acceptance in the churches in Tamworth where he recovered from Hepatitis over a nine month period. He found that he 'just didn't fit!' and gave up trying to relate to 'straight churches'. Encouraged by his parents he gained entry to the University of New England in 1975 and studied Psychology and Sociology. However both University and the local student milieu were sufficient to cause a major change of direction. He found his studies 'essentially alienating' and the student scene both contrived and limiting.

'Psychology particularly was irrelevant, too vague I've always been inquisitive, a mechanical person. ... The communes scene sucked, students pretending to be alternative and just reacting against everything. Not at all like the heavies, Timmerman (1) and those that put together Nimbin. Anyway I realised that as much as I wasn't a straight Christian, I wasn't a straight freak also, conservative freak maybe ...'

(Transcripts)

Roger managed a lift to the United States of America as a flight attendant with a veterinary service flying breeding stock to Europe and America. Being 'street wise financially' he decided to tour the States by visiting Christian communities. He travelled across the continent and met many community leaders including Art Gish (2). He was particularly impressed by the Brudderhofs and Mennonite and Brethren communities and visited thirty communities in all (3). After working as a paint analyst he visited communities in the United Kingdom, Germany and France. He returned highly impressed with community, to Sydney in early 1977 and commenced science studies at University of New South Wales.
Though he visited the available Christian communities in Sydney, he was not impressed, being attracted to the Mennonite community ideals. The genesis of X Street was partially his rapid growing friendship with Andrew, their joint social needs, and also his recognition that he would have to start a community if he wanted to attain his ideals.

Community to Roger is similar to Andrew's ideals as they both feel that the church must be small to survive. Like Andrew he rejects any structure that is too large for him to relate to each member with maximum accountability. However unlike Andrew he feels that community should be an active model to the churches and has continued to represent X Street at various local ecumenical gatherings. Roger has contributed most to the common life of X Street as he has the broadest experience of community types and issues. Form reflects community intent to the extent that Roger has insisted on the maintenance of common purse arrangements, distributed leadership, common ownership of property and many other ideals common to the Anabaptist communal movements.

Roger recognised that community at this stage is still reasonably rudimentary and has yet to work out its purposes. He is particularly attracted to the ideals of simplicity (as discussed in Chapter eight) and has encouraged the community to distribute much of its surplus to secular and Christian organisations involved in third world relief and social justice concerns. Community is thus both a site to express appropriate Christianity to those one commits oneself to, and also a model to the Church and the broader local community. Roger hopes that what is essentially a living arrangement might be broadened to become a community of witness. However, pragmatically the future is uncertain, as Shelley and him wish to have children and they both feel that this should wait till the other members of the community are ready to accept the changes this will bring.
Shelley

Shelley is perhaps the community conscience and describes herself as 'the most people person here'. Her journey to community most closely approximates the ideal-type process described in chapter seven, *The Paths to Community*. At twenty-six, one year older than Roger, she was born at Coffs Harbour, the only child of corner storekeepers. Her parents were strong supporters of the Congregational Church and brought her up in 'fear and favour of the Lord'. She attended various church-based activities including missions to surfies and other transients in the Coffs area. As she passed through late adolescence, she became aware of the 'cultural chauvinism' her church expressed in confining its activities to 'identifiable white welfare consumers', and neglecting the extensive aboriginal population in the Coffs - Sawtell area. Her efforts to change the welfare policies of her congregation and the agencies with which she worked led to her an increasing awareness of the racist attitudes of many of her fellow communicants. She became increasingly vocal, critical, and hence marginal to her primary reference group - the church.

Whilst tolerated as 'an angry young woman' for a while, she became isolated from the majority of her youth group and eventually censured by the elders as a troublemaker leading the youth astray. Disillusionment set in and she quickly lapsed from any active Christian commitment, which further alienated her from her social group. For mixed reasons she rejected Christianity entirely and moved from home into a casual relationship with a part aboriginal. This defacto relationship so scandalised the relatively closed community at Coffs that she moved with her lover to Sydney. However the affair ended and she returned home to be 'accepted as a repentant soul'. Her parents arranged for her to visit Sydney to 'see about education' and she found work as a screen printer.
Gradually she realised she still 'loved the Lord' and joined a Baptist Church and eventually moved to a Baptist Hostel. However she was unable to relate to 'social Christianity' and found that her reputation had preceded her. Then desperately unhappy, and unable to return to Coffs, she met Roger at a BYF rally, and quickly joined community.

Community, to Shelley is, 'real Christianity', or complete uncritical acceptance. At first she was irritated by Roger's insistence on the forms of community, that seemed to her, to isolate them from the wider church community, commonpurse and the like. However she gradually inculcated the perspective of Andrew and Roger, that community should be both church and model. Having had an exposure to the House of the New World she was reluctant to do anything that was, in her estimation, countercultural. She felt that Christian Community should be clearly visible as an alternate family that demonstrated Christ's love and acceptance. She felt that much of the church and indeed community was pretense. The church should be family, first, foremost and always! As X Street had accepted her, so she felt it should accept others: the 'giddy phase' described above was largely at her instigation. However she was first to acknowledge that the community was ill equipped for active welfare and decided to stop the community's Alexandria efforts.

Shelley acutely felt her position in the community as 'community nominal female' and though she rejects categorically any feminism as 'antilife', she felt the need to resist the traditional female role of homemaker and to define her position as 'a sister'. This was sided by her being the sole income earner, for fourteen months, which led to a certain degree of role-reversal, and equally by the home proudness of all of the male community members. Their joint experiences as transients and also the deprivations of their 'giddy period' had bred a degree of 'our home-our castle'. All members agreed that community should be a
place that liberates rather than oppresses. Shelley hopes that her early insistence on a new division of labour will be maintained after she stops work and has children. She hopes that the marriage of Andrew and Maude will lead to a balanced cluster community that will enhance the family atmosphere of X Street and 'give a family feeling to our activities'.

Vaughan

At forty-one Vaughan is institutionalised by the community as its 'granddad'. Born in Alexandria he had worked in the inner city all of his life in the motor vehicle industry. He had been brought up by working class parents who saw education as the 'chance to get ahead'. Though not directly religious, they had encouraged him to attend church and he had been converted at fourteen, in a Salvation Army Corps. He shared much in common with Roger both having common interests that bridged the sixteen years age difference. Both were 'extremely handy' and interested in alternative technology. Neither found they could cope with the 'straight church'; Vaughan feeling that they were not on his wave length. An intensely practical person, he felt the church spent 'too much time talking and not enough doing'. He had considered missionary service as a mechanic with Asia Pacific Christian Mission but his wife's illness had limited his options.

Vaughan's path to community was uncomplicated. A private person, he had few friends and his congregation, again Baptist, did not offer much social support. When his wife died, he found himself cut off from the congregation by his, and their, inability to seek, or offer comfort. Roger by comparison was open, caring and seemed to be able to handle Vaughan's needs. The common bond built up at Tech generalised to community and Vaughan felt at home with the small group. After much
contact, when asked to stay by Andrew and Shelley, he felt accepted and able to 'finish' his previous life. Community, to Vaughan represents a parafamily structure that again allows a Site for commitment and appropriate Christianity. Whilst not interested in remarriage, he feels the community should adopt a family structure to ensure its survival.

George

Italian by birth, George at thirty-six is the most highly qualified of the community, having completed his M.B. B.S. M.R.C. (Psych.) and D.P.M. Though qualified as a Psychiatrist he practices in the Western Suburbs as a Family Practitioner. His family migrated to Australia when he was six and settled in Melbourne. Completing his studies at thirty he travelled and experienced various forms of community, secular and Christian, before returning to Australia and combining Psychiatry with family practice. He became a Christian whilst at University and joined the local CU (Christian Union). Deeply committed as an adult and having to weather the disapproval of his nominally Catholic family he was unwilling to compromise his Christianity . . .

'You ask why community? Well I'll tell you. You can get awful sick of playing games in churches. If you're a doctor, then the games get worse as they 'respect you'. This develops its own logic and you find yourself hating the game and the people that passively force you to play it. As a Psychiatrist I found myself so isolated by the game that no one came near me emotionally. My attempts to challenge this sick situation silenced even the few who might have come close. No one argues with doctors, they're godlike!! Well I got sick of being God . . .'

(Transcripts)

George's move to community was partially a rejection of Psychiatry and partially a rejection of the emotional estrangement of his position in his local congregation. Having met both Roger and Andrew at a network's meeting, he gradually became attracted to the community and when the
opportunity presented itself in the move to Cammeray, joined. His hope for community is a secure place to 'be myself'. Beyond this he is relatively disinterested in idealistic purposes feeling he 'gives enough in the surgery and financially'.

Maude

Having not met Maude I am unable to comment in depth on her reasons for community. As a nurse she was absent on my visits to the community and whilst having spoken to her on the community and its purposes, by phone I am hesitant to do more than attempt a biographical sketch.

Maude was born in Sydney the middle child of a professional family, father - an economist and mother - a lawyer. She attended a private school and became a Christian as an 'obligatory response to the opportunings of my peer group'. She worked as a commercial artist, before undertaking nursing, a step she regrets. Recently she has returned to commercial art for a large department store. At a party she met Andrew and - 'attracted by his accent, fell madly in love with him, and eventually decided that at thirty-four I wasn't getting any younger, and that I should propose'. While the relationship has been stormy, she feels that community is 'part and parcel' of her relationship to Andrew and was willing to test this within community for thirty months prior to marriage.

Some aspects of community life

The House:

After living in 'student squats' Andrew was interested in uping the quality of life of the community. The current house has six bedrooms, with two bathrooms, kitchens, living rooms and recreation areas having been built with inlaw/servant quarters in mind. The house is luxurious by any standards, forty-two squares and whilst on a small block for the
area, is secluded. Due to the split level design it is easy to find privacy even when fully occupied. Roger and Shelley occupy the separate inlaw area and rear of the house. Andrew and Vaughan share a room out of preference, rather than need, and George lives on the top level sleeping at his surgery two nights a week to offer a twenty-four hour emergency service. Rental is $240.00 dollars per week and the community employs a part-time gardener/domestic twenty hours a week at a further cost of $180.00. The house was on the market when they occupied it and Andrew arranged a lease for three years with an option to buy for $245,000.00. The community is divided as to whether they should move or buy the property as their lease expires in late November. The central issue is not cost but rather the approaching marriage of Andrew and Maude which will alter the balance of the community from largely a singles to married group. Currently the community seems to favour purchasing three adjoining houses in the Castle Hill area.

Finances:

Roger has been instrumental in maintaining the community from its outset as a commonpurse, shared in common collectivity. This is to my knowledge only one of two communities in New South Wales that has complete financial communism. This reflects Roger's determination to demonstrate that 'the community practices love rather than materialism'. Based on Acts Two 'and they all shared all in common' and the brudderhof model of material equality and equity; all income is pooled into one bank account and disbursements are made by Shelley. This continues the practices established when she was the sole wage earner. The before tax income of the community (excluding Maude) is approximately $2,300.00 per week, reflecting the high earning power of George, Andrew, Roger and Vaughan. The Community donates approximately forty percent of its net income to various charitable causes on a one-off basis. The community
would not be drawn further on its tithing as they felt 'that the righthand should not know what the lefthand does'. All disbursements are made by casual discussion at dinner. This very high level of tithing is seen by the community as its main external purpose.

The only person that brought any capital to the community was Vaughan, the balance of the proceeds of his house. This was lent to George to purchase his part-share in an established medical practice. All other property is jointly owned and for their combined incomes, minimal. The community have not discussed financial arrangements should they collapse or disband.

Worship:

The commonlife of the community reaches its highest expression in its acts of worship. In common with the Anabaptist tradition that underlies the community, worship is the pinnacle of group commitment to each other and the Lord. The community restricts its worship to the members only, though they occasionally combine with a house church or worship with another church or community, away from the house. Worship is informal with each person speaking 'as the spirit leads'. In common with the Brethren faith to which they feel they are closely aligned, they are non-sacramental and each male member will teach, or share the communion service. Shelley and Maude, both agree that the woman should be silent as a mark of respect to the Lord's wishes (4). Music is important and each member is responsible for some aspect of celebration. Andrew is usually the initiator of new forms of worship and all communitarians feel that their joint worship is free and without restraint.

Sunday is set aside for community worship and recreation. The community will often visit as a group other churches or organisations that have 'relevant ministries'. Two mornings a week are set aside for
community prayer, the day varying, depending on George's commitments. Wednesday night is community night for prayer and discussion and all of the community rotate in leading the bible study.

Leadership:

The community rejects overt leadership. Whilst in practice the community acknowledges that Andrew is a 'natural initiator' and acts as the disciplinarian, this does not equal spiritual leadership. The group practises distributed leadership with Roger 'sensing God's purpose", Shelley as the community conscience and Vaughan as the 'mystic'. All spiritual direction is shared and tested by the community as a whole. No communitarian has the perogative to assert another's behaviour as ungodly, as they hold a theological position close to the Quakers' inner light being the final source of spiritual wisdom. Indeed the community is rejecting of any structure that equates power with spiritual authority.

In practice the community reached a consensus on each decision before acting. Though they feel this is a cumbersome process they are unwilling to make a decision that has not got complete unanimity. This in part accounts for the slow growth of the community purposes. Roger has been adamant that the community to function 'needs to travel at the speed of the slowest member, which is often me'. As the communitarians have been together for up to six years they have developed a high level of group solidarity and trust which eases the decision process.

Covenant:

Finally the communitarians developed a covenant that reflected their growing appreciation of the length of their commitment to each other and its consequences. This covenant demonstrates their belief in community as the Lord's will for them at this time:-
- As the Lord wills I commit myself to you as a brother (sister). As in marriage I will love you, keep you and support you, until he comes.

- We as a community agree to put each other first, to be obedient to each other under the Spirit's direction.

- We agree to seek the Lord's will for our lives and to act for his creation.

- We agree to discipline ourselves with prayer and study of the word.

- We agree to be reconciled should the need arise.

Discussion

X Street demonstrates the essential features of a community. Despite its small beginnings both Andrew and Roger intentionally decided on community as a lifestyle and in advertising sought similar minded Christians. Whilst essentially organic in its growth it was necessarily formed for a purpose to provide a site for 'appropriate Christianity' within a larger family structure. The community is composed of unrelated adults who coalesced to community around psychological need and Roger's ideals for an appropriate communal lifestyle. They knew each other in part, outside the community and were attracted as much by the possibilities of community, as from friendships with the founders. Only Shelley and Maude came to community after the fact, George and Vaughan knew Andrew and Roger prior to the community's inception. The communitarians came from similar denominational backgrounds and were committed to the Anabaptist traditions by their respective denominational roots as well as from Roger's and George's experiences in Anabaptist communities overseas. As discussed previously this heritage underlies most communities either as an inherited or adopted tradition. The communitarians had been active in their Christian expression far beyond the norm for their congregations. Both Andrew and George had been lay preachers and deacons, Shelley had worked full time as a church mission worker (unpaid) Roger
had led an Evangelical Union fellowship, as had George and of the community only Maude had a 'normal' involvement. The community formed reflected the activity and energy of the members.

In some respects the two case studies chosen do not reflect the average community profile. Whilst the bulk of the communitarians of X Street came from straight working class backgrounds, the community they eventually evolved is affluent far beyond the community norm. This reflects the unusual concentration of highly educated professionals and their attendant earning power. George and Andrew both have postgraduate qualifications and the communitarians are educated far beyond community committed core norms. However all of the community, again with the exception of Maude, came from upwardly mobile working class families which does accord with the backgrounds of most committed core members.

Turning to the purposes of X Street it is clearly seen that community is a desecularising structure. Most communitarians had a sophisticated appreciation of sociological insight. Whilst they were frankly sceptical that sociology had 'anthing to offer'; they were happy to concede that community 'may be seen' as a reaction to cognitive segmentation and secularisation (indeed Roger suggested this prior to my testing my findings against the ground of the community meanings). Most communitarians, again with the exception of Maude, saw the church as suffering from most of the ills of institutional and normative secularisation and were quick to point out that the structural arrangements of the established churches were essential to organisational survival but 'spiritually tantamount to being neutered'. Thus the primary purpose of X Street was to de-emphasise the organisational aspects of Christianity to emphasise the spiritual.
Interestingly the community chose to equate 'appropriate or real Christianity' with Acts Two Christianity. On the surface the isolated self-contained communism of X Street is seemingly opposite to the biblical accounts of an active evangelical fellowship to which 'numbers were added daily'. Andrew justified the essentially private form of the community by stating 'we have our gifts'. None were evangelists, seeing the community purposes as 'supporting others by the organisation of our lives'. Roger felt the community was too vulnerable to admit outsiders and needed to consolidate the community 'over a number of years yet'. All communitarians without exception felt the biggest threat to the community's survival came from too close an identification with the established church. Whilst the threat was variously perceived Andrew spoke for all when he said . . .

'Our greatest danger is the Church Universal. I don't think that we can really believe any longer that we live on a Christian level, you know. We're really just what's left. Should we try and pretend that its still a Christian Universe if it ever was . . . and I doubt it. The Church Universal is the biggest farce this century!

So what do we do hey? . . . The church goes back to the catacombs, small, staving, scared. To challenge the institutional structures, in some ways the 'Whore of Babylon', we wait it out . . .' (5)

Community was thus a 'remnant'. The faithful Body of Christ awaiting his return. The communitarians evinced a curious blend of eschatological reflection and pious scepticism, aimed squarely at themselves, the established churches and the world. Roger in discussing the relations of the community to the world, stated that the current Sydney scene had many parallels to religion in the Soviet Union. The last days drawing near, the church has become secular, equivalent to the 'official Baptist Church in Russia'. Christianity seen as a faithful remnant in hiding,
the underground church and by analogy X Street. This was said somewhat facetiously, but with serious undertones. Community must defend itself against identification with and absorption by, the established churches to 'remain the faithful bride of Christ awaiting his coming'.

Thus communitarians seek to desecularise their phenomenal worlds. By remaining disengaged they protect themselves from further secularisation and are able to construct a small social reality that is privatised *par excellence*. George quoting a slogan popular in "Fundamentalist Shifted' circles (6) advanced the following as a legitimation of this process . . . .

'At True Vine they say, you know, 'We take you out of the world, to take the world out of you, so you can resist the world, back in the world.' there's a lot of truth in this you know . . .' (Transcripts)

The communitarians felt themselves to be a body of the 'Body of Christ' loosely connected with other communities and house churches that were 'fellow travelling'. They were able to desecularise their world by seeing their links with the 'invisible church' in 'every part of the globe'. The Christian church was thus groups of Christians anywhere meeting together. The established churches 'might be part of the 'Body of Christ' but only 'if they realise they're wrongly constructed'. The Church was a small group phenomenon 'first, last and always'. This view aided desecularisation in a number of ways. Firstly it allowed them to not feel isolated or confront relevance as they felt they had links and historical antecedents whilst remaining isolated. This helped maintain the boundaries of the group, promoted internal cohesiveness and allowed discordant realities to be transposed 'out there'. The relevance question that plagues the churches and communities,'how do we make Christ
relevant to the world' became translated into 'remaining faithful' and the fault for secularisation could be maintained external to the group with the institutional church and hence diminished the communitarians' sense of personal liability.

Thus the community's in order to motivations were essentially group related. The communitarians constructed the community to practise appropriate Christianity with each other and to locate themselves in a 'rapidly degrading Christian world'. The communitarians because motivations were, as with most committed core members, a mixture of psychosocial factors that typify the paths to community discussed in chapter seven. Andrew, George, Vaughan and Shelley all were committed to the structures of their respective denominational churches. In each case they were engaged actively. For Andrew, Vaughan and George, loneliness of varying sorts gradually drove them from their home churches. They saw the failure of the church as a personal failure to meet their psychological needs directly. As Andrew has been quoted above 'If I'm lonely in the church what hope have the unchurched'. These men generalised their own disappointments to the broader church context and decided to challenge their situation, Andrew and George directly and Vaughan indirectly. Shelley demonstrates a heavily engaged Christian that became privatised by the needs of others, the aboriginal community neglected by the church. She reached a similar point to the men when she generalised this specific instance of the churches' failure to the broader context of church relevance. The disillusionment phase.

The next stage of the journey to community varied for each member of the community. Roger who had never really been inside the established structures was privatised by his inability to relate to the institutional church. Thus he was Disengaged before he was engaged. Shelley, Andrew and to a limited extent Maude all struggled with the church in the
disillusionment phase and gave up. Vaughan in a passive way, was an indigestible lump in the collective concern of his congregation and excluded himself by his sheer inability to receive help, which from his perspective at least, the church was equally unable to give him.

Only Shelley reached the disbelief phase of the journey to community. Perhaps she felt the failure, of the church, more acutely as she was both personally and professionally disconfirmed. Thus her investment in the church was conceivably greater.

All reached the privatisation phase. To a certain extent they remain within this phase. As discussed above no member of the community feels they have the right to intrude on another's interpretation of scripture or understanding of the 'Lord's purpose' for each member. For this reason they have no leadership and are essentially a committed core community. Equally they refuse to move on an issue until consensus or complete agreement is reached. However to the extent they have passed this stage all came to community because they realised that they needed the oft discussed site to practise appropriate Christianity. Thus in some ways the dissonance phase was bypassed by all except Shelley. The men passed directly to the community phase. Therefore Shelley and to a lesser degree the rest of the community demonstrate the conditions of change, that brought them to community.

In conclusion it must be said that X Street's particular combination of in order to and because motivations sums to a picture that is neither radical nor counter cultural. If conservatism is meant as a 'return to or a preservation of a certain way of life' then X Street is not particularly conservative despite the assertions of the communards themselves; nor equally is it radical. The X Streeters see themselves as an 'alternative to the alternatives' of which the counter cultural is the furtherest. We turn now to an examination of an engaged community.
Cobbitty community offers a direct contrast to the essentially privatised X Street Community. Cobbitty was formed as a conscious attempt to build an open community that serves three aims: To provide an alternative residential model for those in need of welfare assistance; to live a life of simplicity and ecological realism; and to provide an alternative model of the Body of Christ to the established churches. The community has grown organically and its ostensible purposes have altered. However the community remains an open, engaged group that seeks relevance as its first and virtually sole aim. The communitarians all demonstrate by their paths to community, people seeking to find meaning and a new form of relating as Christians. They equally demonstrate, by the structures they have built, a desire to act as a model and as a source of encouragement to those, who like themselves have difficulty with the established forms of Christian expression. Cobbitty Community has been chosen as the second case study as it is in many ways the antithesis of X Street. It also demonstrates the complexity and confusion of community as a way of life.

The Community's History

Cobbitty is my home community. I was its founder and remain its leader to the extent that we have leadership. Always conscious of the degree of subjectivity involved in reporting one's own milieu, I have tested the following reflections against the ground of my fellow communitarians perspectives. Rather than detail the development of the community by concentrating on those who came and went. I set out below a brief overview of the significant highlights of the community and then swiftly move to a consideration of each current person's perspective of community.
Cobbitty community started in August 1981 when Riia my wife, Beryl a colleague and Hugh a former client decided to intentionally form a communal lifestyle. I was working in a Training School for delinquents, and, with Beryl, the institution's teacher, shared a concern that Christians should offer a better alternative to institutional care for the many people who ran foul of our welfare system. We felt that welfare care would be unnecessary if each committed Christian family was willing to accommodate and care for one person 'in need'. Riia and I had just returned from the United Kingdom where we had stayed in various Christian communities that had reasonably successfully achieved this end. Beryl had returned from the New Guinea mission field and we all had previous communal experience. Having just purchased a spacious five bedroom house we decided to construct a community.

The community has moved through three phases so far. The first was the establishment phase which continues in part. We restructured the house making first steps towards a simple lifestyle: a large garden, developed a goat herd and began to offer accommodation to those in need. Since the community's inception we have accommodated thirty-two people who were in need, because of a criminal history which limited alternatives, had psychological problems, or were referred by the wider local community. The length of residence varied from an overnight to thirteen month stays. As well as direct accommodation the community offered counselling and other direct assistance, money, vegetables, childminding and sought to be as immediately useful as possible. As the core of the community contains two psychologists, a welfare worker, a parole officer and two teachers, this phase was marked by a strong welfare orientation.
The second phase was the consolidation and expansion phase. Overcrowding always a problem, limited both the quality of care and our emotional stamina. In December 1982 three of the community purchased another house in easy walking distance to the first and because even this addition of an extra property went only a little way to arresting our accommodation problems the community as a whole added an extra ten square extension to the property. In this phase the relationships within the community were realigned by two events. Max and Beryl, two of the core, married each other on the lawns of the main house in an exclusively community ceremony and Riia and I started a family with the birth of our son Tae. Other members of the community were experiencing family problems external to the community and as such the overall feeling of the stage was one of confusion and flux.

The community's third stage started in November 1983 when the community started a gradual decline as the stresses of readjustment to marriage, relationship collapse, parenthood and a strenuous building programme overwhelmed already stretched emotional resources, compounding the real stresses of living with emotionally disturbed people. At present the future of the community is undecided.

The People (As they see themselves)

I have described my own progression to community and family background in Chapter Two. It then remains for me to record my hopes for community as a participant. I am unable to relate to the established churches as I no longer feel they are sufficiently reflexive to address the many real challenges faced by Christianity today. My major hope for community is a perhaps optimistic view that community will succeed in becoming as established alternative social structure for those who are able to reject the materialism of western society. This is less
a hope for Christianity then for society as a whole. Despite the seeming plethora of media alternatives, welfare practitioners realise the few real options available.

Riia

Born to an Estonian emigre family, her father a former medical practitioner, and mother a nurse, Riia was brought up in an isolated migrant family where the dominant consideration was a preservation of Estonian Culture. This isolated the family to the extent that Riia entered school not speaking English, though born in Australia. Her parents fearing the losses assimilation entailed and preoccupied with limited finances, created an emotional climate where Riia and her sisters experienced low self-confidence and an ambivalence to Australian culture. By middle adolescence Riia was self doubting, doubly unsure of her identity, and with few close friends. At sixteen Riia was successfully evangelised by an expanding Uniting Church and became a Christian. This expanded her social group and for the first time gave her a reference group outside of the family. Unfortunately it also heightened the conflict within the family, her parents disapproving of her Christian commitment and increasing cultural assimilation.

In 1976 Riia moved to Sydney to continue her higher education in the Faculty of Education at the University of New South Wales. In 1977 she married. At that stage Riia lived in a quasicommunity or student household in the glebe of St. John's Darlinghurst. In the second year of marriage she lived in a small community in Kogarah associated with the local Baptist church. Riia did not place a high priority on privacy in the home and was happy to share with others. In 1981 she moved to Cobbitty, buying a house with a potential for community.
Riia hoped for a greater sharing and implementation of Christian ideals that characterised her home church. Whilst at O'Connor Uniting she was asked to join a community associated with the church but parental disapproval constrained her. Thus community at Cobbitty was a recovering of a lost opportunity; and also a hope to build a structure that would allow a loving, caring atmosphere. Riia differs from the rest of the community having been socialised into a church where community was seen at least by some as a desirable alternative. Her experiences of the church when she came to Sydney were equally positive, there being a strong community feeling at St. John's, that effect her homesickness. Her reflections on the organised church are thus grounded in two immediately positive experiences where a substitute family structure in large measure offset her family experiences. Unfortunately after marriage she was unable to regain these positives, as the available church options were limited and fell far short of her earlier experiences.

Community was thus an alternative to available options and a renewal of past hopes. She felt community would bring into the home 'real Christianity' rather than social forms. Thus community is a logical extension rather than a surplanting of the church. It should equip the Christians living in close contact with a degree of commitment that would support the activities of the wider congregation. During her time in Community Riia has supported the local Uniting Fellowship coextensive with community. In this sense Riia is still supportive of the structures and engaged in institutional expressions of Christianity and sees the community as needing to be church related.
Her hopes for community have not been met, given the uncertainties of a welfare community that has its primary purpose the succour of others. The needs of the welfare recipients have stood in the way of a deep spiritual commitment of the core members. Riia's main hope for the community in its present phase is a rediscovery of the central purpose of Christianity, a commitment to Christ before others. Riia is thus at once the most 'spiritually oriented' and engaged Christian in the community and equally the least supportive of its 'this worldly' pretensions.

Lee

Lee came to the community in February 1983, on the recommendation of a Congregational minister who had previously used the community for welfare purposes. He had been exploited by a local stud which had presumed on Lee's invalid pensioner status to pay the minimum possible wage of $40.00 per sixty hour week. Lee had left the stud after protesting this gross exploitation and moved into the community as a vegetable gardener. In early May of this year Lee left the community briefly to attend the Grow residential programme (with which the community has informal links); returning in mid-September. At present Lee is undecided whether he should remain in the community or return to rural work.

Lee was born in Sydney, the youngest of nine children. His father was an itinerant 'all jobs man' who moved the family around Sydney under the twin pressures of seasonal work and economic necessity. His siblings many years older, were involved in crime and he currently has two brothers in maximum security, serving life sentences. At seventeen Lee was placed on a permanent invalid pension after suffering an acute reactive psychotic episode that resulted in moderate neurological motor
impairment. After working voluntarily in sheltered workshops for a few years he married at age twenty-five and was subsequently divorced in an uncontested action on the basis of mental instability. Lee had become a Christian at Mt. Pritchard Independent Baptist Church in 1975. Following his divorce he 'went crazy with grief' and was involved in the drugs scene. After a period of living rough he decided to seek rural work and held successive jobs until reaching community.

Lee came to community as he was asked to. Various members felt he was exploited by his employer and after a period of visiting joined as the community gardener. Lee joined community . . .

"Because I was tired . . . needed to feel settled . . . somewhere to be at home."

The community was thus a protective environment where he could experience a pseudofamily. His parents had died and he had a series of unsatisfactory relationships that limited his social circle. Like many communitarians he hoped for primary social relationships within the community, a sense of being wanted, needed, usefulness and of personal worth. Community was also a place where he could 'be a Christian easier than in the churches'. A feeling not well articulated, even if strongly felt.

The current tensions of the community defines Lee's hopes for the future though he is undecided as to his immediate employment and hence living arrangements. He hopes for a closer family-like structure within the community, as his primary social group, a pseudo family, that replaces his shattered natural family. Community is thus an important plank of his identity and is necessarily needing to be stable, durable and cohesive. At thirty-two the community is home, and like home is a necessary potential source of security if needed.
Beryl

At twenty-nine Beryl is the communitarian with the widest Christian experience. Born in Sydney, the younger of two daughters of a jobbing carpenter, her father died when she was seven, leaving her mother to raise the family on a Widow's pension. From a strongly evangelical background she grew up within the normal expectations of the working class Baptist church her mother attended. Attending Teacher's College she qualified as a special education primary teacher and was employed by Youth and Community Services in their residential care establishments, finally being seconded to the institution I ran, and hence to community.

Beryl's journey to community represents \textit{par excellence} the process outlined in chapter seven. Her involvement in the established church was first socialised, uncritical and essentially social. However several factors progressively moved her from uncritical acceptance to privatised doubt.

Beryl had been socialised to accept marriage as a developmental imperative that surpassed all else. Unfortunately she did not marry and increasingly found herself out of step with her church peers. As this was her primary social group she became increasingly vulnerable and marginal. She reported that her friends were marrying and raising families and exerting pressure on her to conform, by arranging dates, discussing the possibility of her marriage as a foregone conclusion and by direct encouragement to find a mate. Whilst not adverse, Beryl did not get any 'good offers'. As she reached her mid-twenties she found herself increasingly marginal to her former friends that were preoccupied with the rapid adjustments of early marriage and also increasingly excluded from social activities based on couples. She began to question the logic of insisting that Christians marry only Christians in a small society where eligible females outnumbered
eligible males 3:1 and yet insisted that marriage was the desired outcome. This was the start of her questioning the church.

She was in a relationship that abruptly terminated when her partner decided to 'move on'. This profoundly destabilised Beryl and she found herself increasingly doubting that she would marry. Her social circles also started to accept this as a possible outcome and she started comparing herself with those in the church that had not married. This destabilisation became pathological and she reported crying up to four years after the cessation of her relationship. She increasingly shared accommodation and social activities with friends in a similar position to herself and 'travelled in a society of Christian females'. She had attempted to find satisfaction in the churches only to become increasingly aware that she could not accommodate any longer to 'a social Christianity that revolved around the norms of society - a husband, house, car, kids and his career'. As with so many communitarians when she felt she really needed the support and encouragement of the church she was left with an increasingly uncomfortable awareness that it was not only largely incapable of providing help but was actively disinterested. Her attempts to challenge the expectations of the church increased her marginality.

In 1980 she sought leave of absence from the Department and went to New Guinea as a teaching missionary at Awaba High. Having travelled extensively as a youth, Beryl was at first comfortable in this different culture but gradually saw missionary life as a 'cop out for those who don't fit the churches'. Increasingly she saw the contrasts between the materially affluent western church and the indigenous culture and the extent to which the western churches had become secularised. At the same time she realised that her own journey to the mission field was indicative of her own dissatisfaction with the structures and at a
psychological level, a compensatory mechanism for missed developmental goals. Retrospectively she saw her missionary service as a flight from an impossible situation, the recognition that she could not affect change in her home church.

Beryl, as one of the founders of community was thus motivated by a number of considerations. Firstly community must provide an alternative structure to accommodate a single in a close emotional pseudo family. The vulnerability of singles in the established churches is proportional to the degree of isolation that comes from an uncritical following of social norms such as marriage. Community by extending the concept of family allows singles to closely relate without feeling stigmatised. Secondly community must have a responsivity that is reflexive to the needs of the communitarians. A precondition of a caring body is its capacity to react to needs. Smaller groups are thus more intimate and responsive. Third the community must be a site for appropriate Christianity. Her mission experiences have shown Beryl the real differences between 'a basic Christian belief and the societal enculturation that surrounds it'. Community must then seek that residuum that characterises basic faith, however conceived. Lastly community should care for those who are 'scrunched by the system' it should be simple, responsive and intimate.

Beryl married Max in August 1983. This represented a turning point in her appreciation of community. Up till this point she had seen community as a refuge from the inequities of an institutional system that was irrelevant. Thus community made its point as a reaction. She now is uncertain of the direction that community should take, yet feels that it potentially has much to offer as a functional alternative to established Christian practices.
Mandy

Mandy rests uneasily in community. As far as the typifications of Chapter Five extend to Cobbitty community, Mandy represents our crypto-communitarian or Lamb. Though she joined the community in November 1982 she is still undecided as to whether community is for her. (7)

Mandy is the youngest of three sisters of a mixed marriage, her sisters sharing another father. She grew up in a home that was characterised by relationship turmoil and often found herself the butt or foil of family fighting. Her mother a nurse and father a toolmaker, were constantly at odds and divorced when Mandy was a young adult. Mandy thus reports her home life as 'typically insecure'. At an early stage she joined the same Baptist Church as myself and in a similar way saw the church community as a counterbalance or surrogate family. An exceptionally bright person she attended a selective school and at an early age developed a critical analytical capacity that balanced a well developed appreciation of social dynamics and left her well equipped to 'see what was going down at home and the church'.

At an early age Mandy began hegira from the established structures. Physically overweight and not meeting stereotyped profiles of feminine pulchritude, she was conscious at an early age of the extent of social Christianity where any 'residuum of faith was a poor third in the race for a boyfriend'. Christianity, at first a compensatory mechanism for family instability and lack of social opportunities, gradually became a relationship with a "God that really cared, personally". Matriculating Mandy chose Psychology at the University of New South Wales. Her interests in rationalistic introspection, academic philosophy and 'the nature of nature' quickly generalised to an active welfare concern for those 'at risk'. As a Christian she saw evangelisation and the
welfare imperative as primary concerns for her local body. However her efforts to challenge the structures of the church together with her social marginality, quickly led to her becoming disillusioned and progressively disengaged.

She then went through a period of 'rebellion'. She attempted to substitute alternative ideological systems in place of Christian belief and entered into a defacto relationship with a fellow student twenty years her senior. For four years she remained outside of both Christianity and the established structures as she struggled to finish a degree part-time; help her family adjust to many changes; and to exist within her socially frowned upon defacto relationship. She reports that at this stage she was 'well aware of the extent to which the church was secularised, only I couldn't distinguish between the church and Christ'. The many challenges of both Psychology and Philosophy (she graduated with honours in Psychology and a major in Philosophy), were sufficient to develop a healthy skepticism to 'truth claims based on experience'. However she gradually decided that all understanding systems were relative to the knower and chose to return to Christianity.

Mandy then entered the privatisation phase. She attended a few churches, relied on her understanding of scripture and Christian responsibility, to act as substitutes for 'the authority of the Body of Christ' and began a gradual and essentially privatised return to faith. Her choice of community was again a combination of factors. She knew Riia, Max and myself as close friends outside of the church. She grew increasingly uncomfortable with her defacto relationship on a personal and spiritual level, and saw community as an alternative to her existing relationship, necessitating moving house etc. On another level she appreciated that Christianity was an essentially gregarious activity which she could not practise privately.
Mandy's hopes for community reflect her continuing uncertainty with this as the best lifestyle to desecularise her life and world view. This is partially a worry that community is a difficult living arrangement to sustain and also a recognition that she is dubious in part that it is an advance rather than a retreat from the problems of a secular age.

Max

At twenty-two Max is the youngest member of the committed core. He joined the community in December 1981, three months after its inception. A friend of Riia and myself, he had visited community since it started and was attracted as much by existing friendships as by the community ideals.

Born in Sydney to working class parents he lived a satisfying life as the younger son in a close caring non Christian family. At twelve he became a Christian as a result of the evangelisation of the Inter-schools Christian Fellowship. Bright, precocious and a leader, he quickly became an important member of his school and sporting circles and successfully evangelised his friends. However he found difficulty in establishing links with the denominational churches and saw his primary fellowship within the I.S.C.F. group. He then joined the local Anglican Church and soon experienced the first major difficulties in 'his Christian walk'.

Max had become a Charismatic Christian in his fellowship and his attempts to influence the youth group in the Anglican parish were not received sympathetically. As with most communitarians he found himself becoming more marginal, the more he tried to change the structures of his church. He had felt the welfare imperative strongly as a teenager and had enrolled part-time in the Welfare Associate Diploma course at
Sydney Technical College. As well as encouraging the 'gifts of the spirit' he felt the church should adopt a higher welfare profile. His efforts to effect change, at first received as the excesses of youth, eventually led to his being publicly denounced from the pulpit. After a period of wandering through other churches and a brief 'ungodly rebellion' he entered community.

As with X Street and Roger, Max is the community idealist. Community is the place in which the church can effectively minister to the weak and the 'unchurched'. Christians must live their lives with the poor oppressed and the needy. Much influenced by Liberation Theology Max was attracted to the ideals of third world basic communities and saw Cobbitty as a vehicle for practising 'appropriate Christianity' to each other as well as modelling relevance. Unlike the other members of community he had not experienced significant psychosocial disruption in his childhood and acknowledges that community is 'more a place to practise relevance than to meet personal need'.

Community is thus the vehicle to change social structures. As a Christian Marxist, Max saw Christianity as needing to stand in dialectic contradiction to the existing class structures. Unfortunately he experiences cognitive dissonance as the established church structures reflect conservative social orders rather than social change. When he is identified as a Christian he is 'automatically linked to a conservative structure I detest'. Community is then in part a way of reducing this dissonance. Max is greatly challenged by simplicity as a lifestyle that models alternatives to western capitalism. Max thus sees community as a idealised alternative to both the structures and the churches. He hopes to remain within community and is committed to Cobbitty, primarily as an avenue of relevance, personally, as much as feeling community contributes to social change.
Colin

Colin, 32, comes to community reluctantly from a background of marital strife. A former employee of Youth and Community Services Department, he knew some of the community prior to its inception. He first saw the community as a source of external support and comfort as his wife progressively distanced herself and instituted divorce proceedings. His descent into community paralleled his removal from the family home, loss of employment and social alienation that accompanied an abrupt change of lifestyle from married breadwinner and father, to unemployed indigent. Community became the literal 'only alternative'.

Colin was born in Scotland and migrated with his family at age seven. His father an architect and mother a teacher, they settled in Sydney's southwest and struggled to make the adjustment to a new country. The stresses gradually overwhelmed them and they divorced, leaving Colin as a young adult to 'fly into marriage at nineteen'.

Colin had become a Christian at school and attended a Brethren Assembly at Cartwright. His marriage was strongly based on a conservative Christian model in which the wife was 'in submission to the husband'. After ten years of 'submission' economic and emotional struggles, she took their two children and left. This was the major impetus to community. Colin found that his efforts to involve his congregations in his marital affairs and to seek ministerial support for a reconciliation were 'quite unsatisfactory'. Increasingly he turned to the community for counselling support and friendship.

All of the communards at Cobbitty have varying adverse emotional reactions to the established church and most of this ennui is essentially a psychological reaction to the disillusionment of the 'paths to community process'. Colin, therefore, is the bitterest of the community.
Whilst the remainder, with the exception of Riia, reacted against the church at a reasonable disinterested level, Colin was psychologically scarred by his experiences. When his wife first left him he could not understand her reasons. His response was to ask the elders to counsel her and seek a reconciliation, based on her submission, and their pastoral oversight of the relationship. His somewhat simplistic view of the relationship was overturned when successive ministers, elders, and churchgoing friends, identified with the wife and attacked him as being 'unreliable, emotionally disturbed, a poor breadwinner and a domestic parasite'. Most encouraged the wife to 'leave me and divorce me'. Colin does not admit the possibility of Christians divorcing and was doubly hurt by the apparent ungodliness of this advice as much as by the loss of hoped for support. His efforts to find a congregation where he would be accepted and his wife chastised and returned to the faith have not met with success. Though dubious about his ability to survive in community, Colin was gradually left with little alternative, as the emotional disturbance of his wife's departure eventually led to his losing his employment and economic assets.

Colin feels the established church has 'become carnal' or worldly. His experiences have left him with an insurmountable cognitive dissonance. His literalness of faith and implicit understanding of the 'churches' responsibility' left him singularly unable to withstand the double shock of his wife's departure and the churches' apparent complicity. He sought to reduce this dissonance 'by prayer and fasting' only to experience a further disillusionment 'when God hasn't answered me'. At this stage Colin struggles to maintain a personal faith and though in community is essentially still in the Disengagement phase. He would prefer the established churches to be responsive and 'really stand for what they should believe in' but he struggles to reconcile his view of
'practical Christianity' with 'reality'. Colin thus does not have any clear understanding or commitment to community other than as a refuge and hopes to return to the world when he can find an appropriate spot. After eighteen months in community, successive reconciliations with his wife and much counselling to stave off divorce proceeding this still seems far off.

Some Aspects of Community Life

Relationship with the established churches

Cobbitty community has struggled to relate to the existing churches without apparent success. When the community was established, the founders felt the community should be engaged and ideally part of the local church structures. As Riia and myself were attached to the Uniting Church this was the first reference point. However over time the church gradually pushed the community to its periphery by insisting that its structures conform to the churches expansion plans. Thus the minister encouraged the community to evangelise, to institute Sunday morning services and in conformity to the order of worship, to collect offerings and to 'in effect become Cobbitty Uniting, a branch of Camden Uniting'.

This raised several difficulties, the community did not see itself as primarily evangelical, it did not wish to open its worship services to the public, rather seeing them as the high point of the community's common life; and ultimately most members having come from larger churches did not wish to be subsumed under another larger structure. For a while individual members went to the evening worship services of the Uniting Church but all with the exception of Riia eventually left. With the best of goodwill the larger church was unable to conceptualise any community effort that was not churchlike in form. On many occasions, interested church members visited only to come away vaguely disturbed by the
purposes and functions of the community. They felt threatened by community as a different pattern of Christianity and whilst acknowledging its validity felt with the minister . . .

"I wish you had happened in someone else's parish. Your presence is uncomfortable and doesn't easily fit into my church."

(Transcripts)

This lack of fit was not one sided. From the beginning some communitarians rejected the Uniting Church as a 'vague doctrineless cobbled together generality that did not stand for anything'. The forms and functions of the church were alien to the majority of the community's Anabaptist heritage, and the sacramentalness of the Church's worship proved the final stumbling block. The minister refused to acknowledge the community's communion and baptism services feeling that they were subversive. After ten months of attempted engagement the community turned elsewhere.

Initially we felt that the Uniting Church was far removed from our joint heritage and sought out other churches that were closer to our doctrinal position. For a while we attempted to worship with a larger non denominational charismatic assembly in Campbelltown only to be repelled by the church's reasonably uncritical fundamentalism and the minister's open derision of community's validity. In December 1982 we approached the Commonwealth Bible College to send a missionary team to Camden and form a church, only to find that when a team arrived in February 1984 that the minister designate was equally committed to absorbing the community into a more 'church-like structure'. At present the community is divided with some members supporting the Uniting Church, some attending the Camden Christian Life Centre and some the Camden Chapel (Brethren). Whilst this is not satisfactory, the community wishing
to relate as a group to a larger established structure, at this stage the lack of suitable options makes this unlikely.

Fundamentally Cobbitty community was and remains at odds with established church practice. The community's failure to successfully relate to the established churches is largely the members' inability to compromise the loss of personal autonomy required of communicants. After being privatised each member resists supporting a structure that seeks to minimise internal dissension by muting both criticism and innovation. The consensus model that Cobbitty operates on does not comfortably equate with the hierarchical authority structures of the parish system. However all of these difficulties are at least in principle surmountable but the churches' insistence on community being an epiphenomena is ultimately disconfirming and acts against community's purposes as a model of 'appropriate Christianity' to the churches. Thus the community views the local churches as being essentially social and the local churches view the community as being essentially radical and irrelevant.

Mission

Communities are constructed for a purpose. Cobbitty community sees its primary purpose as the modelling of 'appropriate responses' to the Christian welfare imperative. This is its primary purpose as well as its primary liability. It seeks to demonstrate that Christians may make a caring impact by residentially assisting those in need. Unfortunately the very real stresses of caring for thirty-two mentally disturbed and/or criminal people for periods up to eighteen months at a time have generated an atmosphere that is not conducive to attract other Christians to a similar work. If a community reaches out to the 'unchurched and the unchurchable', and if it seeks its validity externally, then the community must convince others of the importance and generalisability of its mission.
Unfortunately the community has found over the last three years that the church is little interested in the community's solution to the welfare imperative. Indeed far from modelling appropriate Christianity in this area the community has further alienated those it seeks to persuade . . .

"we couldn't do what you do. We haven't the training."

"It is wonderful the work you do I'm glad the church has organisations like yourself to do this work . . .""

"To expect the church to do what the community does is misconceived. You aim at caring. We aim at salvation . . .""

"The church doesn't need to be a welfare agency, that's what welfare agencies are for . . ."

"I couldn't do it. I wouldn't do it and I wouldn't want to . . ."

These quotes illustrate the range of reactions the community has gathered from its primary target the church and the churched. Cobbitty community has sought by a number of means to attract the local churches into active caring for those 'at risk'. By example, being available to assist those interested in helping, by direct residential and other care, as well as preaching sermons, conducting workshops and politicising church business meetings the community has endeavoured to generalise the community's sense of purpose to the local, particularly Uniting, churches.

This has had three interrelated reactions. A great number of Christians in the churches have developed a seemingly greater complacency 'feeling that they are somehow indirectly legitimated by having us in the area'. Max was amused to hear a local minister address an ecumenial meeting on the welfare needs of the area and indicate what his church, (the community), was doing to meet these needs. Those more closely observant of the community have felt threatened by the degree of commitment
required to live in a welfare community and once firm friendships have collapsed due to the challenge implicit in the community's modelling. Recently the community needed to accommodate a retarded girl temporarily, and asked a church of six hundred members to provide a bed for three nights to only find one couple willing to meet the need. The minister involved interpreted this as . . .

"We can avoid the obvious when we're not immediately concerned but with you around we're immediately concerned . . ." (Transcripts)

The stresses of the welfare mission have brought on the third reaction that of overkill. Most of the uneasy communicants who have been challenged by the community have doubted the sustainability of this type of lifestyle. The confusion of purpose that has resulted from high commitment to caring and high visibility has caused the community to probably, only temporarily, burnout under the joint stresses of those in need and the many hundreds of interested parties, (not to mention sociologists) who have come to do a 'zoo tour and look at the community animals'. The very shakiness of community is thus a powerful disincentive to those the community is trying to influence.

Worship

One of the ostensible aims of the community has been to build a caring committed core, who relate to each other as the primary reference group for expressing "Christian love and brotherhood". We have detailed in the above discussion the struggle community has gone through to relate to the established churches. This struggle has its parallels within community. From its outset Cobbitty community has practised small group Christianity. Like X Street, the communitarians doubt the capacity of the larger established structures to be sufficiently
reflexive to challenge the ongoing secularisation of Christian belief. As implicated in their biographies, the majority had been rejected by larger groups, partially because they sought an intimacy hard to achieve in larger structures. Unfortunately it has not been as easy to build an alternative small group church. Similar difficulties that beset the house church movement (9) bedevil community. More fundamentally there is an ambivalence to whether they are 'called' to be a church or a welfare church-related community.

Since its inception Cobbitty community operated squarely within the Anabaptist tradition of worship. Unlike X Street, each Sunday was open to committed Christians who felt drawn to worship with the community. While not strictly private the community reserved the right to invite only those it felt would have sufficient community-of-interest, to fellowship. Thus over the three years that the community ran Sunday meetings, attendance rarely exceeded twelve adults. Worship was informal and followed the Brethren traditions of inspired speech, distributed leadership and quiet reflection. Balancing the formal Sunday worship, was prayer time each morning, except Saturday, for forty-five minutes, and a Thursday night community meeting, communion and worship. When the group applied for a facility to perform marriages, funerals and other rites, the community was licensed as a Brethren Assembly. This assignation from an external source did much to crystallise the community identity and from August 1983 the community has been recognised as an assembly by other chapels and the local community.
Contractual Gemeinschaft

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Cobbitty Community is the power relations between members. In Chapter Eight elements of the communitarian worldview are explored to explicate the various motivations of community building. However whilst this addresses the in order to and because motives as they relate to meaning systems, that discussion, of necessity, is less concerned with perhaps one of the more fundamental questions of Sociology - 'How is order possible?'. As has been explored in the earlier sections of this thesis, communitarians seek to provide a site at which their perceptions of 'real and appropriate' Christianity may be practised. As this case study shows, the core of Cobbitty have clear ideas of what community should strive to become in providing that opportunity. However this begs to a degree, the question as to how they achieve this. As discussed in Chapter Four, Community may be seen as an association that strives to contractually agree on what will define the objective group meanings, by ensuring that the individual expressive meanings are congruent. That is, community becomes an instance of contractual gemeinschaft, at a meanings as well as at an actualities level. An examination of how the communitarians order their power relationships gives a clue to how this contract is enforced and order made possible.

The core at Cobbitty, as with most other communities, are able to enforce at least behavioural compliance by economic means. Those who did not act as was thought appropriate to a Christian milieu were gradually excluded. As the core owned the assets of the community they were able to evict those who did not comply.
Many times those in need were asked to leave for varying 'transgressions'. Thus one exinstitutional juvenile accommodated for thirteen months was thrown out after a succession of stealing incidents culminating in a theft within the community. Another 'left' after producing a sawn off 22° rifle at the dinner table. Others, generally the emotionally disturbed, gradually left as they recovered. However all of those in need were effectively limited by the barrier of ownership. Many times the community as a whole felt that to be effective in building a community able to retain those making the transition from being in need to being part of the committed core, common ownership was essential. Much discussion went into the possibility of financing a communally owned farm in which financial shares could be taken up at a low capital cost. This would we felt offset the inevitable hierarchy that ownership entailed.

However though the community did jointly purchase a further property and then substantially extend this house, there was a fundamental hesitation to extend the community to common ownership. Though the core were financially capable of establishing a common share farm (we had property assets in excess of $160,000) this has not eventuated. Discussion over three years seemed to founder on the difficulty of sustaining cognitive and emotional compliance to the aims of the existing core. The obstacle to extending ownership rests with an unstated but very evident feeling that the only way to really ensure that new additions to the core were truly in agreement with the aims of the community, was by them making a substantial financial investment to its future. Only by 'putting your money where your mouth was' would there be a guarantee (to the extent possible) that the new addition was truly committed.
This at once shows the essentially estranged and privatised nature of the Cobbitty core and the dominant pattern of Christian community. As is explored in Chapters Seven and Eight the worldview and paths-to-community process are such that the prospective communitarian is vulnerable and at risk of continued loss of meaning. The loss of a context of 'ultimate significances' led to becoming privatised and hence at odds with the essentially social expression of Christianity. Community as the final stage of the Paths-to-community process was an attempt to both found a site for practice of 'real and appropriate' Christianity, as well as a device for enforcing agreement and compliance on the part of those contracting to do so. In the last analysis only the most determined would contract at such a cost and hence by implication be both compatible and consenting to the communal purpose.

Most communities visited conformed in this respect, the exceptions being institutional communities and those smaller communities formed in rented houses. The former were constrained by the dictates of the church body owning and subleasing the institutional buildings and the latter by the dictates of the landlords. Both groups of communities were much more preoccupied with collective management issues and both had low survival rates. Perhaps there is a paradoxical intention at work here with communities being ostensibly open like Cobbitty, but in practice setting very formidable entrance requirements for full membership, to weed out those less committed. Cobbitty had many enquiries but few were prepared to purchase locally to test commitment. Other communities like Bugbrooke in the United Kingdom, with a very large membership, were able to partially avoid this contradiction by requiring all committed members to sell all and give it to the community as a precondition
to membership, thus obviating the problems of differing assets at point of entry. This example like others was a powerful factor in reinforcing Cobbitty's core decision to maintain stiff entry requirements.

Obviously the power relations within the core were dictated by the extent of ownership of the common property and personality conflicts inevitable in a close communal atmosphere were marked. However this mechanism ordered the core relationships and each person felt that the structure of the community enhanced their mutual commitment and accountability. Inevitably also it stratified the community and reinforced the membership categories as discussed in Chapter Five.
DISCUSSION

As with X Street, Cobbitty community shows the essential features of all Christian communities. Thus there was a degree of intentionality, the members knew each other prior to community, were unrelated, came from a similar denominational background, were active and so forth. Similarly they differed from community norms, containing a much higher proportion of well educated members than is usual in community. Five of the eight adults had University or C.A.E. qualifications. However, like X Street and most communities, all bar Colin came from upwardly mobile or straight working class families. Like most Christian communities, and unlike many countercultural, Cobbitty community is reasonably affluent; is situated in an affluent area and is typically conservative - capital conserving.

Unlike X Street the membership is stratified, with clear distinctions between the members. Thus we have a core group of Riia, Max, Beryl and Mandy as a quasi cryptocore member. Colin, Lee and Beryl's mother are distinctly numbered amongst the goats rather than the sheep basically by need and their choice to avoid committee. As community founder, a major capital holder and licenced celebrant, I am the community's leader; to the extent we have leader, most leadership functions being distributed throughout the core.

The community is in one respect quite different from the community norms established in this study. As a straight welfare community, that has functioned for three plus years, it has exceeded the usual lifespan of such communities - eight to ten months. The stresses of the welfare communities are so high as to promote rapid burnout. Thus the survival of the community to this point, together with the current fatigue is at once remarkable and yet clearly not able to continue as before. The few welfare communities that have survived beyond three years have
well developed safety valves and a system for rotating burn out communitarians.

These few structural notes illustrate Cobbitty Community's place within the typologies established last chapter. The biographical notes of the various members illustrates yet again the paths-to-community process we identify in Chapter Seven. Thus Beryl, Mandy, Max and myself all followed the complete path to community: Engagement, Disillusionment, Disengagement, Privatisation, Dissonance and then the Community phase. In Mandy and Max's cases they experienced an Unbelief Phase, three years for Mandy and four months for Max. Again it can be seen that the committed core of community follow a remarkably similar path to community that reflects both their psychosocial needs as much as their beginning attempts to desecularise their respective world views. Community becomes the site for expressing appropriate Christianity within a small group. Equally community becomes the vehicle for ostensible purposes that help desecularise the practices of the communitarians and hence their worldview. The remaining members of the community, Ria, Lee and Colin add further insights to this process to the extent they differ from this progression:

Colin as a 'goat' has experienced similar progression as the core members. He was engaged in the church actively. Domestic missionary, Emmaus Bible College student, Deacon and 'all round active Christian'. His attempts to 'serve the Lord' went a long way to eventually alienating his wife, who after ten years of 'Christian activity being placed ahead of me and the kids' decided 'enough was enough'. Thus Colin faced a double disappointment the very activities his faith has led him to expect will strengthen his 'walk' and hence family, had led to its collapse. In the face of his need the
church has proven inadequate if not even actively disinterested. Colin is thus struggling to reconcile fifteen years highly active Christianity with his present state. Community is then 'a port in the storm', a staging place in his attempts to survive the psychosocial changes that have brought him to the verge of psychoticism on a few occasions. Colin is neither secularised nor privatised. His cognitive boundaries admit only one reasonably conservative model to be true Christianity and the discrepant universe is and would appear to have been, uncritically uncomprensended. Colin does not see his present situation as being indicative of a larger problem, secularisation or otherwise, rather it is a personal failure of the church, in the form of certain individuals, to act appropriately. Thus Colin sees community as a parachurch organisation that 'cares for the needy' rather than a site to reconcile discrepancies.

In constructing theory, it may be said as a trial hypothesis that Colin would not see community as an alternative to the churches because he has failed to generalise his difficulties from the personal to the general. Thus the church has failed him but has not failed others. To the extent that he would admit the possibility of a larger difficulty, secularisation or even simple unbelief, this is not a social phenomenon but rather an individual-by-individual failure. Then people like Colin who have experienced the personal estrangements of the secularisation process remain unaware either defensively or uncomprensingly of the wider implications of their position. In this sense it is theoretically a dubious proposition to maintain as Luckmann would that they are cognitively secularised from their 'overarching contexts of significance'. 
Riia and Lee are equally neither privatised nor secularised, but for opposite reasons to Colin. Neither have experienced personal estrangement from the church. In Riia's case her initial contacts with Christianity were within a church context that was actively seeking to desecularise its structures. Her move to Sydney reinforced this impression when she found another church equally involved at this level. Thus community is in some ways the norm for Riia and hence the churches that she has experienced since community, are instances merely of 'different strokes for different folks'. Thus she is able to maintain her psychological boundaries, participate with established churches and see little conflict between church aims and actualities. Whilst Riia is aware intellectually of the decline of faith, normative change and even the cognitive secularisation that arises from plurality and structural differentiation, she does not experience this psychologically.

Then in theory building we may say that the extent of personal awareness of the impact of secularisation, might hypothetically approximate the extent of personal secularisation. This is an important insight which would benefit from further theoretical elaboration. The theories of secularisation discussed in Chapter Three are essentially sociological. However the extent of secularisation in the individual case, is or may be, the awareness of the personal impact of these changes psychologically. Without wishing to introduce an unnecessary dualism, a weakness of Luckmann's formulations lies with the individual being aware of cognitive segmentation. An assertion that the individual constructs a new social reality in the face of social change is necessarily an assertion that this is a conscious process. While the individual
may in the natural uncritical state subscribe to the prevailing worldview, the failure of this worldview impacts on the individual and his reactions though possibly uncritical and reflexive, are nevertheless conscious. Then the extent to which the person is able to locate his or her problems in an external rather than internal reality equals the extent of a personal secularisation.

Colin is aware of personal estrangement he is not secularised. Riia is aware of theoretical secularisation she is neither estranged nor secularised, Lee is neither aware, estranged nor secularised. All do not experience cognitive segmentation. They apply one worldview, different in each case, to all of their social contexts. Whilst they may uncritically, even unconsciously subscribe to the rational/functional norms of each segment that compartmentalised their lives in a complex society, they nevertheless remain psychologically unaware of any personal secularisation. As they are unaware they may be said to be theoretically segmentised but may not be considered secularised as historical individuals unless they actively and consciously apprise this process as affecting themselves.

This distinction leads to the in order to and because motivations of community. Cobbitty Community as a collectivity is a welfare community. The core see the contemporary secularisation of Christianity as a social failure. Whilst they may see an interrelated complexity of reasons which by themselves contributes to the simple decline of faith hypothesis held by most communitarians, they choose to address the welfare imperative as that aspect of the churches' mission that is within their ambit. Thus many of the evangelical failures of the church lie with the churches' social inability to retain those proselytised. The church as an ideology
is only successful to the extent it attracts and retains new adherents. The core of Cobbitty felt the church had failed to recognise that 'Jesus built his church out of rejects and ordinary people'. Historically Christianity has been seen as 'foolishness to the wise' (10) and the communitarians see the ultimate strength of Christianity lies with its continuing ability to attract those in need of the family structure that does (should) subsume the church.

This becomes an important in order to motivation that at once legitimates and desecularises the communitarians' worldview. It accounts for the churches' apparent failures, justifies their actions and importantly legitimates their choice to remain outside of the formal structures of the established churches. Max felt that the ultimate purpose of community is to show that community and real Christianity are synonymous and possible. Structural differentiation and the normative collapse of the churches could be seen as failures of apprehension, on the part of middle class structures. That is - failure to realise where the base of 'true Christianity' lay; amidst those who were not part of the prevailing dominant social structures. In this view they uncritically paralleled the thoughts of those theorists who see the primary task of Christianity to stand in dialectical opposition to the existing order and if necessary those churches that support the status quo. (11)

This is an essentially desecularising viewpoint. The Cobbitty Communitarians felt that by their efforts they could construct an 'alternative' social group that would model true or at least appropriate Christian practice to the church and those Christians disturbed by apparent secularisation. This social context allowed them to
integrate their personal lives within the fellowship of the community and to extend this to all areas of their lives. Thus community provided a support base to colonise those areas of their recognisably segmented lives and to extend desecularisation to the work place, the political process, the church, leisure activities and ultimately to personal belief.

The community's commitment to simplicity as discussed in Chapter Eight, demonstrates this process. All members of the community felt that ecodegradation was the single most important issue beyond a personal salvation experience. The community attempted with moderate success to follow the Mennonite Central Committee's guidelines for living more simply. (12)

They felt that by so doing they were challenging the existing waste and overconsumption that oppresses the Third World but more importantly allowed them a very powerful argument against scientism.

Max again summed up this position when he said 'science has its place but a belief in science that surplants a belief in God is shown up by the slow suicide of the earth as a result of unchecked progress'. Most of the communitarians felt that scientism or the belief in science as a God substitute was directly challenged by the environmental crisis. They felt that by challenging the uncritical assumption that a supposedly morally neutral science would 'save the world' they could demonstrate the inadequacy of scientism as a value system. The real oppression of the Third World in the name of 'technical efficiency' could then be used to challenge the middle class 'churched conscience' and escalate this process. Ultimately the realisation that science, in its broadest terms, was in a dependent variable situation to values would lead
to its surplantation by a more articulated belief system of which Christianity would then be at least one of the offerings.

Similarly the community challenged the basis of the creation/science debate hoping to destabilise uncritically held beliefs.

This brief discussion illustrates the essential elements of an open engaged community that is seeking to find a place within the wider social milieu its members derive from. Unlike X Street the communitarians feel challenged to be visible and equally feel a responsibility to model or actively desecularise their phenomenal world. Each member of the community is challenged to engage with the other members in a newer and more appropriate construction of reality. A primary ingredient of this construction is mutuality of belief and accountability of practice. The community as a whole, whilst acknowledging their many shortcomings, feel a certain satisfaction that they are working out a newer synthesis between belief and practice that has a wider applicability beyond the community.

CONCLUSION

These two case studies explicate the continuum proposed in the conclusions to Chapter Five. All of the communities studied in this research project reacted to secularisation by a process of desecularising belief and practice. They did so by reacting to the normative and institutional aspects of secularisation. Their attempted desecularisation strategies may be seen as a continuum that reflects the extent that they deprivatise whilst grappling with Normative and Institutional secularisation. Thus communities may be ordered on the continuum to the extent that they structure their efforts in a way that actively desecularises the cognitive
segmentation proposed by Luckmann and Berger. Deprivation lies with the extent that the individuals that comprise community merge their beliefs and practices in a shared construction of reality, that is generalised to their wider biographical contexts. For a community, privatisation is arrested to the extent that the social group has a wider social applicability, or at least feels a certain satisfaction that it is at least potentially desecularising.

X Street represents one end of the continuum. It is private as an organisation and privatised as a collectivity. It has reacted to the paths-to-community process by withdrawing and constructing a social milieu that allows the members to feel a certain relevance with the group. Whilst this is satisfying on a personal level, and as such is felt to be 'true or appropriate Christianity' the members remain essentially privatised at the cognitive level even though they may have constructed a reality that desecularises at an institutional or normative level. Indeed the members, whilst sociologically unaware, feel that at this stage the best model for individual belief is to remain essentially privatised. As an organisation, X Street feels it has little to offer the wider community at this stage of its development and as such is isolated from any wider desecularising process.

Cobbitty Community at the other end of the continuum is open as an organisation and deprivatising as a collectivity. It has reacted to the paths-to-community process by reacting to and challenging those aspects of institutional and normative secularisation, that the members feel they may make a substantial commitment to. They have constructed a social milieu that is satisfying on a personal level and demonstrates 'true or
appropriate Christian belief and practice'. Whilst the communitarians feel that they have been relatively ineffectual in their efforts, this is the sheer magnitude of the problem, rather than a personal failure. At the cognitive level members feel they are developing a worldview that effectively arrests cognitive segmentation and has a wider applicability. Thus they desecularise and deprivatise themselves as individuals and as a collectivity.

Thus we have illustrated a continuum that stretches from a disengaged isolation to an engaged relevance seeking. We now turn to an examination of the process by which individual communitarians become secularised, and in reaction begin to desecularise their worldviews.
NOTES CHAPTER SIX

1. Frans Timmeraman was a student activist on various campuses in New South Wales in the early seventies. Whilst Roger implies that Timmerman was involved in the Nimbin 'happening' he had little if any active involvement in the moves to establish Nimbin.

2. Art Gish is a Brethren community leader in the United States who has emerged as an opinion leader within the international community of communities organisation. At the time of Roger's visit he was the elder of the New Covenant Fellowship, Athens, Ohio. He is author of several influential publications such as The New Left and Christian Radicalism Eerdmans, New York 1970 and Living in Christian Community (cited extensively in this research) Albatross Press, Sydney 1979. Roger, and hence X Street was particularly influenced by Gish's work.

3. The Brudderhofs, Mennonite and Brethren communities form a distinct strand within the community and Anabaptist movements. We have reviewed the essential elements of this tradition in Chapter Four both case studies lie squarely within this tradition.

4. Paul in 1 Timothy 2 verses 9-15 locates the places of women within a service. To remain quiet, not speak, but to receive instruction in submission and quiet humility. Within the Brethren tradition this is culturally preserved, whilst accorded a certain 'historical' relevance only. Thus Maude and Shelley do not teach but participate in most of the other worship activities.

5. This is quoted and discussed more fully in our section 'The Church Universal' in Chapter Eight.

6. See note (37) Chapter Seven, on "Fundamentalist Shifted". We discuss more generally the various alternative responses to secularisation in Chapter Four amongst which is a more general discussion of Fundamentalism.

7. Mandy left the community in December 1984. There is a taped interview with her as an appendix.

8. Liberation Theology which has its major following in Third World Catholic countries has led to the establishment of Base communities as a means of countering social injustice and economic deprivation. The Catholic Church recognises these communities as a vehicle for social development particularly in areas with few clergy. However they have distinctive differences from Christian Community as such, yet are often confused with each other.

9. See discussion in Chapter Four.
10. The communitarians understand Jesus's message as appealing to those who were oppressed by the prevailing social order. The messianic content of the message could only be thus interpreted by those alienated from the real benefits of social conformity. Thus Christianity's truth claims make the most sense to those who were essentially alienated from other alternatives.

11. This theoretical position stretches from Liberation theology to those writers such as Harvey Cox and Gogarten who see institutional secularisation as an important freeing of 'real Christianity'. See discussion in Chapter Three.

This chapter discusses motivations of communitarians towards community. With the following chapter it illustrates the phenomenological worldview of communitarians and their reactions to the secular world. The work of Alfred Schutz, Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger is discussed and applied as an analysis of the social conditions of community.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PATHS TO COMMUNITY
(The Social Conditions of Change)

RELEVANCE

The remaining chapters make the major theoretical contributions of the thesis. Within this discussion the term 'relevance' reoccurs repeatedly as a justification for the communitarians of their social constructions and worldviews. Relevance enjoys wide currency within the communal movement and has developed all of the characteristics of a catch cry equivalent to Husserl's 'to the things themselves'. To the communitarians the term enjoyed the status of a community shibboleth. However, like most important and widely agreed upon verbalisations of purpose, the term serves only by the very diversity of meanings its generality permits. In Chapter Nine 'Relevance' and the wider implications of the term are discussed as it relates to sociological theory and the substantive contributions of this thesis; however to orient the reader it is felt necessary to briefly discuss the meanings the term enjoys amongst communitarians in daily life.

The chief purpose revolves around the central issue of desecularisation and is used to denote any action that serves to make Christianity more central to wider society. As such it is an in-order-to motivation. Such relevance is at once the assertion that Christianity is important and fundamental to life and on the other that it is capable of wider applicability to the institutional church and ultimately society as a whole. Used in this context it
it means society's options are poorer for the loss of a Christian ethos informing it.

At a more immediate level the term is directed at the institutional church which is seen as being 'irrelevant'. It is thus a challenge to the church to become relevant, or at least to recognise that as the primary representative of ongoing Christian expression, it has been found wanting. This demonstrates the pragmatic belief of the communitarians, that numerically and institutionally, the church remains linked in the public mind to all things Christian. When communitarians use the term in this way it is essentially active and strikes at the heart of their communal efforts to reform the church, model appropriate (relevant) Christianity or to provide functional equivalents to the church. As such it is bound up in the purposes of the communal form.

Relevance has a third and more personal or psychological meaning which is closer to the rest of the wider communal movement. This is the feeling that being an uncritical cog in the system is alienating and somehow personally disconfirming. When the communitarian uses the term in the first person singular they are expressing essentially because motivations - 'I wanted to feel relevant'. Most often this occurs in the context of the paths-to-community process outlined below in connection with their growing disillusionment with the institutional church at a personal level. When relevance is thus used it means a loss or diminution of personal impact on their immediate structures.
Relevance has more meanings than outlined above and Chapter Nine is essentially an account of its applicability to the desecularisation thesis. It must be stressed that this short note outlines usages of the term, rather than agreed upon methods of achieving these aims.

Meaning as Subjectivity

This chapter explicates the major assertion of the thesis - that community is a reaction to the cognitive secularisation of certain members of the established church. From a growing disillusionment with the capacity of the churches to react supportively in reinforcing a 'context of ultimate significance', the person moves first into privatisation and thence into efforts to arrest and divert the loss of the ultimate substrate of meaning, a shared context. Community becomes a means of desecularising, and a site for the contractual practice of 'real and appropriate Christianity'. The major task of this chapter then is to propose, describe and defend the process of social change that leads committed communicants to become committed communitarians.

While the tasks of theoretical conceptualisation and the description it entails are reflections of the researcher's perspectives and of the communitarians themselves; the defense of the model must rest with the assertion that what follows is one possible interpretation of the social phenomenon. While its very groundedness, particularly the testing of the researcher's insights against those of the social actors themselves, gives a certain confidence to the model; it is an attempt to represent community as an active social response to a set of perceived given in society. As such, and as discussed in
Chapter Three, the communitarians hold varying perceptions of these givens. Hence responses to secularisation are as complex as the social ground in which these givens occur. This means that the model here proposed is a reflection directly of perception and hence has to be examined as much empirically as from an appreciation of the attributions the communitarians (and the researcher) placed on their perceptions of the givens.

The model that follows relies on a double subjectivity - that of the communitarians' recollections and then the meanings they subsequently placed on their actions. The research tested these reflections by as many comparisons as possible but the model rests on the meanings constructed by the communitarians themselves. Thus evaluation of the model then must take into account three interlocking considerations which revolve around interpreting meaning. Before examining the process it is important then to examine in detail these considerations and the problems posed. This will assist in the evaluation of the model and thus the chapter turns now to some methodological considerations, which though discussed in Chapter Two, are immediately relevant to the model.

Firstly. Neither the sociologist qua sociologist, acting as a participant observer, is popular within community; nor are his observations necessarily accorded any credibility (1). This may be the paramount consideration estranging the researcher from the field of study. Many recent researchers of alternative communes have noted this rejection of Sociology:
"Explicitly Sociology has a poor reputation in communes. Implicitly communes ask to be seen as an attempt to make nonsense of many of the ways in which sociology conventionally treats the social. They are... based upon hypotheses which are, from at least some sociological points of view, incredible... Not only do they refuse to be defined in terms of any of the familiar classifications of sociology but they pronounce those classifications useless artefacts of a self-estranged world - positive obstacles to an understanding of the human qualities of the social." (2)

The response of the communitarians was to reject the dualism that characterises most explanation of social phenomena. To the extent they were aware of 'levels of meaning' they responded by invoking the 'false consciousness' debate of philosophy; asserting that to dichotomise for understanding was to falsely estrange the apprehended object from the ground in which it occurs. They felt that the 'ologies' had fallen into the rationalist trap of apprehending discrete categories or classes rather than wholes. In this regard they were particularly rejecting scientism (as discussed in Chapter Three) as a system of belief, as having little to say about ultimate questions, other than to falsely limit and categorise 'real life'. Many other writers both from a community or religious perspective have commented on this perceived failure of abstraction.

"The fundamental belief which we found to be very common in communes is that there are ways of knowing which are at once entirely real for the individual and entirely beyond the grasp of science, and that the inability of science to master this kind of knowing in no way invalidates the experience of the individuals in question." (3)
"There are aspects of the Church's life which sociology cannot penetrate. The Church is more than a social, historical institution: it is the Body of Christ. This ambiguity of the Church's nature sets certain limits upon religious sociology."(4)

Thus the second major difficulty of community is to develop a meta-sociological conceptualisation of community that is at once heuristic, satisfies sociological rigour and is acceptable to the communitarians themselves.(5) This will be the major consideration of the remaining discussion below.

Yet a third difficulty remains in discussion of the paths or motivations to community; that of the heterogeneity of communitarians. To attempt any cursory classificatory system (as has been attempted in the demographics chapter) is to realise that there are many different types of communitarians. An attempt to meet the criterion of conciseness in explanation inevitably produces a reduction and generalisation of the field under study. The communitarians are individuals and as such resist as completely spurious any attempt at explanation beyond the level of individual meaning.

Yet there are similarities that are recognised and have social utility for the communitarians themselves. One such obvious distinction is presumed purpose of the community participant. Whilst communitarians suggest that their reasons for community are essentially irreducible to theoretical classification, they orient and locate themselves in community purposively and are consciously able to label themselves Shepherds, Sheep, Lambs, Goats or Sociologist-Unbelievers. Thus for the purpose of conciseness and explanation it is possible to delimit categories that are
essentially those of the social actors themselves. (This has been discussed at length in Chp. 5).

In the interests then of reducing the heterogeneous nature of community to a manageable focus, the remaining discussion in this chapter concentrates on the committed core. Several justifications may be made of this contraction that would absolve the researcher of any charges of simplification or brutality to the study. However, it must be said that the individuality of community meanings are nowhere more marked than in the two other major groups of communitarians, the leadership and the welfare participants, both of whom were so diverse as to defeat meaningful categorisation at more than a simple purposive level. Thus this study concentrates on the core group the most numerous grouping in which intentionality of purpose and meaning are able to be clearly demonstrated.

Social reality

These three difficulties, all of which are essentially related to the wider difficulties of theoretical classification revolve around how the sociologist might formulate a theory, or explanation of community, in the face of the sustained skepticism of the actors themselves. As Abrams and McCulloch suggest this is no mean task:

"Researching communes is an altogether more strenuous business, a matter of maintaining the credibility of an estranged typifying sense of the world in the course of trying to understand people who themselves well understand the intellectual system within which the researcher is moving and who regard it as nonsense." (6)
Is there then, no common ground left on which to examine community? As discussed in the methodology chapter this study has adopted a phenomenological orientation to community in the face of a sustained rejection of empiricism, and the positivist and functionalist approaches that stem from it. If it is accepted that verification of any explanation of community would have to satisfy the social actors themselves, it then needs a less empirical approach to data collection and a more philosophical appreciation of how the 'individual or mundane realities, including commonsense apprehended typifications may be aligned with those categorisations that have their theoretical roots in sociological tradition.'(7) Thus explanation of community, its roots, intentions, forms and purposes needs to be subsumed by an apriori examination of the patterns of communication that build and maintain within community life the "intersubjective production and interpretation of meanings" that give it intentionality.(8) Therefore, to explain a social form in a sense that will satisfy both social actors and sociologists alike, we need to look to a level of social reality that is common to both.

The phenomenological approach has had many critics and their criticisms have often been substantiated.(9) However, quite often this criticism arises from a failure of critics to comprehend the real limits of the phenomenological method. The great exponent of sociological phenomenology, Alfred Schutz and his successors have maintained that in essence the phenomenological method is essentially protosociology and its scope is that of construing the social construction of reality. Within this tradition Luckmann
and Berger have extended this essentially epistemological endeavour to the problems of religious meaning. Schutz (10) following Weber's postulate of the subjective interpretation of meaning broadly distinguishes two classes of motives. Rigby (11) in his excellent study of British communes paraphrases him thus:

"Motives which involve ends to be achieved, goals sought for, are termed 'in order to' motives; motives which are explained by reference to the actor's background, environment or psychic disposition are termed 'because' motives... The future tense dominates 'in order to motives', the past dominates 'because' motives. As I project and plan my action now, I am aware of 'my in order to' motives, for it is precisely these motives which spur my action. The because motives, however, which could explain certain aspects of my actions, remain rather more obscure and marginal to my awareness... The crucial difference between these two categories... is one of time-perspective."

What role then does the researcher play in the generation of meaning? Partly it is the focusing of the awareness of the social actor on the ramifications of the because motives which is essentially a shifting of the participants' time perspective. We act by habit in our social milieu and often are only called to reflection by the interaction of another social actor, the researcher. This is particularly the case in participant observation studies which are essentially epistemologically reflexive and in which cognitive detachment is often limited. (12) There is a further role for the observer, that which brings an 'objective' focus to the causality of the social actors' meaning. As Schutz, and following him, Rigby, point out, there may be causal factors of which the social actors would not be aware, and to which the orientation and training of the observer would be sensitised. (13) However, this is not a functionalist assignment of reasons but rather an additional
category of 'causality', that would be recognised and affirmed by the social actors as an extension of the first two motives and has its ultimate verification in its predictive capacity. (14) Therefore an adequate account phenomenologically and sociologically is that:

"... to gain an adequate understanding and explanation of an individual actor's pattern of meaningful behaviour, the observer has to concern himself with (1) the actor's consciously held 'in order to' motives (2) the actors consciously held 'because' motives, and (3) objective factors underlying these motives. (15)

It is from this perspective that this study attempts to elicit group commonalities to illustrate an ideal-typology, of these paths to community.

THE PROCESS OF DESECULARISATION

The Paths to Community (The Sociological conditions of Change)

The remainder of the chapter explores the process of moving from committed church member to committed communitarian. It is neither exhaustive nor does it offer a complete theoretical subsystem as there remain a number of major research considerations as discussed below. Further this model necessarily speaks at a level of generalisation. Many committed core members did not reach a community by this process and significant variations are addressed as they arise. However, the following model, arising from visits, participant's recollections, taped interviews, correspondence and many other sources of data, indicated that the majority of the core had elements of this process in their journey to community,
so much so, that as the grounded data generated categories, a striking conceptual model emerged...

The first stage finds the participant a member of a local congregation. Usually he or she occupies an important and active place in the congregation. Generally this person is out of step with the rest of the congregation as he or she sees Christianity as an all embracing way of life. This leads the person to be active in the church congregation as the primary locus of faith and action. This is the Engagement Phase.

Gradually the participant becomes aware that Christianity is a social or leisure activity for the majority of the congregation and is not seen by them as the major source of personal legitimation. At the same time the person is assailed by many challenges to his or her faith and practice such as social injustice, which lie outside of the congregation. These two problems lead to attempts to challenge the local congregation to become more relevant. This has the effect of upsetting the congregational equilibrium and the participant becomes labelled 'idealist', 'troublemaker', 'heretic'. As his other efforts fail the participant experiences dissonance between the ostensible and actual purposes of the congregation. This is the Disillusionment Phase.

The person now becomes increasingly cynical and gradually ceases to see his congregation as the primary reference point for expressing appropriate Christianity. As his cynicism grows so he becomes more marginal in the congregational social group. He may respond to this disaffiliation by resigning from specialised roles such as
Sunday school teacher, deacon, home fellowship leader, or be removed. This loss of status parallels his loss of confidence in, and of, the congregation. This gradual relegation may be accompanied by searching for alternatives to the home congregation within the same denomination or in others. The discovery of the same situation in other congregations, plus the unfamiliarity of the new group compounds the disillusionment experienced. The participant leaves his congregation. This is the Disengagement Phase.

At this point some communitarians reject Christianity, some substitute alternative systems of ultimate significance, Buddhism, etc. This stage is characterised by psychosocial disorientation as the person has lost important sources of personal legitimation and social support. This is the Disbelief Phase. Not all communitarians pass through this stage some move directly to the next.

Gradually the person realises that Christianity provided 'ultimate significance' in their lives and they have abandoned the most significant psychosocial underpinning of their worldview. Guilt is another central feature. The person gradually resolves guilt by distinguishing between institutional and the private legitimation of belief. In this sense they have privatised not only belief but also individual Christian action. The person gradually re-establishes a personal and essentially private commitment to Christ and remains isolated from any institutional expression of Christianity. This is the Privatisation Phase.
Regardless of the religious tradition in which the individual belief system had its origin, a major contribution to the privatisation phase is the individual's personal interpretation of the scriptures. The participant gradually relies more on the written injunction of the scriptures, than on the previously internalised 'official model' interpretations. The participant becomes convinced that Christianity is an essentially social 'body life' expression and this is in conflict with an isolated expression of privatised practice. This conflict is heightened by the psychosocial destabilisation the individual is undergoing. However, the strength of the preceding stages militates against the person recommitting him/herself to the established churches, though they might seek partial relief by minimal attendance. This is the Dissonance Phase.

The final stage is a resolving of the dissonance by the intentional practice of Christianity within a community structure and it must be stressed again that community is just one possible resolution amongst many; attractive due to the degree of personal control possible. The person relates primarily to the community as a site in which appropriate Christianity is practiced. The person seeks to intentionally guarantee within the community structures the intentional performance of appropriate practices and beliefs. This is contractual in nature. This is the Community Phase.

This scheme will be elaborated below. It represents an idealised conceptual model of the paths-to-community and should not be seen as a psychologically discontinuous process of developmental stages in fixed succession. Rather like the bereavement modelling of
Kubler-Ross (16) it is the overall pathway in an interconnecting series of trails that find their way through the forest of religious change. Participants may proceed from the first to last stage in one step or might reverse any of the stages in any order. They might also arrive at the final stage by a series of successive approximations through the stages. What has been elaborated here is a process of secularisation to the point of the privatisation phase and has many correlates with previous discussions in Chapter Three. Beyond the privatisation phase the communitarians are actively embarked on a process of desecularisation. Importantly, not every person who embarks on this journey will reach a community outcome and some other variants are discussed below. More importantly, how does this process relate both to established theory and to the pre-existing religious experience of the communitarians?

Religious Experience

Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger jointly and on slightly divergent paths have done much to illustrate the role of religious meaning in a secular age. Both have addressed the secularisation issue as the vehicle for arguing that there has been a change in the forms of religious meaning, whilst the essential utility of religious belief remains. Luckmann (1983) defines secularisation as 'the process that leads to the increasing autonomy of various segments of the social structure from the norms originating in the sacred cosmos.' (17). His earlier work The Invisible Religion (1967) sets out the basics of this process. Firstly religion is
essentially a form of search for ultimate meaning. The individual becomes a social self by transcending his or her biological nature, by embarking with others in the social construction of reality. That is, in a society which is relatively homogeneous, there exists a specific historical social form of religion, that permeates the society and provides a specific religious worldview, that orients the individual to his society and his institutional obligations.

For the communitarians this is institutional Christianity. The individual transcends his individuality by participating with others within the local congregation, in constructing a reality in which all subscribe to the specific religious representations of the worldview and which are internalised and rarely questioned.

However, it is a less than perfect world and Luckmann uses as the starting point for his discussions of secularisation, the Marxian conception of surplus manpower leading to the structural division of labour, and attendant social roles. In an increasingly structurally differentiated society there arises an expert group of religious professionals who gradually supervise the performance of the internalised norms/outward expressions and develop the function of social control. Whilst in the simplest of homogeneous societies there is a one-to-one correspondence between the internalised worldview and religious practice, in more complex societies institutional differentiation leads to a plurality of norms in which there cannot be this one-to-one correspondence. Thus the official or received religion becomes increasingly incongruent with the subjective 'ultimate significance' of the individual.
This process is aided by the increasing functional rationality that underlies recent social change. The official functions of religion become increasingly specialised into an exclusively religious sphere where the claims of the church to represent ultimate significance or to exert social control became neutralised as 'mere rhetoric' (18).

However, the institutional church does not cease to claim ultimate significance but in its attempts to adjust to the demands of rapid social change, fragments into religious pluralism in which there are divergent official models, these either compete or replace each other, perhaps on a generational basis, and all of which increasingly become highly segmented and autonomous. The individual no longer responds to one 'overarching biographical context of significance' (19) but is forced to choose between the competing claims of religious institutions and other non-religious institutions which have their own normative ideologies.

The result of institutional segmentation and the divergent claims of each of the institutional specialisations that represent the many roles the individual fulfills in a complex society, is the emergence of the private sphere. The individual no longer has an overarching canopy of sacred values that may be taken as a socialised given, but is forced to choose from a multiplicity of religious themes. This profoundly affects the construction of a social identity in that the individual is no longer socialised into a predetermined identity but is free to construct an identity from any number of normative systems:
"Personal identity becomes, essentially, a private phenomenon. This is, perhaps, the most revolutionary trait of modern society. Institutional segmentation left wide areas in the life of the individual unstructured and the overarching biographical context of significance undetermined. From the interstices of the social structure... emerged... a private sphere. The 'liberation' of individual consciousness from the social structure and the 'freedom' in the 'private sphere' provide the basis for the somewhat illusory sense of autonomy which characterises the typical person in modern society." (20)

At this point Berger and Luckmann diverge slightly. Luckmann maintains that 'ultimate significance' continues to be essentially a religious phenomenon even though compounded from secondary themes that do not appear to be 'traditionally religious' in character. Berger with a narrower definition of religion, would agree with the epistemological transcendence of these secondary themes, but would wish to distinguish between those of a religious, as distinct from a secular basis. Berger states that it is not sufficient to show functionally that the necessary anthropological foundation of religion lies in self-trancendence, and it does not follow that secular values are thus religious. (21) Whilst both theorists would argue that these new privatised plausibility structures may be traditional or syncretist, Berger would argue for functional alternatives such as science or communism.

Berger and Luckmann both see secularisation as the process by which structural differentiation led to a segmentation of social norms in various autonomous institutions. Thus privatisation is an effect of the process of secularisation. Indeed the paths-to-community process may be seen in part as a process of privatisation. The individual is forced to construct 'ultimate significance out of a market place of competing plausibility structures'. The
individual may adopt a traditional form or opt for some syncretist or functional alternative such as secularism; but does so without the benefit of external legitimation. Each area of the individual's institutional social roles carries its own pragmatic limited norms but taken as a whole these are not functionally equivalent to an overarching system of legitimation. The individual may choose traditional Christianity and submit himself to this particular religious form but he does so as an act of consumption in the market place of available meanings and in a sense the communitarians obviate the choice by constructing community.

This theory of secularisation has undergone some modification since its first formulation. (22) However, it adapts itself to the phenomenological issues addressed above. Berger and Luckmann suggest that traditional forms of Christian practice may adapt to secularisation and offer themselves as highly plausible alternatives in the secular market place. In fact they both have joined the renewed optimism that surrounds the secularisation debate and the place of the religious in contemporary society (23):

"And it would be downright silly for a sociologist to maintain that the degree of privatisation of individual existence and consciousness and religion... is incompatible with some form of resocialisation of religion and perhaps a subinstitutional resocialisation of existence. It is becoming rather evident that this may take new - or at least - seemingly new - forms of organisation" (24)

It is in this sense that the study turns now to a detailed examination of the paths to one such form.
THE ENGAGEMENT PHASE

The researcher, as a former clinical psychologist, was struck by the degree to which the committed core were typical of a psychological dimension of the trait Conservatism. (25). In essence the majority of the future communitarians were committed to the preservation of the existing social order, were largely resistant to change and located a sense of self within the existing social order. They exhibited high need of social approval, were affiliates and had typically a low sense of personal autonomy. These factors make their subsequent estrangement from their primary reference groups that much more painful.

However, this achievement via conservative conformity does not equal uncritical acceptance of structures. While most yet-to-be communitarians were strongly committed to the congregational structures, this commitment was tempered by an awareness of the plight of the institutional church. At this stage most communitarians did not sufficiently self-differentiate from the congregational peer grouping, to be able to critically challenge these structures. Instead they invested their sense of worth in firstly conformity to the congregational norms and secondly in their belief that in so doing they were making a substantial contribution to arresting the decline (so perceived) of those structures. The process detailed below is thus in essence the gradual realisation of the untenability of this personal position. Thus the sociological process of gradual estrangement from the institutional church and attempts at desecularisation, may be paralleled by the psychological process of resolution of cognitive dissonance.
This may be most clearly seen in the communitarian's reflections on purpose within their past congregational life. As these are essentially after the fact recollections and as there are no independent measures of the actualities of congregational life, these present recollections have the quality of because motivations to community. Communitarians reported that they were actively engaged in the church to achieve a number of ends:

"The church and the people in it were my life, my friends. I wanted them to really know Jesus..."
"We need to strengthen that which remains..."
"We were losing out you know? The church wasn't a serious challenge to society... a bit of a joke..."
"If we are serious about Christianity we must really believe it. Integrate it... practice it appropriately, and know what we're on about."
"The fundamentalists say that one day we'll all wake up in Hell. As a society we're on the skids and I'm not sure if we'll end up shovelling ashes but it's possible that one day we'll all wake up with society evilly pulled down around our ankles... Only the Church could arrest this..."

(transcripts)

These few quotes sketch the range of in order to motives that oriented the communitarian within his congregation and provided his legitimation. Perhaps the single strongest response in the study was the belief that the church was ultimately the only answer to all of the world's problems. Individual belief, personal godliness or piety were too isolated to arrest the ungodliness of the world. Jesus could act supernaturally to impinge on the natural order, had done so historically and would do so in the coming age. However, the supernatural would rob the Church of its primary act of love, that of evangelisation. Ultimately the communitarian believed that the secularisation of the world was reducible to Christians' declining commitment to evangelisation...
"A Jesus relationship is so real that if people experienced him then there'd be no atheism. If they don't then its our fault and failure."

(transcripts)

Evangelisation was ultimately personal witness grounded in the larger witness of the local body of Christ. Communitarians felt that for their personal witness to be effective, they needed to be able to demonstrate the realness of a 'Christ life' within a local congregation. Only if they could bring the 'unchurched' to a church that clearly was superior to the surrounding available societal options, would the unchurched become churched. Whilst there would seem a contradiction between the belief in the all powerful efficacy of a real experience of Christ as a tool for personal salvation, and on the other hand a need for a church to express Christ, the communitarians realised that the about-to-become Christian, needed to engage in a secular cost benefit analysis of the here and now benefits, that Christian commitment would bring. The belief in the afterlife was too otherworldly and remote in our age, to offset the competing attractions of the immediate here and now.

Thus communitarians oriented themselves to the local congregation as the primary vehicle for arresting the slide into disbelief. Partially this was an uncritical belief that the church could achieve this end, or often a more informed, but despairing, lack of alternatives...

"A Catholic hasn't got that many other ways of saying God can speak to us than through the local church."

(transcripts)
They saw the realistic task of the local congregation as an alternative in a largely secular world. Then 'Christian Duty' became, on the one hand, a need to be a sharply focused alternative, a 'light on a hill', and on the other, an arresting of the internal rot of the local congregation, a 'strengthening of that which remains'. The communitarian was oriented to his church as the primary vehicle to achieve both ends.

When expressing their personal responses to these felt imperatives, the potential communitarians said their in order-to motives were largely oriented to the congregation rather than the 'world'. They felt secure in their ability to make a meaningful contribution to mission, evangelisation or even personal statement on the plight of the world. However, they felt inadequate in the basis on which they made these claims. Until the internal secularisation of the local church was arrested they felt any outward activity was ineffective. At this stage however, they uncritically supported the Church as they felt themselves to be essentially uninformed as to how the church was not meeting these ends. Secularisation was a remote concept. Rather they had a pervasive sense of things not right. Hence their efforts were uncritically congregationally directed.

The because motivations were even less articulated at this stage. In retrospect most communitarians were confident that a mixture of motives held them in the congregation. Primarily these were psychosocial. To the extent that they were relying on the local congregation as their sole (primary) referent of social group.
'The church and the people in it were my life, my friends...' expressed the degree of commitment most communitarians felt to the congregation. Often they were adult converts to Christianity and had experienced a loss of most other relationships and social supports. They responded that all other areas in their lives were subordinated to those of the church. They were immersed in the activities of the congregation to an extent that precluded both doubt and the time for reflection.

"Look I don't really know... I was a deacon, supervised the Sunday School, Wednesday night bible study and on the manse building group... As well Sunday morning Sunday School, teachers meeting, CE (Christian Endeavour) Church, generally took someone home for lunch, prayer group... fellowship teas occasionally... Evening service fellowship... drove kids home. Youth group Friday nights... and I'd been involved with MAF. (Missionary Aviation Fellowship), occasional Festival of Light activities, Call to Australia you know and well five or six other missions I guess. This wasn't conducive to thinking through whether I was any use to anyone."

(condensed Transcript)

Going along with this exclusive orientation to the social referent, the local congregation, were cognitive factors. The essential element of conformity orientation is the belief in the legitimacy of those structures. The communitarians reflected that they were able to stave off doubt by this immersion. A sense of personal responsibility could be subordinated to the collectivity of the parish and the authority of the leadership. Thus an increasing awareness that one's personal values were not widely held in the larger society and were, in fact, often in conflict with every day practices could be rationalised or otherwise defensively adjusted by accepting the global truth claims of the Church as an 'official or received'
model. (26) There was quite a degree of bitterness felt by the communitarians, that they could have invested so much credibility in these 'truth claims'. Indeed one social worker communitarian stated...

"This is doing a classic Festinger you know." (27)

At the third level of meaning, that of 'other causal factors', two other considerations were identified, that could be applied to some, but not all potential communitarians. Firstly, there were indications that many communitarians were marginal to their congregations, even though they often held significant positions within the church. Marginality was clearer in the case of communitarians who had been converted to Christianity as 'believers', rather than socialised as children. It expressed itself in firstly a subjective experience of 'not quite being on the inside of the social group', and also in somehow 'not quite being in step' with the rest of the church. It is almost folk mythology in the church that converts 'get it (religion) bad' and are more keen to gain acceptance by oversubscribing to the conformity requirements of the social group. However, many potential communitarians who were born into the church felt a degree of subjective marginality.

Perversely this felt marginality and 'keenness in reply', often meant that the communitarian became neutralised by being encapsulated into leadership roles. A cynical communitarian described this process as...
"Marginal acceptance meant the rest of the church could safely shove you into so many little make-work roles that they could forget you and go back to sleep. Apathy meant that anyone who was keen and wanted the church to get off its arse... and was uncomfortable, could be safely promoted out of harms way."

(transcripts)

Secondly, potential communitarians had a 'salient identity' problem. Personal success for the communitarians was equated to conformity with the expressed values of the primary social group. However, the expressed values did not correspond with the actual values of the group. Hence there was a discontinuity that most church-goers accepted as 'the church speaking 'rhetorically' and were not challenged by this discrepancy. However, the communitarians sought personal success and identity with conformance to authority or with the expressed identity considerations of the group... evangelist etc. Thus they reinforced their marginality by subscribing more to the 'official model' than to the actual practices. Why this should happen is discussed in Chapter Eight; however, as Merton has pointed out (28) this attempt at normative success is blocked and often leads to a variety of responses in reply. In this case the potential communitarian whilst not abandoning success orientations has adopted other responses to this search.

One of this study's major criticisms of Luckmann's and Berger's theories is the contention that they underestimate the extent to which people may respond to secularisation by either sophisticated psychological defense mechanisms or by remaining unaware that their primary reference group's worldviews are no longer 'official'. Within the above discussion there may be seen a certain justification
for these criticisms. Many communitarians felt that the majority of their congregational peers were completely ignorant of the 'supermarket of available ultimate significances' and were largely unaware that their own worldview was not that of the 'silent majority'. Whilst it is felt that the communitarians may be continuing the confusion between expressed and actual values in this attribution, this is largely outside the scope of this study. However it is significant that the potential communitarians became aware of the differing worldviews of 'ultimate significance' and rather than adjusting, dealt with them by repression or other defense mechanisms, rather than by becoming privatised as Luckmann would suggest. Why some members became privatised according to Luckmann's formulations and others questionably maintain an intact worldview by psychological representation is an interesting further area for study.

The Disillusionment Phase

This stage has the most internal variations and it is only possible to discuss a few of the many aspects of the disillusionment period. Perhaps the most significant variable is the time span in which the person made the psychological transition from a committed congregational communicant to a disillusioned communicant. Some reported years of disillusionment, a lack of alternatives and family and other social pressures constraining change. Others experienced a crisis or turning point and disillusionment followed swiftly. In either case the essential feature of this period is the challenge to the church to relevance, or the meeting of social need.
"I wanted my congregation (Baptist) to do something for people in the boarding houses rotting away. Our Church was in a street full of doctors and churches and boarding houses full of pensioners, drunks, kids on the dole and people from Psych hospitals... It wasn't that we could ignore their problems they were there every Sunday, pissing on the pavement... stoned and very obvious; like you couldn't miss them... we had a little mission every once in a while!!

Anyway I was working with these people (Detached Youth Worker) and had heaps of them on my hands. I asked the minister if I could preach and see if the congregation was interested... and maybe helping you know... On that Sunday night I got up and spoke on the needs and our responsibility... laid it on thick and gave the congregation no option but to get up and do something. I ended by appealing for assistance and said that I'd be at the door and discuss helping with anyone interested. They walked out and shook my hand and thanked me for my lovely sermon. One bloke came up and said that he had a problem... I went home and resigned..." (29)

This quote sketches the essential ingredients of this stage. The potential communitarian, for any number of reasons, which are peculiar to the individual, starts to experience high levels of dissonance between his cognitive orientation to the primary social group and his actual experiences. This takes two forms. Firstly, he becomes aware that there is a discrepancy between the rhetoric of the church and its practices. By a process of 'effort Justification' (30) the communitarian translates this into an externalisation. 'The Church isn't aware of the discrepancy'. The potential communitarian then attempts to alert the church to the needs. At this point the expectations of the person are not met and the disillusionment process begins. As the person challenges the congregation to action so he is met with resistance. Why there is this resistance (if so) is not germaine to this study only the perceptions of the communitarians. (31) Out of a number of available themes the most prevalent is that of Christianity as a leisure activity.
"Jesus would weep to see it, the church as an alternative to lawn bowling or the beach or getting into surfing... we were just another thing to do on a boring Sunday."

(transcripts)

The persons studied, reported that their congregations were essentially apathetic to the challenge of obvious social needs. The challenge presented was in part a genuine idealistic response to a very real need, and a cry from the communitarian for support and legitimation by the group. To the extent that the support function was not met, so the 'in order to' motives of the challenge went unheeded and unmet. This created a cognitive dissonance that could not be met by Psychological shifts. It went directly against the social construction of reality the communitarian was operating in at that stage...

"The church should be that community which influences the daily decisions of our lives more than all the other forces in society put together. It is difficult for any of us to understand the pressures of the world without the help of a body in making our decisions. Rather than letting the world make our decisions for us, together we seek God's will" (32)

The communitarian comes right up against the fundamental discrepancy between himself and the rest of society. This point has been addressed again and again by writers and researchers in this area.

"As the integration of the whole person's life, Christianity, is only accepted by a limited number. The structure of parishes and congregations was workable - perhaps necessary - in an age in which Christianity was the 'integrator' of everyone's life. It does not correspond to the real situation today." (33)
The second major disillusioning influence is the potential participants burgeoning awareness that the Church has become a secular institution in a secular age. In Chapter Eight the ramifications of this view are discussed. At present the communitarian finds that the 'because' motivations that underlie his or her challenge to the congregation, that of relevance, or a plea of personal legitimation via action, are not met. He becomes increasingly aware of the extent of secularisation on institutional and normative variables as discussed in Chapter Three and is increasingly disturbed by the apparent inadequacy of the church to arrest or limit its own perceived secularisation. Thus there is a distinct cognitive shift from feeling the church is merely unaware or asleep, to realising that they are actively or passively disinterested in resisting secularisation.

The person's response to this failure is again variable. Some, as in our quote above, were overwhelmed by this 'betrayal' and resigned. Others perhaps less emotively involved or more tenacious continued to challenge the church to ...

"put up or shut up. God doesn't need a pack of parasites batten on him for social lubrication. He'll get them the same way he got the pious pharisees; become real or die..."

(transcripts)

The net result of this tactic according to a substantial percentage of communitarians was to isolate themselves further from the congregations. Often this was the genuine result of the church's failure to realise that the potential communitarian's challenge was a
personal plea for legitimation. More commonly the average member felt this was 'self righteousness' on the part of the challenger...

"This teenager (a 16 year old drug dependant) has so many immediate problems that the Church could respond very practically. Food, shelter, you know. Well we've 400 members. After I couldn't find one person to meet any of these needs my angry reactions were met with: "Why do we pay taxes? Why are you so concerned? Stop being so righteous!" I hadn't any real reply..."

(transcripts)

This further reinforced the person's marginal status and compounded their disillusionment. Often their attempts were sufficient to raise differing responses in the congregations and threaten group solidarity. At this point often the counter-process of social cohesion excluded the person even though his or her response raised many sympathetic supporters...

"I was astounded. The priest thanked me for my concern and asked if I would consider leaving..."

(transcripts)

Often the response was purely apathetic...

"This is more properly the field of social welfare agencies."

(transcripts)

Luckmann's and Berger's formulations more than adequately represent the cognitive shifts of this Phase. In an increasingly differentiated society each institution makes only relative claims for its own area but in the case of a once 'Official Worldview' the processes of secularisation, pluralisation and particularly 'subjectivisation'
affect the person's meaningful world. (34) Religious activity acts powerfully as a means of enforcing the religious ideology that orients the person to society as a whole. In this process the transcendence of the worldview is taken-for-granted. When the person becomes aware that the worldview is no longer transcendent, but still makes these rhetorical claims, the plausibility structure of the worldview is shaken if not destroyed. As the person's world is socially constructed and maintained, it requires a base that is 'real to actual human beings'. Hence the person in a socially constructed religious world requires a social structure within which its reality is taken-for-granted. (35) This is no longer the local congregation for the potential communitarian.

One final reflection before leaving discussion of this phase. It is not necessary that the actual event that estranges the participant be located in an objective outer world. In many cases communitarians left their congregations when their subjectivities overwhelmed them. Indeed often their challenge to their congregations was evinced as little more than a questioning of the doctrines and practices of the assembly. It is poignant that the most common interpretation placed on this questioning by the church was 'loss of faith'.

The Disengagement Phase and Unbelief

The person now becomes increasingly cynical and gradually ceases to see his congregation as the primary reference point for expressing appropriate Christianity. As his cynicism grows so he becomes more
socially marginal. He may respond to this disaffiliation by resigning from specialised roles such as Sunday School teacher, Deacon, Acolyte; or be removed. This loss of status parallels his loss of confidence in and of the congregation. This stage is then characterised by three variants:

The person may become increasingly withdrawn and self absorbed and experience 'normlessness'. The individual having lost his normative construction of reality becomes prone to profound disorientation or psychological disorder. A significant proportion consider suicide. (36)

Alternatively, the person may seek to substitute another congregation as an attempt to externalise his cognitive dissonance. This parallels the externalisation of his or her challenge to the Church 'they must be unaware or asleep' becomes converted into 'they must be a bad example of a congregation'. This process allows the individual to maintain a belief in the institutional and normative structures that underlie his social constructions. Hypothetically many Christians may find groups that do meet the preconditions of the challenges presented and thus maintain their worldview (37).

However, this was not the experience of the communitarians studied. Instead they reported that they found the same degree of disinterest or secularisation, however conceived, within any of the churches they were able to reach. Additionally they did not have the support of an existing social network and were hence much more vulnerable in this search.

The third alternative was to substitute an alternative value system
normative base and socially constructed reality. This transformation particularly towards Eastern religions has been extensively studied elsewhere. (38)

The commonality that underlies these stages is a recognition at an ultimate significance level that pluralism inevitably leads to a relativist approach to religious meaning. That is, in the preceding phases, the person was able to deny or be unaware of competing meaning systems. At this stage he is confronted by relativism. Curiously the individual realises not only that he is confronted by a supermarket system of available 'relative ultimate significances' or plausibility structures but that he is interchangeably irrelevant to this process. Luckmann 1983 makes this point ...

"The structural irrelevance of the person is a many-faceted and ambivalent phenomenon. Yet one of its most important consequences is that an incongruence of a rather profound nature arises between the individual and the social order in which he lives." (39)

He realises that though someone has to make up the 'objective anonymous performances' that make up the segments of all of the social roles of society; it does not necessarily have to be him as a historical person. Thus he is freely interchangeable with any other person. This leads to an increasing psychosocial alienation that compounds the very real loss of the congregational mileau. As the person realises that this anonymity extends to most areas of life (if not all) he realises that he is alone the only person to make sense of his existence; and meaning has been transformed from the objective external to the
subjective internal. Luckmann states …

"It is in this state of affairs which may be described as privatisation of personal existence, and it is this state of affairs which is the structural basis for whatever may be modern in religious consciousness in our time …" (40)

Whether or not this stage ends in a period of unbelief or in some contemporary transformation, the individual has essentially moved from an ordered overarching set of values which give biographical meaning, to the isolated position of deriving a reason for his actions as well as a new social context …

"It becomes a very lonely world. You know what its like Jim. One day you're part of the swim and the next seemingly your left with whatever's left. Only now you have to make sense of it all."

(transcripts)

Privatisation Phase

The disengagement phase is a time of profound disorientation both psychologically and sociologically. The individual essentially a conservative achievement-via-conformity person located within the established structures of the institutional Christian church is, sometimes suddenly, embracing disbelief or even quite unusual normative systems.

It is a time of profound disequilibrium. The person struggles with a lifeworld which is not only less sure but has lost its comfortable boundaries. The future communitarian, an essentially success-by-conformity person, has not only lost many of the social indicators of
personal success but more poignantly has lost the reference system that he or she sought conformity with. Rather than dealing with an external world the person struggles in the unfamiliar territory of personal choice of meaning structures. At this stage such a shift is essentially a psychological rather than a social event. The person has been psychologically traumatised, disoriented. Hypothetically such alienation might be dealt with in a number of ways as has been detailed by Merton and others (41) but it is not a stage that can be sustained for very long.

The privatisation phase develops as the person gradually realises the extent of personal disequilibrium and the change in their social contexts. The changing locus of control from the external to the internal is paralleled by a rise in personal guilt. It is an interesting theoretical speculation, at this point, why the future communitarian resolves this profound disorientation by distinguishing between his or her own failure (however perceived) as a Christian, and the failure of those institutional structures that contain received Christianity.

It is a further speculation that many other cognitively secularised individuals do not regain faith or may translate belief into many other forms. In fact it is surmised that this would be an individual-by-individual matter rather than an alternative social process. Yet a further speculation is that the significant difference between those that continue to community and those that remain secularised is the extent to which basic personality structures are altered as a result of the previous phases with the more conservative taking the communal action. Perhaps the significant difference lies in the
communitarian being able to retain his or her basic psychological structure by externalising responsibility for his or her personal crisis. However, this remains merely a speculative point as there was not any ready comparative access to other segmented Christians and here deal with the after the fact recollections of the communitarians themselves.

However, the time taken in the transition from the disillusionment phase to privatisation is inversely proportional to the communitarians' awareness of their own cognitive secularisation. Most communitarians would not concede that they had become personally secularised and were able to defensively rationalise their position by externalising their isolation onto the church which had 'failed'. They were able to explain their present state by projecting the blame onto the congregation which had excluded them socially as well as having done unto their belief by failing to meet their challenges. Thus they could rationalise their gradual shift from an institutional to personal legitimation of belief by asserting that they had remained 'constant' but the church had moved away from real faith and practice. They felt that their slide into disbelief, (for those who experienced this stage,) was equivalent to:

"the momentary confusion of Christ's cry from the cross 'My God, my God why have you forsaken me?'; being translated into 'My church, my church why hast thou forsaken me?'"

(transcripts)

The privatisation phase as such is characterised by both private belief and practice. The person has typically left their church
and abandoned much of the social networks that surround Christianity. Whilst the person may be able to resolve the disequilibrium that follows rapid psychosocial changes, the individual is left with the guilt that follows from having translated belief structures from the institutional to the private sphere. He may blame the church for its failures but is never the less far from any expected socially accepted expression of personal Christianity. The individual is confronted by choice, both of ways to resolve this and of whether the person should resolve this dilemma. It is at this stage the person starts to desecularise his or her existence.

"You get to the point where you'd need to be two people. One of you is angry at all of the bullshit that got under your skin in the first place and the other, well, it realises you've got to get rescued in a hurry ... I worked out a personal deal, believing in God but not doing Christian things ... I knew that I'd have to choose some way of getting back together."

(transcripts)

The very first building block of the desecularisation process is the recognition of personal need. This comes from an appreciation of the real dimensions of Luckmann's privatised state. The individual having comfortably conformed is now faced with choice in a plurality of meaning systems. He recognises not only the dimensions of the marketplace of meanings but the discovery that ...

"In a pluralist society the individual is often pluralist, believing one thing with one part of the mind, another with another." (42)

adequately describes not only his present state but also illuminates
his past uncritical acceptance of normative segmentation. Whilst the person is maintained in the privatised state by anger and disillusionment he continues to be destabilised by the need to choose. The researcher was struck over and over again by the Kierkegaardian thesis 'Christianity does not exist - a man must choose to believe' (43). The guilt and feeling that one is living far outside of the structures of the belief that one continues to hold, is a powerful incentive to reconcile both choice, and the alternatives from which choice is made.

The Dissonance Phase

In some ways the privatisation phase is typically fundamentalistic. A partial resolution of the dilemma sketched above comes from an increasing reliance on the scriptures as an externalised source of personal privatised legitimation. Even though the individual may not come from a tradition that stresses personal interpretation of the scriptures, increasingly the scriptures assume the status of ultimate authority. Together with privatised belief and practice comes an acceptance of biblical literalness. The person externalises the problem of choice by deriving personal codes on the basis of biblical injunctions. Unfortunately this increases the person's guilt by highlighting the dissonance between the person's present state and the injunctions of the scriptures.

"No possible way of reconciling the church as the body of Christ and sitting at home day after day. The scriptures start to haunt you."

(transcripts)
Communitarians reported that the social context of Christianity as 'body life' eventually was as great a motivation to community as was the loneliness of lost friendships. However, for a variety of personally specific reasons, the church was no longer a viable option. (44) Choice when exercised was community.

The Community Phase

"We are a warm Christian household looking for a fifth person to join us. The rent is $17 p.w. and we are situated in Brunswick, Melbourne. Ring ... (45)"

'The Christian Covenant Community is being established at Putty, N.S.W. ... It will be run on a multiple occupancy, common share basis, on 60 Hectares ... of land. Interested Christian Families can write for information to Peter and Carmel ...' (46)

The way to community is as varied as the communitarians themselves. Some reached community by word of mouth some by answering adds seeking an extra boarder, some by direct contact from the community itself, many via special interest group contacts as discussed in the next chapter. Many formed community themselves, others drifted into community as a rising 'we-consciousness'. All came to community to address what they saw as the very real issues that they were grappling with.

The final phase of the paths to community is the intentional joining of a community structure. The degree of intentionality equalled the degree of conscious awareness that they were seeking alternatives to their privatised condition. Many communitarians only gradually realised that they were in a community structure and intentionality
came as an after the fact consolidation of an unexpressed motivation. However, practically all communitarians spoken to were emphatic that their place in community was a thought out chosen alternative.

This phase of the process includes a gradually increasing dissonance that causes further psychosocial disequilibrium. Often married couples found that this disequilibrium was disrupting the marriage, and community was sought as an external support.

"Bill and I joined the renewal group... primarily because I felt so vulnerable outside the old parish scene. We were both attracted to this group because it had a clear covenant we could agree with and because we chose to belong to a group we were responsible to and could significantly change if we needed to. Unlike our previous church this agreement really defined our rights and responsibilities in an accountable way. By the covenant between us, Brian (the leader) had formed the group so we could really practice Christianity as well as make an impact on the parish we are associated with. This settled us down as Christians and as a couple." (47)

This quote emphasises the principal characteristics, because motivations, or the desires that led to community. Firstly, a social group in which the person could develop a feeling of bondedness, friendship and mutual support that would replace the old affectional ties of the former congregation. Many communitarians felt that this was the primary motivation to community. A realisation that their experiences were hurtful to the point that they needed stronger bonds than previously ...

"This is my family now, you know. When I really needed family, God provided it in this community." (transcripts)
Often the communitarians were vulnerable to the point that their previous congregational experiences were a major obstacle to any bonding ...

"Well I let that get in the way... I was lonely in my church. We were small, only 60 members, and most didn't come, and I had no point of contact with them... my life wasn't in anyway caught up with theirs... we passed each other like ships in the night you know. All playing at being brothers and sisters..."

(transcripts)

Second, community in whatever form provided a clear understanding of why the communitarians were there. In the in order to sense community was associational or contractual. Whether implicitly or explicitly members knew what membership meant, not only on a theological level but also on a practical day to day level. Often this was expressed contractually, (48) via a written covenant. Always the communities were 'up front' in insisting that prospective members realise their obligations by trial membership, or apprenticeship, or some other testing time. This was very appealing to the prospective communitarians because the sheer visibility of the communal purpose acted as an emotional guarantee that the community would enact its purposes if required.

Third, the communitarians felt they would potentially be able to ensure the accountability of the other members by direct confrontation. If necessary the community would be sufficiently reflexive to respond to a real challenge or need; and that they would be personally powerful within the structures. These three points illustrate the contention of Chapter Four, that here community is
an essentially gesellschaft structure, in an attempt to approximate a gemeinschaft form.

The *because* motivations to community have been illustrated in the preceding discussion of stages to community. It is the sum of the individuals' experiences that predisposes the decision to commit, with a group of others, an intentional act of community. Why this intentional act takes the communal form is discussed in the following chapter which considers those themes that constitute the communitarian’s worldview and around which they build purpose. That chapter also looks at the underlying themes that constitute a social reality which is desecularising in its parts. The present discussion sees the journey to community as a process of cognitive secularisation followed by the dawning awareness of the degree to which this has become a personal reality and the first steps to an effective response.

**CONCLUSION**

Another caveat. It must be pointed out again that the building of an ideal-type, be it structure, or as in this case, a process, is essentially an abstraction that serves the purposes of explication as well as theory building. What is developed here is a model illustrating the steps by which the average communitarian journeys towards community. It is a social, psychological and spiritual journey marked by cognitive stages which provides outward markers to a more profound series of life changes. Not all communitarians make the journey this way and not all go through these stages in
this order or indeed through the majority of them. Again it must be said that we are dealing with only one of the five groupings identified in Chapter Five, the committed core. An ideal-type is a method/theoretical construct that has much value sociologically but in a commonsense understanding...

'In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a Utopia.'

- Max Weber (49)

This has concentrated on the first two levels of meaning that would be agreed to by the communitarians. What could be said as a sociological observer above and beyond this review? Two major contentions: Firstly, few communitarians would recognise this process as a process of secularisation. If the theory must stand the test of the actors themselves, it must be said that few would label their journey as an example of cognitive secularisation and beginning attempts to reverse that process. We are back to Abrams and McCulloch's problem of the social actors themselves having an insight into the theoretical systems of the observer and regarding them as nonsense. Those communitarians that shared the researcher's findings were not hostile to this interpretation but regarded the attempt to represent these stages sociologically as illconceived. Though they took delight in reading the draft findings they rejected that they had undergone a process of social differentiation into a subgroup with specific aims as a result of personal cognitive segmentation. Whilst they recognised themselves and drew many parallels between this theoretical model and their personal hegira, explanation in other than 'the religious' terms was in their view ill founded. (50)
With this cautionary proviso it may be said that the observer himself found meaning in this process not only phenomenologically but also psychosocially. It seemed that a re-occurring theme of the process was the psychological defense style of attributing the causes of the change to factors external to the person. (51) This displacement allowed the person to escape considerable cognitive dissonance and to locate 'out there' the source of his or her problems. This ultimately allowed the person to adjust gradually to profound psychosocial changes without significant personality restructuring. Perhaps ultimately this is why communitarians were so ready to accept the purity of Luckmann's and Berger's formulations as it related to others without accepting that it had happened to them personally.
NOTES CHAPTER SEVEN

1. For example:

"Sociologists are parasites. They're interested in coming here and stuffing us into their theories. We get a gutful of questionnaires sent by under-graduates wanting to finish their things, but the boxes don't say anything about us. They only say something about the theories of their supervisor or Uni. or the last book they read. You can't understand us until you're with us."

(transcripts)

"We're sick of the zoo tours you blokes get up to, and you don't understand anyway. You can't say we are a bunch of rejects escaping the world, or getting into, or out of it, because... you're only looking at what we do, not what we are."

(transcripts)

"Jim: 'Why a community form though...'
Pat: 'Look you're doing this again. I can't say why; only that I am here. Don't you understand I'm not interested in explanations but... actions.
Jim: 'So community is where you can be involved...
Pat: 'This is useless. We're not speaking the same language. Can't you forget you're a researcher and remember that you joined community.....

(transcripts)


5. See Metcalf's tests of an acceptable conceptualisation in note number 26 of Chapter Three.

6. Abrams, op.cit., page 15. They go on to say: "The probability is that more and more of the groups the social scientist wishes to study will be of this kind, sharing with communes an educated capacity to enact their disbelief in the possibility of a scientific understanding of social relations: This is particularly the case with the communities that comprise the bases of this study!"


9. For a discussion of some of the limitations by an Australian author particularly as it relates to community studies see R. A. Wild's Australian Community Studies and Beyond, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1983, pages 10-14. However, it is suggested that critics of phenomenological method mistake both the scope and the claims of the phenomenologists. They are seeking firstly to redress the theoretical apriori of most other sociological schools as well as making a relatively restricted comment within one small area of sociological method, Schutz's protosociology. To criticise as Alvin Gouldner does in The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology, Basic Books, N.Y., 1970, is to mistake both the purposes and intent of the phenomenological method. See particularly pps. 391-393, for an example of this ill conceived view point.

10. It is traditional in these types of studies to acknowledge the debt to Alfred Schutz who with Georges Gurwitch did much to redress the abstractions of methodological empiricism. Andrew Rigby introduces this distinction of Schutz's in his chapter 'The Paths to Community' Alternative Realities: A Study of Communes and their members, Routledge, London, 1974 to whom is acknowledged a debt for form if not content of similar chapters. For further discussion of this concept the primary source is Alfred Schutz Collected Papers 11: Studies in Social Theory, ed., A Broderson, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1964, pps. 3-19.


12. Wild, op. cit., page 12. See also Luckmann, 1983, op. cit., page VIII "Social Science is epistemologically reflexive. Even temporary cognitive detachment from the social world in which we live cannot be absolute, and it is obvious that we keep returning to that world in practical engagement in any case."

13. Rigby, op. cit., page 177. Perhaps too the 'crossing' from one province of meaning to another, the 'scientific' in Schutz's terms may provide another source of insight by its dislocating nature.

14. Rigby at this point returns to the hypothesis that the theorist may have insight which is superior to that of the social actor and so at this third level there in disagreement. It is contended that theory should be tested against the ground in which it occurs. As Luckmann 1983 Page VI has stated emphatically ... "The idea that the social world of our thoughts and actions could be explained by outsiders pretending to superior knowledge must seem perverse." Yet it is possible to reach a synthesis. See Note 7 above.


22. Glasner, page 55, op. cit., details the limitations of the segmentation thesis as part of his overall concern with secularisation mythology.

23. With the turn of the wheel, theoretical interest in secularisation theory has declined somewhat with sociologists and others now conceding that the extent of secularisation in western society may have been misconstrued somewhat. There has been a revision of many theoretical viewpoints, see Bryan Wilson 'The Return of the Sacred' Journal Scientific Study Religion, 1979, 18 (3) pps. 268-280; Luckmann (1983) p. 173; Peter Berger 'From Secularity to World Religions' The Christian Century, 97, Jan. 16, 1980, pps. 41-45.


25. Without becoming too obviously Psychological, idiographic approaches to trait construction have traditionally isolated two major dimensions of achievement - achievement by conformity as against - achievement by independence. This polarity underlies the trait conservatism, those who score high on the former are considered essentially conservative oriented. See California Psychological Inventory. From a Sociological perspective the majority of committed core moved rapidly from achievement via conformity to established church norms, to achievement via innovation of Merton's stage of innovation.

25. A major criticism that may be made of Luckmann's segmented secularisation thesis is a seeming neglect of the extent individuals may unconsciously defensively react to cognitive dissonance. While Luckmann would nevertheless assert that this equals secularisation, many deal with these incongruities so successfully as to remain largely unaware that secularisation has proceeded. This raises the difficulty of grounding a process of 'cognitive' secularisation in a situation where many would be cognitively unaware.
27. Leon Festinger a microfunctionalist sociopsychologist, was particularly interested in the defensive reactions and cognitive adjustments necessary... When Prophecy Fails, Leon Festinger, Henry Riecken and Stanley Schacter, University of Minnesota Press, 1956. Festinger later developed his theory of cognitive dissonance in which individuals regain cognitive congruence by either reducing 'inconsistent cognitions' i.e. changing attitudes or by increasing the number of 'consistent cognitions' or rationalising and otherwise defensively maintaining the original cognitive position. It is in this sense the socialworker maintains that the future communitarian reacts defensively until the inconsistent cognitions overwhelm the consistent attitudes and acts, See L.A. Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, Stanford University Press, California, 1957.

28. Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, Free Press, N.Y., 1968. Merton's classic functionalist account of anomie and social deviance lists five possible ways individuals strive for 'success': by conformity to established norms; if not successful then by innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. There are obvious parallels between the processes described in this chapter and Merton's functionalist account. See pps. 54-56, 66-69, 154-56, 193-197.

29. Personal communication in response to a written request for clarification.

30. Festinger, op.cit., outlines the process of 'Effort Justification,' the attitudinal position that people grow to like that which they have suffered for. Thus communitarians in the churches, strongly committed to achievement-by-conformity partially reduce this dissonance by defensive rationalisation and partially by the cognitive shift of overestimating the importance and depth of their commitments emotionally.

31. From enquiries in the communitarians home churches the communicants reacted more to the future communitarian's personality attributes, 'He's elitist - a know all, arrogant, rude etc.' than to the issues raised by the communitarians. A reflection of both the fundamental difference between the groups and the social nature of the former?

32. Gish, op.cit., page 96.

33. Preston, op.cit., page 33.

34. Paraphrasing, Glasner, op.cit., page 55.

35. Paraphrasing, Glasner, op.cit., page 55 again.

36. Whilst most communitarians deal constructively with the alienation that accompanies the secularisation process a few reach true anomic proportions. Suicide as an indicator was a consistent theme within a segment of the population studied.
37. Various theorists have noted a 'Fundamentalist Shift' as a response to threatened cognitive boundaries cf. David Martin, The Dilemmas of Contemporary Religion, Blackwell, Oxford, 1978. The retreat to fundamentalism is just one of the many options open to religionists dealing with cognitive segmentation. Why communitarians choose community rather than the other options remains a multicausal phenomenon in which personality variables, opportunity and sheer serendipity play their part.

38. Bryan Wilson, Contemporary transformations of Religion, Oxford University Press, 1976, for example.


41. See note 28 above. The important point psychologically is that the individual deals with the psychic trauma well in advance of the social constructions that allow a more permanent compromise.

42. Edwards, op.cit., page 159.


44. As discussed in note 37 above there are many reasons for the actual 'choice' of community rather than any of the other options available. It must be reiterated that the reasons are complex and remain at this stage essentially psychological. This is a fruitful area for further research.


47. Personal communication from members of the New Israel Covenant Community.

48. See appendix three for illustrative Covenants, See also X Street case study Chapter Six.


50. See Appendix 3 for an example of a communard's response to the thesis in draft.

'We don't feel very securely at home in this interpreted world.'

Rilke.
CHAPTER EIGHT

A DESECULARISING WORLDVIEW....

This chapter continues the discussion of the phenomenal worldviews of the communitarians commenced in Chapter Seven 'The Paths to Community', by developing the meanings of the communitarians themselves. In this chapter a number of themes are considered, which in part portrat the communitarians' attempts to desecularise their world:-

The Church Universal
Secularisation
Authority, Leadership, Clergy?
The First Century Church- Acts Two
Renewal
Community and Family
Simplicity, Science and the 21st Century
Social Justice-Social Action

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the structures of the lifeworld and how they relate to these elements in adjusting the dissonance that secularisation entails.
CHAPTER EIGHT

A DESECULARISING WORLDVIEW

Chapter Eight continues the discussion of the paths-to-community process by outlining those cognitive orientations that are significant in supporting and validating the communitarians' construction of an 'appropriate site for Christian expression'. It does so by outlining three sets of interrelated themes. These themes are not the communitarian worldview as such. Christianity, however conceived, is and remains, the cement that orders all of the provinces of meaning of the worldview, that gives the communitarian a system of 'ultimate relevances'. These themes are cognitive devices that allow the communitarian to externalise and deal with cognitive dissonance that threatens the cement of the worldview. As such these themes are elaborations of the worldview and act as mechanisms to reduce the shock of moving from one area of segmentation to another, and thus facilitates both deprivatisation and desecularisation.

The themes, though common to many other Christians were aspects of a Christian life that preoccupied the communitarians. They are constant topics of communal conversation and surfaced continually throughout the research in response to any discussion of communal intent. As the research proceeded it became clear that these themes were the areas in which Christianity was seen as being most vulnerable; and thus those aspects of secularisation to be most resisted. To address these concerns, community became the vehicle to both deprivatise and resacrilise, their collective lifeworld.
The chapter explores then the communitarian worldview, in as much as it relates to community and the church and their contact with society, and their attempts to desecularise. As the grounded research unfolded a number of categories emerged that related the communitarians to their world. These were noted as themes and when delimiting the data they seemed to cluster as discussed below. There was a commonality in these themes, in that they legitimated the communitarians in their community building and at the same time were pragmatic concerns the social actors wanted to achieve. As such the themes were the 'motor' of the paths-to-community process discussed in the last chapter:- the shift from a naive worldview and its social context to an informed worldview and its newer social context. Also they were important insights into the nature of the communitarians themselves.

These various themes were not the only ones noted. There were several others, that essentially reflected the communitarian conservativeness, such as POLITICAL AFFILIATION and other themes not here discussed, as they are common to a much wider social grouping than the communitarians. However the remaining themes are theoretically significant at an evidential level. Schutz, Luckmann, Berger and others have all been preoccupied by the shifts that occur when the individual's provinces of meaning, that compose the overall worldview, are challenged. Schutz in particular did much seminal work into the structures of relevance, that sustain the worldview and this is discussed at the conclusion of the chapter. Perhaps Luckmann's greatest contribution to sociological theorising was to detail the transformations, that occur within the religious provinces as the structures of society change and hence alter social dynamics. The themes noted here are an important collaboration of these theorists' work, in as much as they point to one instance of social change, that came about when the social actors were
suddenly confronted with the apparent failure of their social group, to support and reinforce the elements of their worldview.

At a social process level this failure of 'social context' might have a number of outcomes. The person might seek another similar group to reinforce his worldview. In which case it remains intact and perhaps still relatively unquestioned. He might substitute some or all elements of his worldview and even adopt a new social context. He might lapse into confusion or make some other psychosocial adjustment in the absence of some 'overarching context of significances'. Or he might recognise the failure of his social context to support his beliefs, reappraise his worldview and then finding that is still is the most likely vehicle of continuing relevance, construct a newer social context to support it. Chapter seven argued that the communitarian seeks to construct such a context within community, and the paths-to-community process outlined the reasons that lead to the necessity of this choice. However this leaves certain theoretical questions unanswered:-

What particularly are the communitarians reacting to within the Church context that might be seen as a failure to reinforce the worldview? What are those elements or aspects that have been unsupported and how do they relate to maintaining a 'context of significance'? The first set of three themes - The Church Universal, Secularisation and Authority-Leadership-Clergy address these questions. Taking as a given that Christianity is the integrator of all meanings within the worldview, it looks to those aspects of society, and social process, that weaken its authority. It then looks to the site for appropriate practice of Christianity - the Church Universal and its failures to maintain a Christian ethos within the wider society, Secularisation. 
These set of themes conclude with a discussion of the responsibility for the loss of authority of the Church and its implications, Authority-Leadership-Clergy. These themes taken together are those aspects of the worldview that relate to the because motivations to community and legitimate the community process.

What are the communitarians hoping to achieve in community? How is community desecularising? Three themes cluster around these questions, the 1st Century Church - Acts Two, Renewal and Community and Family. These themes are the 'prescriptions for change' and support the in order to motivations of community. They are essentially aimed at the Church Universal in recognition that the Church is still the most likely site for a re-establishment of a Christian ethos in wider western society. They are at once the recognition that the Church needs to change (and these themes are prescriptions for such change) and that the changes are unlikely to occur within the church and thus must at least happen within community. These themes thus further legitimate the community effort as well as reinforce the communitarian worldview, by ensuring at least one site of personal relevance. The thrust of these themes is seen to be essentially past oriented and supports the thesis' contention that communitarians are striving to model an appropriate future direction for the church, based on past potentialities and prerogatives.

The final set of themes address the question 'Is Christian Community a valid lifestyle in itself?' Two themes - Simplicity, Science and the 21st Century and Social Action/Social Justice, relate community and the Church towards the future and might be seen as the partial acknowledgement that an exclusively past orientation limits a
realistic appraisal of the continuing relevance of Christianity within the west. As such these two themes are future oriented \textit{in-order-to} motivations and give community a relevance that is desecularising to the extent that it affirms the communitarian conviction, that society as it stands, is at risk and that community or the church, has something very valuable to offer as an alternative.

However, how is this alternative to be shaped? As has been argued in the introductory chapter, community is an essentially conservative social phenomenon that seeks a return to an idealised epoch when 'God and man at table are sat down'. An age in which the ideals of the scriptures and the idealised reconstructions of past realities, mesh to show clearly the ultimate absoluteness of God constraints, ordering the new heaven and new earth. The communitarians hold this dream. Not simplistically but with reservations and the full awareness of an age of disinterest. They hold a hope that the relativism and pluralism of their society will, perhaps dialectically, breed the conditions of renewed God consciousness; renewal in the face of decline. Others, more pessimistically, lament lost Babylons and act as stewards 'until he comes'. Whatever the personal history or social conditions of the hegira to community, the clearest expression of motives is this orientation to the past.

In order then to defend this Golden Age thesis it has to be shown that the communitarians have an appreciation of the various secularising processes in their society and that they are actively involved in an alternate social construction of reality. Such a construction is of essence partial and in objective terms clearly demonstrative of segmentised secularisation. The communitarians are aware that their attempts to construct an alternate meaning system, to integrate their
lives, and order their social actions, is limited to the small sector of society their groupings construct. However this alternative stands as a reaffirmation of the 'once was' and has potential to be an evangelical presence to those outside their sector of society. It also stands as a salutary reminder of the sociological reality that few social processes are strictly linear and most stand in relation to their own countervailing forces. As Peter Berger has spelled out, like modernity, secularisation as a concept, stands in constant relation to countersecularising forces (1). The various themes that make up the communitarians' view of the world are here detailed, and show a picture of a desecularising worldview.

(1) THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

"Our Father, giver of life hear us. Intercede for your world and preserve your Church Universal..."
- Anglican Liturgy

"Unless we are the body of Christ, and that means something to every person on this planet then the Church Universal is an arrant failure."
- Sermon, Bundeena Fellowship

"I don't think that we can really believe any longer that we live on a Christian level you know. We're really just what's left. Should we try and pretend that its still a Christian Universe if it ever was ?, and I doubt it ! The Church Universal is the biggest farce this century."
- (Transcripts)

Communitarians were divided on the role the Church should play in the contemporary age. Few felt any optimism that significant changes would be made to either arrest the decline of the 'official model' and few felt that there had ever been any concensus. More were pessimistic that community would ever be able to arrest the erosion of belief they felt characterised the institutional church. Most felt
that community was their personal compromise to this recognition.

Behind this outright pessimism there was a curious ambivalence to
the relationship the communities should have with the local church
structures.

Two quotes from Preston's report illustrate more the dimensions of
this ambivalence, than opposing positions in their own right.

"I once used to think that a Christian community was
simply an extension of the life of the local parish. More recently I am coming to think that the two are
actually in conflict with one another. Most local
parishes seem to organise themselves in a way which
works against the establishment of real Christian
community." (2)

As against:--

"There has always been an objective of working closely
with the parish. 'Nothing is really done that is
not done in the name of the parish'..." (3)

These quotes illustrate both the communities' ambivalence over the
role of the institutional church and also ambivalence as to their
role in relation to the structures. As Preston points out most
communitarians felt a certain hostility from the local congregation
that reinforced this ambivalent attitude but their worries were at a
more fundamental level than the personal. Another participant summed
up his personal dilemma thus...

"If you've put most of your life into the church,
then you're reluctant to scuttle it ... I'm not
that critical really ... but I doubt the Church
has anything more to say to the world. It's
mission is to broadcast the seed but the Church
itself is the stony ground..."  

(Transcripts)

This communitarian went on to say that community represented an
appropriate model of realistic present day Christianity... that we
had to return to an understanding of real Christianity as 'an embattled minority group' in a heathen world. This belief in Christian realism is echoed in the communitarians' publications and in the conferences they attend. David Millikan in his Paper to the 1980 Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students Conference - Christian Realism: A Framework for Christian Action, points to the heart of the communitarians' dilemma...

"For Christians there is a need to assess the appropriateness of some of the theological presuppositions that have formed the groundwork of our inherited Christian social view... There is within the Christian church a growing uncertainty about the capacity of inherited Christian doctrinal systems to provide a substantial contribution to the understanding of contemporary world problems. ... (thus) Those people who struggle to find expressions of the kingdom in communal living, in adjustments of lifestyle, in experimental business practices, ought to be encouraged." (4)

The uncertainty of the communitarians spoken to, illustrated the depth of their concern to maximise efforts to make a significant personal impact on the world around them. At a grassroots level they were determined to express 'Appropriate Christianity' in a recognisable distinctive form that would both attract the unchurched and the churched alike. They were ambivalent as to whether the institutional expressions were sufficiently amenable to their concerns to represent a profitable mission field in cost-benefit terms. They recognised that in the public mind, Christianity and the visible established churches were synonymous and hence, to a great extent, were committed to making the structures a little more relevant; to do otherwise was to weaken both community and the churches. Their personal experience of the church, on the paths to community and in their continuing interactions, largely alienated them from any effective church witness. It is suggested that the
extent of the participants continuing involvement in the established churches is firstly a reflection of the sacramentalness of the denominations they derived from; and the responses they receive to their few remaining interactions.

Why are the communities still largely estranged from the institutional churches? Partially this is a reflection of their views on the clergy as discussed below and more immediately the threat they present to churchgoers. As illustrated by this parishioner's statement:-

"These people are not the body of Christ. They separate themselves from us and I'm sure they think they're better than us.

Q. Why?

They don't have much to do with the parish and it's always 'this is how you should do it'. They don't stop and think that we couldn't all go and live in a commune, even if Christ did ..." (5)

Their attempts at community parallel their belief, that the appropriate expression of real Christianity is equivalent to an outward expression of lifestyle. 'Life should be an ultimate witness and private piety isn't enough' summed up a major difference between the committed churchgoer and the committed communitarian. Often it was stated that 'an effective witness for Christ was equivalent to the strength of your demonstrable sacrificial lifestyle. A 'putupness or shutupness'. Conversely a major criticism of the communities, by their nearest parishes, was predicated by comments such as 'they don't know how to do good by stealth, only by publicity', 'they suffer the Pharisee's problem' or- 'they always let their right hand know what their left is doing'. Thus there seemed to be a basic disagreement on tactics, as well as the appropriateness of the church as a Christian witness. The next section discusses the specific limitations the Church was felt to suffer but here communitarians were debating not
the restructuring of institutions, but rather adopting a position close to that of German theologians after Bultmann (6).

This ambivalence extended to the communitarians' role in the world. Virtually all communities had some form of evangelical outreach even those groups with few historical evangelical roots. However the individual participant often expressed a curious circular doubt that they would be any more effective, than the institutional structures. This took the form of explicit belief that secularisation equalled a sign of the 'last days being at hand'. The extent of decline and the few relative evangelicals, meant that the majority of humanity, statistically, were 'predestined' to the broad road to damnation for lack of an effective witness. Hence most communitarians felt their efforts to be relative tokenism in the face of the need. Only structures as large as the institutional church would be able to make an impact sufficient to arrest decline. However the communitarians were caught once again in the ambivalence of whether they should be engaged in a grass roots rebuilding of the Christianitas or a 'rescue job' on the church (7). On a self-interested level they were happy with the imminence of Christ's return, ensuring a personal eschatological transcendence; but felt the equally motivating evangelical imperative: 'to have been found worthy'.

Discussion: This ambivalence to the Church Universal may be interpreted at a number of levels. The communitarians' in-order-to orientations again show their essentially other-directed orientations, to effective witness, evangelisation, modelling, challenging structures to relevance. Their purposes reflect the message 'something is wrong, we need to react'. There is a sense of urgency. On the level of the
because they doubt themselves psychologically 'can I do this in the light of my past experiences' and socially 'what is the most appropriate avenue of ensuring a correspondence between personal belief and structures'. The uncertainty which surrounds the purposes of community as a small and relatively unrecognised religious phenomenon means that the relationship of most communities is similar to the emergence of adolescent identity; 'I'm not sure exactly who I am but I've a fair idea of what I don't want to be': analogous to the adolescent developing the first stages of an identity by marking himself off from the primary familial identity. So community grapples with 'appropriate Christianity' contrapuntally.

The communitarian's view of the Church Universal is thus uneasy and not clearly articulated, with many differing voices and approaches.

Underlying this uncertainty however is the conviction that community, however conceived, is more appropriate than the churches the participants derive from. There is a sense of 'the church's weakness legitimates us' by showing the constraints that the structures place on the 'truly religious'. Ultimately the community is a freer avenue to explore the dimensions of what faith means in practice. In this they used very similar arguments to these philosophers, theologians and sociologists, who in the 1950's hailed 'the death of God' as a final separation of true Christianity from its contextual constraints (8).

(2) SECULARISATION

Whilst the average communitarian might be pushed to define the interstices into which the church and the communities relationship might fall; they had no such difficulty in defining why the church was not
adequate to the task of evangelising the world. Perhaps as a reflection of their own journey to community, most communitarians were articulate in cataloging the many real problems they saw the church facing. Some of the major subthemes are now examined to illustrate the cognitive ground from which the communitarians are reacting. However they have been extensively discussed in Chapter Three.

Some communitarians could attempt a sophisticated sociological analysis of secularisation in its many shapes and functions. Few chose to do so. Rather, the average respondent when faced with a question in the form of 'what is wrong with the church?' replied with a spiritual answer. The researcher is thus faced with the task of remaining true to the meanings of the social actors themselves, whilst attempting a sociological explanation. With this in mind it seemed that the communitarians accepted uncritically that established Christian belief and practice had suffered a major decline. This they accepted in a commonsense view of the decline hypothesis, with a baseline for the golden age well within their lifetimes...

"My Sunday School had 123 children in 1958 when I was superintendent... when I left we were lucky to get 30." - (Transcripts)

"You might find me old fashioned but I remember well when a child born out of wedlock was seen as sinful but now no-one cares anymore." - (Transcripts)

Most communitarians were cognisant that church membership had formerly more social acceptance attributes, but never the less felt that real substantive decline had occurred both organisationally and subjectively. Three major sources seemed to constantly re-occur in discussions to account for this decline:-
"This in vitro fertilization may be seen in some quarters as progress and undoubtedly it is in some ways. I for one though, begin to doubt that all progress is progress. One applauds the extension of techniques that make our lot more comfortable but one deplores the confusion this brings to our thinking. As a clergyman I'm often appalled by the looseness of my parishioners' thought processes, that mistakes scientific advance for human progress."

- (Transcripts)

Returning to the discussion of the assumptional bases of secularisation debate in chapter three, the notion of progress was central to much of the communitarians' comments on the institutional church. Progress was seen as a semantic difficulty that the Church faced in presenting the Gospel. In a society that equates material advantage with notions of progress, the church offered little other than a certain metaphysical relief from some of the excesses of progress; the high road toll for example. Yet the church continued to use the same assumptions of semantic content, in appealing to notions such as 'progress', 'advancement', 'becoming' and the like. Many respondents felt the Church used a traditional language, that had taken different meanings for the majority of the congregation, and that the clergy and other 'arcane jugglers' had not realised that the language used had itself become secularised. The average communicant was at a loss to interpret the language of the church in a way that made sense to his commonsense understandings. Thus the concept of 'drawing nearer to God' might mean spiritual transcendence to the clergy; whilst it might mean finally hearing God answer back to the communicant. Many communitarians felt that the average churchgoer accepted the majority of the ritual and polemics as socially rather than metaphysically grounded and thus made little sense of the church's pleas for personal progress in the spiritual walk (9). This unthinking acceptance
that both parties understood each other, contributed to real confusion and a sense that the church 'really didn't know what it was on about'.

Paralleling this semantic difficulty were concerns that the average churchgoer, equipped with a materialist language, was limited by a concrete mind. Most communitarians expressed considerable chagrin over their attempts to get outsiders to speculate on the ideological assumptions of scientism. They felt that science as such was, or could theoretically be morally neutral but the unthinking acceptance of science as a value system, was just that, unthinking. However despite a sophisticated understanding of the real limits of science, few communitarians could engage others to move from a materialist conception of the universe ...

"...and so I asked him if they'd thought through why this was so and he said 'well they've proved it, haven't they?'. I asked him what he meant by proof and he said 'Well scientifically'..."

(Transcripts, conversation on evolution)

Many communitarians with a good grounding in the hard sciences were thus in the invidious position of on the one hand trying to set real limits to what the sciences really addressed whilst on the other, of defending their positions as experts. Thus the conversation above between a communitarian science teacher and a businessman church member on evolution, was concluded with the teacher aware that he had failed to promote an abstract appreciation of the problem; and the businessman (presumably) failing to appreciate the distinction entirely.

Nowhere was this more the case than on the issue of scientific progress.
Communitarians reported considerable annoyance that they were unable to shift even committed churchgoers, even less the unchurched, from seeing 'faith' in rationalistic terms. Notions of progress, grounded in materialist conceptions of personal enhancement, met with limited understanding and even suspicion, when applied metaphysically. For this reason communitarians were at pains to demarcate the boundaries of the religious and this, in part, accounts for the refusal to acknowledge sociological or other frameworks as having anything to say about community. Science was thus seen as a dubious benefit, even if it did generate material comfort, as it confused an already limited critical appreciation on the part of the public...

"Community fails, if it does, because it isn't able to say 'look this is religious and that's scientific', and we so often confuse the two. Even science itself isn't a benefit often because each refinement equals another problem for religious meaning... and often you wish you were back when science didn't seem to have the answer all the time... what hope then has the church if we can't demonstrate this in community."

(Transcripts)

Relativism

Communitarians felt that the church had lost ground to all other institutions in society because it refused to acknowledge absolutes. Many gave quite sociologically sophisticated accounts of the structural differentiation-pluralism-disengagement continuum, in scriptural language. As discussed in Chapter Three they felt that the church had by this process lost its core functions and had been gradually forced into an increasingly relativist position. Communitarians were divided as to the reasons for this shift, but they were unanimous in affirming that Christianity gave absolutes,
that ultimately established 'God's order on Earth', or the absolute normative basis of society. Then as the relativist drift of the Church continues, the communitarians felt the church had failed to give a 'God says' response to the range of issues troubling society...

"But I am distressed at the lack of a coherent Christian position in Canberra in relation to parliamentarians. Susan Ryan recently commented that she only ever sees Christians when private morality is being discussed not when real issues are being dealt with.' (10)

Thus they felt the church had lost her prophetic voice by accommodating to the institutional differentiation that had specialised her voice to the rarefied levels of generalised meaning. However the communitarians' response to this process differed sharply depending on whether they had Catholic or Protestant roots. The Catholic communitarians on the whole, felt the Church's voice had become voices, from many differing denominational camps and hence this slide might be seen as evidence of a house divided. They saw the answer in the light of Vatican Two ecumenism, in the gradual reconsolidation of the fragments into one voice (essentially Catholic), which would grow from a reconsideration of the real commonalities of Christian life in a post-Christian age. The Protestant and Nonconformist communitarians (without the benefit of Vatican Two) felt that the 'Many Voices' were heard because one voice had not been heard clearly enough, and each from their own doctrinal position called for a return to the fundamentals of Christ's teaching. Thus whilst their areas of agreement were many, the differences in the overall community scene reflected the differences in the overall church scene, a distinction which most communitarians appreciated.
However relativism as such was not the greatest obstacle to an effective absoluteness, rather most communitarians felt that the church was largely disinterested in combating its slide into 'just one competing meaning system' and was quite happy to continue preaching to the converted as this entailed little internal change. The ultimate truth claims of Christianity could thus be defended on the basis of 'they'll realise their errors when they wake up in hell'.

This deep relativism most communitarians felt, stemmed from the subliminal awareness on the part of the clergy, that their message found its ultimate legitimation in the extent to which it penetrated society as a whole; that is preaching to the converted is satisfying to a point, but ultimately new converts equals success. Unfortunately most clergy realised the only way in which Christianity's truth claims would be accepted was on the basis of a civic response (11); which was generalised and sufficiently all embracing to encompass most of receptive society, without the necessity of being discomforted by rigorous observances. Virtually all communitarians felt this further reinforced the relativist position of the church and inevitably negatively influenced those committed communicants, who were otherwise liable to be discipled into staunch believers. Irrespective of denominational background most communitarians who had an opinion on this subject were envious of those fundamentalist charismatic churches that had adopted 'truth claims approaches' and inding so established moral boundaries for their rapidly increasing congregations. However most communitarians saw this as only a partial solution to the church's dilemmas.

Irrelevance

"No greater challenge has the church ahead of it than to find something they can offer the disbelieving masses."

(Transcripts)
Respondents acknowledged that the church had a crisis of confidence in what it could offer the wider society. As a social club the Church could claim a qualified success but as an active social force its message was limited by the confidence the leadership felt in asserting the church had something to offer. Whilst most communitarians appreciated the real difficulties facing the clergy, they nevertheless felt that society's contemptuous dismissal of the church as offering anything useful, was essentially a failure of leadership.

(3) AUTHORITY, LEADERSHIP - CLERGY?

Perhaps the most definitive statement that could be made about communitarians as a group was in relation to their attitudes to leadership. The researcher, from an Anabaptist background, was repeatedly struck by the distributed leadership functions within community that approached the Anabaptist ideal. Even community groups from sacramental denominations were closer to eldership-leadership than many mainline nonconformist denominations. Partly this represented an actualisation of an ideal social structure and partially a reaction to a perceived church leadership crisis. In very few communities did the participants place a high priority on the role of an ordained minister, even those who needed a quote "juggler of the arcane symbols" unquote, for sacramental observance.

A common theme in most communities, was the devaluation of the laity, by the established churches. Indeed few communities would sustain a distinction between laity/clergy, and in most of the few that did, power ultimately rested within the core group, rather than an office as such. They felt that community would be a success in part, to the extent that it recognised that each person in community had a
spiritual gift, as well as a social function. Leadership, to the extent that it was necessary, was the recognition and ordering of these 'gifts of body ministry' in such a way to ensure 'the smooth flow of the spirit'. Typically as discussed in Chapter five, communities with more than 12-15 members evolved a leadership team that distributed leadership functions in a mutually self-regulating way; and it seemed that in most communities this approach worked well, with due allowance for personality differences.

Communitarians, satisfied in responsive leadership structures, were on the whole hostile to the concept of an ordained ministry. Partially this was due to psychological damage sustained at the hands of former ministers, and partially a feeling that clergy were perhaps the single greatest obstacle to the church's effectiveness...

"...the clergy are essentially parasites. Their day has gone. I will not be obedient to anyone who isn't obedient to me. ... Why is the church stuffed? Obviously it's its ministry. Those who represent it are useless; worse, bloody destructive..."

(Transcripts)

Power was a primary consideration to many communitarians. Most felt the institutional churches were structural arrangements that benefitted the clergy 'first, second and always'. Having suffered at their hands, few were willing to return ...

"In the local parish, there is rarely any recognition of each person's gifts. Often, through veneration of the clergy, the gifts of others are overlooked or discounted. ... I have some thoughts about a way out of this dilemma... but to talk about inservice training for clergy is to talk about the clergy giving up a lot of power and status which he now holds." (12)

"Areas of real conflict which come to mind are: Grossly unequal distribution of power - the mentality of a general (clergy) with his officers (parish council) and troops (congregation)." (13)
Others with a more charitable viewpoint, felt the clergy were the victims of the structural differentiation process, to the point that they had become irrelevant...

"Most priests are so removed from their congregation that they avoid contact with their parishioners except on an artificial basis and hide behind their functions - Mass, prayer, sacraments and the like. Once they had some clout but now are peripheral to real life. I think most realise this, its part of the declining vocations but still they go on the same way."

(Transcripts)

Most agreed that the clergy were to be more pitied than condemned.

These few quotes illustrate the negative aspects of ministry. Communitarians are, with most Christians, conservative in believing in a hierarchical ordering of the Church. Thus they see leadership as the 'discernment' within the body of leaders who are recognised and confirmed and continually legitimated in the community. Whilst this belief structure differs substantially from actualities as discussed in the leadership appendix; it has the status of community myth. Thus leaders are thought to be servants of the body and as such accountable...

"... since gifts are named by the community it follows both that the leadership of a local community will be named by that community, rather than being assigned to a congregation by a hierarchy and the leaders are accountable to the community they serve. What a servant does is determined not by the servant's own will, but by those he/she serves." (14)

Community is thus a ministry of all believers in which 'laity' is supplanted by Luther's 'by baptism all are truly priests'. Accountability is thus a central feature of leadership, which binds the communitarian to his/her leaders as much as the leaders are bound. The category of religious specialist is reversed and though
community may employ some of its members full-time in 'clergy-like' roles, this is seen as a sharing of resources to encourage gifts, rather than the establishment of clergy substitutes. Communitarians strongly believed that in the development of 'religious specialists' the wider church had its most fundamental failure.

Discussion

These three themes, the Church Universal, Secularisation and Authority -Leadership-Clergy are related and form one distinct sub-grouping of themes, that of a reaction to the established order. They are essentially negative in as much as they are dominated by the past and the communitarians' reactions to events that were psychosocially damaging. They are essentially because motivations, as community is essentially a because reaction. However these three themes also demonstrate a desecularising tendency.

The communitarians are born into or converted to an objectivised system of meanings that has ultimate significance. To a great extent the role rules and normative prescriptions are unconscious, to the extent that they are unquestioned incorporations of a learnt and culturally transmitted 'stock of knowledge'. They are legitimated within the plausibility structures of both the presocial and more importantly via the institutionally differentiated legitimators of meaning, the clergy. Thus the communitarians, as committed church-goers, were essentially within a symbolic universe of meaning, that was maintained and legitimated as a social given. Thus the denominational structures they came from were the ultimate plausibility structures of the person's worldview. (15)
However into this relatively uncomplicated Eden came the snake of competing meaning systems. Pluralism led to a number of related reactions. Firstly the legitimation of the internalised worldview depended heavily on the primary legitimators, the clergy. These experts were responsible for the manipulation of the conceptual machinery that would reconcile discordant conceptual universes.

Two processes are at hand for the clergy to use: To either maintain the boundaries of belief via therapy to the doubter, or to incorporate or translate, the discordant subjectivities into the existing symbolic universe. Unfortunately neither process assisted the communitarians. They resisted internalising their cognitive dissonance and located the source of discordance firmly in the 'out there'. As such therapy particularly in the disillusionment phase, increased the discordance. The second mechanism essentially nihilation, in which the discordant elements that threaten the plausibility structures, are 'explained' and interpreted within the boundaries of the worldview was not successful, as the communitarians now were no longer accepting a relatively narrow conception of the symbolic universe. Thus for example, the move from seeing Christianity as the system of ultimate relevance to seeing it as a competing meaning system, that relatively few people subscribed to as an overarching system of personal transcendence; left the communitarians on the outside of the plausibility boundaries. Legitimation was thus no longer primarily external but had become located in the privatised awareness of the individual.

Thus it can be seen that these three themes develop this process. Firstly the Church moves from being an unquestioned system of ultimate significances to being one questionable segmentised
institution. The legitimators become devalued and their role as 'religious specialists' questioned. The individual is left with the responsibility of integrating the discordance. He has a number of choices. He may internalise the church's seeming irrelevance as either a personal weakness or 'lack of understanding of God's ways' and return to the fold. He may use the mechanism of denial and refuse to recognise the existence of the segmentation which gave rise to the perception of irrelevance. He may even migrate to the new meaning structures and become 'secularised'. Although, as mentioned earlier, this may only be a stage on the path to community. Finally, he may attempt to innovate, to reconcile the discordance by creating a new social construction of reality in which the discordant elements are encapsulated, or excluded from the boundaries of the system.

Within the themes outlined can be seen the emergence of such an innovation. Firstly, there is the concern that privatisation is in essence a retreat from the problem. There is a need to say that Christianity is, or may be, ultimately significant. (16) A major plank of a social reconstruction becomes a demonstration that it may act as such in community. Secondly is a rejection of those legitimating structures that might degrade this attempt, the rejection of the church and clergy as sources of legitimation. Thirdly, community acts as a vehicle in which new boundaries are established for the social world in which the actors are able to construct a 'set piece' social system, that holds constant (to the extent possible) those other elements that threaten belief.

Thus the communitarian is withdrawing into a subsociety in which he or she can exclude those elements of the other competing meaning
systems that might be attempting to annihilate Christianity. This attempt establishes an essentially deviant social system that objectivates meaning amongst the actors in an essentially sectarian way as discussed in Chapter Four. As reality needs others to objectivate meaning, so the community must have the clear boundaries of membership that select only those others, who agree with the new social construction. Lastly, the individual having attempted to desecularise personally, by the construction of this subuniverse, must legitimate it by seeking to persuade others. Ultimately then the success or otherwise of this process is the impact it has on precisely those groups the individual has first marked themselves off from. Thus the primary target of the communitarians is the Church, rather than the wider society.

The study turns now to three other related themes that may be seen as desecularising attempts aimed at the wider church.

(4) THE 1ST CENTURY CHURCH—ACTS TWO

"Envisage Christian Community, House fellowship basis, mud brick, organic gardening. Seeking a minimum of 6 couples, children, single folk, dedicated to the Lord Jesus Acts 2:44 ...."(17)

Again in defense of the basic thesis that community is an essentially conservative social phenomenon seeking to return to 'a time when', any number of baselines may be advanced in which the status quo was less problematic for the communitarians. One such baseline was the early church, or 1st Century Christianity. As a desecularising tendency, communitarians who subscribe to the social arrangements of the early church, do so advisedly with well thought out motives
"The church has lost its basis. I mean it isn't what Paul would have called a community of faith. They no longer practice Christianity in a recognisable form. It isn't what it was in Acts, though of course we're living in the 20th century and not all of it would apply... Still we need to recognise this isn't a Christian country anymore...and we need to act like it isn't...."

(transcripts)

This quote contains the essential elements of this theme. 'We are no longer relevant as institutional structures that are based on an implied overarching Christianitas. Our churches need to realise that we no longer demonstrate appropriate Christianity in a pagan culture. Appropriate Christianity is that which is different and highly visible. One form of visibility could be the arrangements of Acts Two, which were essentially communal. By returning to an Acts Two arrangement, the communitarians will be acknowledging this shift and combating its worst elements, relativism, materialism, the decline of belief, loss of fellowship and meaning.

This theme contains a number of elements that are essentially desecularising as discussed above:-

Firstly, there is the recognition that a fundamental shift has occurred. Many communitarians equated the present resurgence of First Century Christianity as a final recognition that they live in a post-Christian age. Thus all structures which may have been marginally appropriate even a short time ago are now largely irrelevant. This shift is seen in all of the indices that mark the theoretical limits of the secularisation debate. What is
significant is the realisation that this has occurred. Most communitarians were skeptical that the church had woken up to this profound change. The first task was to demonstrate clearly the dimensions of this shift...

"You are only preaching to those asleep. The church is, you know, asleep in the light, (Keith Green?) Yeah. Don't know what'll wake 'em up but how do you show the silly buggers that it's over like?... they could all go home, you know, the party's over. No one cares if you're Christian anymore. So why play games - Hymns, missions, you know..." (transcripts)

Arising from this recognition are clear alternatives. Not all communitarians were interested in the 1st Century Alternative, in fact community was fairly evenly divided on it as a valid alternative, but most felt that it was an ideal alternative. Based on Paul's description of the early church in Acts, this alternative had a number of features.

"And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who believed were together, and had all things in common and they began selling their possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone had need. And day by day continuing in one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together...." (18)

Communitarians felt that by structural adjustment they would be able to approximate the ideal of this passage and others. This was a pragmatic rather than idealised awareness, that social structures were important elements in the social construction of reality. Living together and sharing meals necessarily meant
an increased concern for each other that bred group cohesiveness. The sharing of possessions, led to an economic dependency that generated commitment and so forth. Importantly this structural adjustment was seen as a vehicle to challenge others as much as constrain self.

The strength of this theme is hard to overemphasise and it has had numerous interpreters. A writer in this area Robert Banks, whose books, *Paul's Idea of Community* and *Going to Church in the First Century*, have been widely quoted by communitarians. The theological prophet of both community and house church movements, his works stand on a par with those of Athol Gill, the leader of The House of the Gentle Bunyip in Melbourne. Other Australian writers have published in part on this theme (19).

Why then First rather than Nineteenth Century Christianity as a baseline? Obviously the attraction of a canonical status. Yet few communitarians would see Paul's descriptions of church community as a biblical prescription. Most viewed the Acts arrangements as an exemplar that held valuable lessons for contemporary Christianity, yet were not binding on twentieth century practice. (20) Perhaps as Martin 1978 has suggested (21), the transformations of rapid social change have left the communitarians with Luckmann's 'illusory freedom'. They feel they need a referent to an age when high levels of secular diversity were met with quite definite religious structures. Communitarians thus saw the early church as analogous to their present situation. High levels of religious diversity lead to a de-establishing of
an 'official model' and the illusion of free choice. However such choice equated with a 'dreadful freedom' that such choice brought. The First Century was then an example of a time when 'real Christianity' could maintain its boundaries of belief and practice, in a time of rapid social change.

(5) RENEWAL (ECUMENISM)

'O God, by the mystery of today's feast, you bless your church in every race and nation. Pour down upon the whole world the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and in our day inspire the hearts of the faithful to perform those self same works which by Divine condescension were wrought when the Gospel was first preached'.

Catholic Pentecost Liturgy (22)

Renewal meant two closely interrelated things to communitarians. Most importantly the rediscovery of the gifts of the spirit, or charismatic renewal, and secondly and subtending from the first, ecumenical rapprochement. At least 70 percent of communitarians studied saw themselves as part of the 'great charismatic renewal'; and one of the two communities networks, the Related Christian Communities, saw themselves squarely within the ranks of the Catholic renewal tradition (23). Nothing is added here to the great body of work on the charismatic renewal phenomenon other than to assert that most communitarians were first 'Charismatics' before becoming communitarians. It is suggested that seeing community as an expression of the charismatic renewal may well confuse, rather than explain community as a social entity. What is presently important is the meanings that the communitarians brought to this movement and community.
"In the Catholic Church at the moment being Pentecostal is a distinct liability. Being a charismatic in a community makes you even more marginal!! I guess its the realisation that you must have a direct relationship with Jesus that cuts across Catholicism".

(transcripts)

The two related Christian communities studied in detail both had an evangelical approach that was not common in traditional Catholicism. Both communities, relating to essentially noncharismatic parishes, stressed the need to have 'a real experience of the Holy Spirit'. Both saw their primary external function as 'evangelising' the parish into an 'experience of the spirit'. Without putting too fine a point on it many communitarians saw the renewal movement as a heaven sent opportunity to proselytize within a structure that they saw had at best a loosely defined sacramental route to salvation. The researcher was struck again and again by the almost calvinistic assumption of an external experience of grace equalling a personal assurance of salvation. One respondent, an acolyte of the Church, expressed this clearly...

"Lets face it many Catholics don't know they're saved because they never have been. Just going through the church's rituals doesn't equal salvation. You've got to experience it. Our prayer group allows us to reach these Catholics who aren't yet Christians..."

(transcripts)

Renewal thus allowed the communitarian within these communities to experience both a personal salvation history as well as equiping him to interpret the rituals used in the church's liturgy, in such a way as to strengthen the purposes of the community-relevance commitment, belief and ultimately desecularisation.
....'when the Gospel was first preached'. This ending to the traditional Catholic prayer at Pentecost, points to the close relation between renewal and the belief in the first century church as an exemplar. A common expression in community is, 'we are renewing the gifts of the spirit to the church as it was in the beginning' i.e. the First Century. This close coincidence points to the communitarians' belief that the church has been weakened by a loss of the realities that once characterised Christian practice.... And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place....' It has been suggested in other places (24), that this resurgence of biblical miracle literalness in the wider church, is an illustration of a weak organisation retreating into the mystical or millenarian, to avoid harsh secular realities; but for the communitarians the reverse is true. They see the charisms as one further vehicle to 'equip the saints in the struggle against disbelief'....

"Christ attracted people to him with signs and miracles. In this age we need to do likewise". (transcripts)

However it should be pointed out that a primary outcome for most communitarians engaged in renewal was a strengthening of community by recruiting new members.

Closely allied with renewal, and in some ways equally First Century, was the belief in ecumenism. Most researchers in the area of renewal explication have referred to charismatics' overt messages that charismatic renewal is the breaking down of barriers, amongst which are those of doctrine. Contrary to scripture, on five distinct occasions the researcher was told that the First Century
church was united doctrinally, because they were equipped with the gifts of the spirit i.e. interpretation, discernment etc. This, they pointed out, meant the early church was homogeneous and ecumenism wasn't necessary - it was. Though this flies in the face of the scriptural account, it was surprising, the number of communitarians, who held an attenuated belief in the position that the gifts of the spirit equalled ecumenism.

Though the researcher was unable to see any evidence that ecumenism strengthened the communities, it was held as a conscious goal by many. The addition of the pentecostal experience allowed communitarians to submerge their doctrinal differences by participating in a new area of faith and worship. Most confused this with a genuine thorough going ecumenism which addressed issues of contention. However it is undoubted that the addition of a new area common to all denominations and not in dispute, provided a functional bridge that did much to reduce the psychological distances between faiths. Thus the Related Christian Communities network had an articulated strategy to encourage communities that were ecumenical...

'The community is ecumenical in its lifestyle, one of the major thrusts in this ecumenism is for members to experience the fullness of their own tradition, to honor (sic) the richness of other traditions, and to be in right order and submission to their respective Churches'. (25)

Though some writers would interpret this as a triumph of ecumenism, it is here suggested, that within the communities studied, it was practical only to the extent that individuals practiced a certain psychological compartmentalism and that they had the added safety valve of relating to an external church of their own denomination. Most communities were composed of people from similar denominational
backgrounds and as only 25 percent of communities were parish-related, ecumenism was more an ideal than an actuality. (26).

However Renewal and its concomitant ecumenism provided an important metaphysical plank in the arresting of secularisation. To the extent that you could account for the decline of the established church by asserting this was a refusal of the 'neglected gifts' then you had both an answer to the church's dilemma and a reason for your present marginal position. The discussion turns now to a discussion of community and family.

(6) COMMUNITY AND FAMILY

If the community movement has a shibboleth it would be allegiance to the word family. In practice family means many things to communitarians and 'protecting the family' may mean introducing unrelated adults into the family structure to support parents in one context, and keeping interference of any kind to a minimum in another. However the belief in the family, and community as its protector, is absolute.

Communitarians see the family as being extremely vulnerable in present society. Its vulnerability is demonstrated by such comments as 'the craziness of the nuclear family', to 'they want to abolish it altogether'. Most communitarians maintained that the family, however conceived, was a God given relationship that society interfered with at its peril. Beyond this central belief, their views reflected the structural arrangements of the various communities. Those in single house groupings, of necessity felt that the family was vulnerable precisely because the parents were isolated in the home and the
addition of unrelated adults strengthened the caring functions.
Most other communities felt that the family should be strengthened externally by joint childcare, social support of parents, economic sharing and other arrangements peculiar to the individual community. These groupings felt the family should be maintained in a distinct unit within the overall structures, as this approximated the community norm and as such reduced one negative aspect of community life, in the popular conception.

As with renewal there is little that can be added to the immense debate that surrounds this issue. However again in defence of the basic thesis, this study turns to the meanings that attach to this strong belief in the family.

"You hear them saying that Christians are born not made anymore, but they're missing the point. Unless the family is sound then we won't pass anything on..." (transcripts)

"You shouldn't be studying community really, you should be studying the Christian family...." (transcripts)

"Really the family is our first community. It is possibly the best model community can have. We at Bundeena, encourage the family because it is God's plan and because this in turn guarantees the next generation will be Christian...." (transcripts)

Should there be any further need to illustrate the radical differences between the Countercultural and the Christian community movement, one need look no further than the meanings attached to family. Rigby has graphically illustrated the countercultural view of family in his chapter - Communes and the nuclear family (27), Abrams and McCulloch's major work concentrated specifically on communes that attempted to transform the family (28). Cock's work illustrated throughout the
transformations of the family within Australian countercultural communes (29). All saw family as...

"One of the major bulwarks of the existing social order and therefore an institution in need of radical alteration." (30)

Communitarians conversely, whilst acknowledging the many problems with the family in society, felt that...

'The stronger and more exclusive the marriage commitment is the freer relationships can be... The intimacy of the family, rather than competing with the larger community, can be a building block for a wider intimacy. Although one does not have to be in Christian community to have a Christian family life, it does provide an environment in which the family can be daily nurtured and strengthened.' (31)

Communitarians recognised that the family is the primary vehicle for enculturation and the bulwark of the existing social order. To the extent that Australian society is emmeshed within a Christian conception of the family, they are willing to uphold and strengthen the traditional social order. Thus communitarians were active in organisations such as the Family Life Movement, the Call to Australia, the Festival of Light, the Right to Life Association. Whilst they might disagree with these organisations on many issues, they felt the central point, the defense of the family, was too important to be divisive. Often qualified support was given to, specifically non-Christian organisations that made pro-family statements and four communitarians gratuitously volunteered that they voted Liberal only because they felt this party gave more support to the family than other parties.

The commitment to the family, however conceived, was both personal
and cultural...

"Libbers tell me that as a woman, family oppresses me but these stupid people are oppressing me too. They rip down my country, kill off its unborn and force me into alternatives I don't want!! When will these people realise they're forcing most women into a position of supposed equality that's garbage. Kill the family, force men and women into 'its' and we're left with communism. In fact even communists don't hold with that rubbish."

(transcripts)

This essential conservatism was aimed squarely at those in the wider society who advocated departures from the Christian ideal. It was part of the overall anti-abortion, anti-feminist, anti-utopianism that characterised the worldview of the more conservative of the communities studied. However they were radical, in as much as they insisted that their primary referent, the institutional church, revise its views of the family. Thus a common theme in the Catholic communities was 'of course most people are against the Church's views on birth control. It is directly opposed to family realities'. They felt that encouraging the ideal of the nuclear family was equivalent to institutional suicide as it excluded singles, sole parents, and the aged widowed which increasingly make up society. Family, within community, thus expressed the ideals of a strong marriage bond that allowed others to participate, gave relief to the partners, was open to community discipline and encouragement. Perhaps because of their insistence on the community as a larger family structure, they were able to insist on singlehood as a distinct calling and to insist that the divorced not remarry. Most felt the church held a stereotype of marriage and the family that excluded all who were unlucky, unwilling or unwanted.
Another emphasis of the communitarians, was on the family as a death transcendent device, that would free the community to care for its young. A recurring theme in most research on the communal form has been the potential ability of communities to exist beyond the life of the individuals that compose it. Within communities researched, the researcher was struck by the inclusiveness of this function. Many communitarians felt that community would ensure both the personal, material and spiritual well being of dependents. The wider family structure gave a feeling of security which could not be obtained in the nuclear form.

As a collectivity, community is the family structure that the established churches preached but found difficult to practice...

"I was lonely in my church. We are small, only 60 members, and most didn't come and I had no point of contact with them... my life wasn't in anyway caught up with theirs...we passed each other like ships in the night you know. All playing at being brothers and sisters...."

(transcripts)

The sheer size of the local church as an organisation that had to support itself and its paid professionals, militated against the real brotherliness that 1st Century biblical accounts implied. Most communitarians felt that the major limit to effective Christian practice was the size and complexity of the established church. Hence the mutual accountability that was so necessary for any effective witness was lessened by the sheer size of the church's membership. Community could then more closely approximate the true family ideals and hence act as a more effective and ultimately desecularising agency. Thus it was almost mandatory in all communities that the social organisation reflect the larger
extended family.

Discussion

The themes of Acts 2, Renewal and Community and Family form a subgrouping which are essentially progressive reactions to the concerns of earlier themes. They represent an attempt by the communitarians to provide an alternative to the existing order within the churches, and, as such, are essentially correctives. The commonality underlying these themes is a return to idealised times and structures that resist if not reverse the decline of faith and Christian practice. Thus the 1st Century church is seen as an exemplar for its clarity of purpose, if not homogeneity. The appeal of Acts 2 is both a looking backwards and a looking forwards. In the past the church was organised, expanding and sure of itself in a pagan culture. As such there are clear parallels for the church today in the post Christian era, which many communitarians feel society is rapidly becoming.

Similarly renewal is an idealised return to 'the great age of faith' located vaguely 'out there in the thirteenth century', when the Christian world was united into one sacred cosmos. If the church should need any impetus towards this golden age, it lies in the ecumenism that communitarians conflate with the renewal movement. Again, if renewal is the impetus, then 'more wholesome family arrangements' are vehicles of such renewal; the discovery in a post Christian age that the differences that divide are less than the basics of faith. The charisms that lead to becoming spiritual brothers and sisters, and to a recognition of the role of the Christian biological family as a primary site of
Christian development, combine to arrest the decline of the family ideal in the church. Hence a return to 'a more appropriate consideration of the family's worth'.

It will be noted that these three themes are again aimed at the established church and while positive suggestions for change, imply directly the limitations of the churches in these areas. The notion of the golden age, as discussed in chapter three, underlies these themes, though most communitarians would qualify their assertions that an absolute age of faith ever existed. However they feel that the decline observable in their lifetimes is sufficient to show ongoing secularisation from a baseline well within their own life. Somehow the church is yet again at fault.

These three themes also demonstrate the communitarians' attempts to desecularise their world via the alteration of their structural relationships. As discussed in previous chapters, communitarians spent considerable effort in attempting reengagements of social structures and belief. While most felt pessimistic about dramatically affecting the 'The Religious' in a wider society, they felt that by reversing the 'decline' aspects in Christian life, they would arrest declining belief. These themes then illustrate the communitarian's preoccupations with prescriptions for change, or 'getting back to basics'. The structural differentiation that leads to religious pluralism and hence disengagement, could be arrested by the increasing intimacy, each of these themes suggests to the church. Each implies a social reintegration around a recognition of the 'familialness'
of Christian life. Many communitarians implied that the family was the last bastion of unambiguous meaning and cohesiveness and the church might profit from its example.

Equally, Renewal, clearly linked with ecumenism in most communities, was seen as a desecularising device, that strengthened the whole church, by reintroducing the homogeneity and literalness of the early church. As quoted, many communitarians felt that 'gifts of the spirit' were the enabling of the Christian confraternity with 'signs and wonders' that acted as a warning to the unbelieving and as a rebuke to the lukewarm. Ecumenism and the family promoted a cohesiveness that led to the normative resacrilisation of Christian belief, a matter-of-factness that asks 'How do we put Christ into this?'

These themes demonstrate the communitarians' responses at an ideal level to the perceived deficits of their primary referent, the established church. They are aspects of their worldview and in many communities there are clear differences between these perceptions and appropriate responses. However they are essentially desecularising, in as much as they allow the individual communitarian to believe that he or she sees the problem, that causes widespread secularisation, and has a solution, if only at an ideal level. This mechanism thus allows the communitarian to in part externalise the problem of secularisation and more importantly feel that holding a Christian belief may yet be ultimately relevant to everyday life. It is in this sense that discussion now turns to a consideration of the two remaining themes Simplicity and Social Action/Social Justice which relate to the wider community.
This theme was held by a percentage of the communities studied and was not as well articulated as the themes discussed above. In eleven of the twenty-three communities studied, informal policies existed in pursuing simplicity. In most communities there was an informed awareness of the issues that underlie simplicity; however as a theme this and social justice were clearly subordinate to other aspects of the communitarians' worldview. This reflected the preoccupation of most communitarians with the limitations of the established churches. Indeed, whilst these two remaining themes are aimed at secular society, most communitarians felt they were as much challenges to relevance; laid at the feet of the churches.

Simplicity is the belief that society is wasteful. It stresses the notion of stewardship of the Earth as a biblical imperative (32) to the ecological crisis. As such it appears similar to many countercultural groups who have ecological responsibility as a major concern. However, Simplicity is not pursued by communitarians as an end in itself, but rather as a vehicle to locate them in the wider world. These 'means' share much with the social justice theme discussed in the next section; a desire to transform themselves in response to a relatively indifferent world.

When posing this thematic category, it was difficult to align four interrelated statements...

"Simplicity is not so much biblical, though of course its that, but its also straight environmental good sense. We really do have to act now for future generations..."
Simplicity isn't an end in itself it prepares us for the hard communal realities the church needs to face to remain viable".

Jim this (simplicity) makes us worthy, you know? Christ is coming, very soon. I sense this here (points to chest). Our world hasn't that much longer and I doubt we'll see the 21st century".

Science sucks. Its useless. We know it is but the simple lifestyle shows it up".

Firstly was the straight ecological concern for the environment and a few communities had a selection of secular environmental authors on their shelves (33); as well as the opinion leaders writing from a Christian perspective (34). Their concern was overt and immediate..'we really do have to act now for future generations'..

Paradoxically there was also a strong eschatological, or last days element, that was usually rationalised away by the formula 'if the world would end tomorrow I'd still plant trees'. At a less controversial level most communitarians felt that the call to a simple lifestyle was in conformity to New Testament rejection of materialism and apparent wealth. The simple lifestyle also made hard economic sense and was the major reason that community enjoyed an independence from the established churches. The economics of a shared frugal lifestyle, gave the freedom to live out the biblical message, however it was conceived to the world.

Most communitarians felt the simple lifestyle involved reducing possessions adjourning the trappings of wealth and material acquisition, the pooling of material goods and the serious questioning of the environmental consequences of each purchase. At an action level most tried to reduce consumption, ate revised diets, attempted to recycle resources and most made some pretense at producing their
own food. However, in practice few communities were able to substantially alter their consumption patterns and the most striking aspect of their 'alternative lifestyle' was the communal form and its sharing, which was adopted for reasons quite removed from the environmental as has been discussed in chapter four.

Why then is simplicity embraced by the communitarians as a looked for outcome of the Christian life? The answer lies partly with the sense of responsibility the conservative middleclass core feel for their social context, a concern that permeates the whole of their intentional enterprise and partially with a lingering sense of guilt that affluence brings (35). Christ preached a gospel of renunciation of the world and its trappings and an evangelical turning to the poor and oppressed as a large part of the evangelical and welfare imperatives. Most communitarians are middleclass, upwardly mobile and reasonably affluent. The churches they derive from are reasonably affluent and usually indifferent to the needs of the oppressed at a personal level. Simplicity thus becomes less an ecological imperative than a device to reduce cognitive dissonance. As with the dissonance phase of the Paths-to-community process the material and psychological incongruities between the communitarians, actualities and the biblical commands, leads to strategies or at the very least beliefs, that reduce or assuage these feelings.

This can be seen clearly in the book *Comfort or Crisis* produced in 1980 by the Sydney publisher Hexagon Press, run by a former House of the New World communitarian, with eight authors who debate the role of community, in the task of 'living Christianly in the eighties'. (36) The product of the fourth Middle Earth annual
conference, the book's major theme is 'Should Christians live differently?'. These titles suggest the horns of a dilemma and, often explicitly, the authors challenge the comfort of the majority of Christians in Australia. The authors from their differing perspectives, challenge the church and community to become uncomfortable, or committed to facing the many perceived needs of the world. There is a strong assumption that society is living on borrowed time and simplicity is just one of many responses possible...

'As the demands of simplicity, struggle and self-denial become necessary ingredients for survival, even within the near future, will a lifestyle built on individualism be flexible enough to change? It is not just a matter of you and me being able to change but the whole fabric of society. Is contemporary society so firmly entrenched in its rut that as it races forward, a major bend in the track will send it tumbling out of course? If current reactions to future demands are any indication then, crisis is inevitable'. (37)

The concern to avoid being too comfortable within the structures of society is partly a dialectical response to the affluence/ ecological subtheme and partially, and perhaps more profoundly, a suspicion that comfort equals in some way becoming 'comformed to the world not Christ'. As Davids points out in Living More Simply...

A biblical lifestyle will necessarily recognise itself as being in opposition to the prevailing values and lifestyles of its 'culture'. (38).

Many communitarians felt that simplicity equalled their personal statement that Christians should be aware of the dangers of complacency that the affluent church faces...
'A new church at Eastwood costs 'only' $187,000 but it costs Christ and his Christians a lot more in absolute terms'. (transcripts)

They felt that simplicity would 'characterize' the communal life in such a way that others would be 'shamed into conformity with the Word'.

Simplicity was also strongly connected to the communitarians' views of Science. The study has discussed in several places in the proceeding chapters the communitarian attitude to science and 'scientism'. Most felt that Science was of itself reasonably morally neutral but the way in which it was used was not. Many felt that an uncritical belief in science was as stupid as an uncritical belief in the church. Scientism was seen as an important 'enemy' in their struggle to desecularise. Most felt frustration in trying to get largely apathetic audiences to discuss the differences between Science and a belief in Science. Simplicity thus became a vehicle for challenging, in an interesting way, the problems science brought. As one communitarian leader said...

"Face it. You can talk till you're blue about the danger of substituting Science or Humanism for God but that's just philosophy. Talk about your vegies and you can sneak any conversation around to the meaning of life..." (transcripts)

Many communitarians, most notably the X Streeters, felt that full blown simplicity was so strange a lifestyle compared to comfortable suburbia, that it inevitably must make community that bit more relevant. Ultimately relevance was seen as gospel conformity and this necessarily implies being a 'transient' in this life. They felt
protests'. On the whole though, community remains unsatisfied with the level of action they have been able to achieve.(44)

Discussion

These two themes are essentially future oriented in-order-to motivations, which give community a relevance that is desecularising to the extent that it affirms the communitarian conviction, that society as it stands, is at risk and that community or the church, has something very valuable to offer as an alternative. These themes are shared with the wider alternatives movement, and as such do not distinguish any particularly communal trait. However they are significant as a partial acknowledgement, that an exclusively past orientation limits a realistic appraisal of the continuing relevance of Christianity. Many communitarians felt that the Church had lost its historical perogative as the West's social conscience. Others felt that the development of Christian welfare organisations had removed the individual Christian from direct contact with real needs and hence had lost an opportunity to be 'kept honest'. These themes then acted as a vehicle to assert Christianity is relevant, engaged and active.

Perhaps at a less evidential level, communitarians questioned that their social construction was a valid Christian Lifestyle. Perhaps the most provoking and uneasy criticism, was that the Christian communal was just another weakening of the whole church, yet another fragmentation. As with all of the discussion thus far, challenging the Church to relevance was a crucial concern. These themes seemed to be once again aimed at the church, and yet at least partially seemed also to be a rebutal of this premise.
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

These elements of the communitarian worldview reflect the concerns that directly impinge on the cognitive structure of the communitarians, but how do they relate to a wider theoretical context? Why is the recognition of the disparate nature of the Christian worldview in a secular society such a shock? Why do the communitarians react so forcefully at a social process level to offset psychological dissonance? These questions are addressed below, within the context of a discussion of Schutz's structures of the lifeworld and social relevance.

If Sociology is primarily the explication of the social order found within cultural contexts, then the sociology of knowledge becomes the meaning or understanding systems that underlie any such society and indeed Christian Community. Central to the discussion of meaning is the question of purpose, or of intentionality of meaning. One of the enduring contributions of Schutz's thought was the theoretical exposition of the directedness of the social reality that underlies society. That society is in fact a social construction which is purposive at the level of the individuals of a society and at the collectivity they represent. This purposiveness may be directed and constrained by the ongoing norms and legitimations of a person's biographical context and may be largely uncritical or taken-for-granted, but it is ultimately directed and meaningful. For Schutz the most important feature of the social is the lifeworld and the systems of relevance that underlie and sustain it. (45)
These systems of relevance represent the goals, purposes and outcomes which form an interrelated series of life-plans governing the actions of all individuals and in summation represent their socially constructed reality, in the case of this study Christianity and the church milieu. Human beings are purposive, they act together in a conscious intersubjectivity to further their mutuality. These lifeplans are not in essence insular or egocentric. They reside within a cultural context that directs and shapes actions providing resistance to some while furthering others. These plans exist within the common taken-for-grantedness of the social milieu. They are directed by, and in turn become part of, the common stock-of-knowledge that binds a social grouping. Our actions then in furthering our individual lifeplans arises in these contexts and in turn contribute to the gradual evolution of the social whole.

This process is informed by the systems of reference that are provided by the stock-of-knowledge. This interpretive framework is the conscious reflection on past experiences as a guide to inform the ongoing lifeplans. While it is true that one is often shaped by circumstance and actions have a degree of nondirectedness, a large part of ongoing actions are meaningful, arising from conscious attempts to direct actions purposively. Meaning in this theoretical context is the conscious reflection on past experience. This is another major contribution of Schutz, that only actions which are reflected upon are meaningful guides (46). Guides to social action thus are derived from the past experiences reflected upon by memory, (which in turn are part of the systems of reference within the stock-of-knowledge) and by the conscious reflections on the means to achieve sub units of a person's life plan. Therefore as long as
the church provided an ambit for meaningful reflection it was an adequate site for both informed action as well as direction from past precedent.

This does not imply that one goes through life sociologising actions in an analytic way. Rather most of the conscious actions are part of the natural taken-for-grantedness of everyday life which is the primary reality. However there are provinces of meaning which inform, and are different to the life world. Schutz felt that there were several provinces or worlds of meaning such as dreaming, the world of imagination, the world of scientific contemplation and also of religious experience. While his primary interest lay with the lifeworld, these other provinces play their part in constructing the social whole. Each province of meaning is defined by the systems of relevance that apply within it. They are not mutually exclusive and may overlap. However they are clearly subordinate to the experiencing of the lifeworld. Schutz states...

'The world of working in everyday life is the archetype of our experience of reality. All other provinces of meaning may be considered as its modifications'. (47)

It is at this point the discussions draws near to the communitarians who find the lifeworld intrusively penetrating religious meaning. Schutz maintains that each province of meaning has its distinct cognitive style, a coherent experiential base within the province and a specific accent on reality. The systems of relevance are compatible with the affairs as experienced within the province and concentrate as much on the way it is being experienced, as the what that is being experienced. (48) This is important as this experiencing reinforces the
coherence of the province of meaning as it at the same time builds up an increasing discontinuity between these provinces of meaning. They become increasingly disparate and one often experiences a shock in moving from one relevance system to another. It is not easy to transform one set of experiences into another province. This is why sociology is so singularly unable to address the 'the religious' or experiential aspects of religious life. (49) Schutz labels these provinces finite and there exists a tension in experiencing between modes.

It is possible then to extrapolate from the above summary of relevance and the life world, to the communitarians. While there is an incompatibility between experiencing in the lifeworld, and other provinces of meaning this does not mean that they may not be pragmatically aligned. Thus communitarians, whilst in the church, inhabited several finite provinces of meaning at the same time and worked in the world of daily life to further religious goals. (50) It was also possible to be unaware that they were experiencing different provinces, particularly when there was a close correspondence between the ostensible goals of the lifeworld, imagination and the world of religious experience. Thus the social content of the church's lifeworld may be organised to purposively promote religious experiencing and systems of relevance, while the content of their world of imagination could have a distinct religious flavour. However it is stressed again that these worlds are not reducible by explanation from within another province of meaning. Compatibility was thus at the pragmatic or pursued goals level of the lifeworld.
This becomes increasingly apparent when the naive stock of knowledge fragments in a pluralistic society. Rather than a natural will that expresses the purposes of the whole society in an uncritical and largely taken-for-granted way which may be considered a collective worldview, there arise many competing meaning systems within the lifeworld. Suddenly, the communitarian finds his personal provinces of meaning become polarised and it becomes harder to relate actions within his lifeworld with purposes in the religious or Christian world. Indeed they become aware of the distinction between the two. This may be conceived as secularisation and is the particular contribution that Luckmann, Berger and others, have made to the sociology of knowledge, demonstrating shifts in the way the overarching contexts of significance break down. This may be conceived as cognitive secularisation.

The communitarians of this study represent such a group in transition. Though they had experienced cognitive segmentation whilst committed churchgoers they were then largely unaware of this process and as has been argued this could not be considered secularisation as such. While they may have adopted different systems of relevance within the relational divisions of a structurally differentiated society, they maintained one coherent overarching worldview that integrated each segment into a larger whole. However this construction was based on a very much taken-for-granted foundation. This is the commonsense expectation that...

'Until further notice our past notions, beliefs, concepts and even our unarticulated anticipations will continue to apply and to serve our needs, means that we live in an unquestioned matrix'.

(51)
Thus the communitarians were able to orientate themselves to reality via their systems of relevance which implicitly they shared with the wider social whole. In a less than perfect world this theoretical nicety was never reached and most of the communitarians were cognitively secularised to the extent that they were aware that their worldview was increasingly a minority position in a pluralistic society but they were able to maintain the legitimacy of their worldview, and hence their relevance, by externalising this disparity. As long as they were able to maintain a church social group that acted as their reference point they were able to resist becoming secularised. This is an important point little recognised by theorists in this area. Luckmann and others, it has been suggested, discount the extent people may deny or otherwise psychologically defend against inroads into their worldview, as long as they have a primary reference group within which their systems of relevance were confirmed. In effect the increasing divergence of the wider society was counteracted by reducing the absolute limits of the social grouping one considers one's 'society'. In extreme cases this is the phenomenon within sects and fundamentalist congregations where society has shrunk by this process to a single group and in this thesis the communal situation.

However this diminution of those sharing a common pattern of systems of relevance, such as orthodox Christianity, makes communitarians extremely vulnerable to further challenges to the official construction of reality that they subscribe to. This explains also why sects and other marginal Christian constructions have strong group cohesiveness and clear boundaries between membership and the wider society. However denominational churches are less able to define this inclusiveness and hence less able to promote a clear worldview of overarching and integrating significance. They, of necessity, maintain a high degree
of internal ambiguity to preserve adherence to the 'rhetoric of faith'. Unfortunately this acts against those who, like the communitarians, subscribe to the official model unreservedly. These people are almost inevitably 'at risk' of becoming secularised. It is in this sense that the communitarians become aware of the dangers inherent in the diminution and fragmenting of the lifeworld and act to offset this by a reduction of the primary group, to those who are contractually most committed to both the act of Christianity, as well as its intentions. They become, by the communal venture, committed to an act of desecularising and deprivatising their worldview, by ensuring that all subscribe to both a received worldview-Christianity-as well as the pragmatic themes that give it expression within the lifeworld.

Thus the themes discussed above may now be seen as important parts of the process of community as they provide several legitimations that act to absolve Christianity of any failure as an overarching meaning system. The first set of themes achieve this end by locating the failure or fragmenting of the Christian milieu, within the Church. The breaking of the nexus between belief and action that allows a naive legitimization for a Christian worldview, is a failure of organisation and its adherents, not a failure of the worldview itself. Thus responsibility is externalised and the worldview protected. The second set of themes reinforce this by suggesting reasons for this apparent organisational failure, whilst with the third set, legitimate the act of community as an alternative venue or 'site for the practice of real and appropriate Christianity'. All of these themes are desecularising to the extent that they protect the communitarian from the cognitive dissonance that the intrusion of disparate worldviews (and indeed other
provinces such as the scientific entails. They may be once again externalised as societal artifacts rather than failures of the worldview Christianity.

The extent to which they may be said to be successful in resacrilizing their social contexts would be the extent to which they no longer doubt or experience any personal cognitive dissonance. This must remain a problematic outcome within community.
that simplicity made one precarious and marginal and this should be embraced as a 'joyful experience'. As Eugene Stockton leader of Manly Praise Community wrote in 'Gospel Poverty'...

"Sociologically it might be termed marginality, since it situates a person on the fringes of the world, society, his community or even the church. Psychologically, as I experience it, the aptest term I have come across is precariousness. When I am poor, in whatever way, I am perched on the cliff-top edge of disaster...where precariousness in some form is a constant factor in my life, what then?...My faith dares me to be crazy'. (39).

(8) SOCIAL JUSTICE-SOCIAL ACTION

This theme is coextensive with the simplicity theme and has common elements. Communitarians have a need to see that their lives reflect the Gospel concerns as they relate to the wider world and are based on community making a statement to society and to the established churches, on issues to which a Christian perspective might be applied. As such many of the ostensible concerns have already been covered in discussion of the preceding themes. However this area relates to how the communitarians should react or act as Christians-in-the-world. Informed by the Liberation Theology and radical discipleship movements (40), most communitarians feel that they should act for social justice. This has a number of elements.

Principally communitarians worry that the Judeo Christian ethic that underlies the western worldview is rapidly becoming obsolete. They feel that Christians should be prepared to be a vocal presence. What this presence should achieve is hotly debated...
"We're not living in a Christian age and forcing them to act like Christians is useless. We make our presence felt by being visible and different".

(transcripts)

"In a state of rapid moral decline it becomes necessary to insist that minimum moral standards remain the legal basis of society. Otherwise chaos..."

(Sermon Think-Pink Community)

These quotes sketch the poles of the debate. Perhaps the majority felt that community should preserve and maintain the existing legal base which most see as being formed from Christian precepts. This is seen as being under attack and most communitarians feel that community should support those groups that support the family; oppose abortion, homosexuality, legalisation of drugs and pornography; and act for conservative change: - Repeal of certain aspects of the antidiscrimination laws and so forth. Most would then give qualified support to such organisations as the Family Life Movement, Festival of Light and others in the Right to Life Movement. Equally most would support the established churches, to the extent that they challenge what is seen as being corruption of Christian society. However there is ambivalence, as few communitarians would see the established churches as being in any way responsive to these challenges and usually support is seen as going to individuals within the church, rather than the church as such. However most would see the church as potentially the most effective force to effect change if it could be mobilised.

Other communitarians, felt that the church had failed to recognise that its formal pronouncements were treated as rhetoric in a post-Christian society and that attempts to resurrect the Christianitas were ill conceived. These groups felt community should be visible
and engaged in challenging society to alternatives, rather than attempting a legislative 'rescue job'. They took the pragmatic line that laws, which did not reflect the reality of most of the members of a society, were essentially 'dead letter', no matter how rigorously enforced they might be. So even with stiffer pornography laws, this would not significantly reduce the level or desire for such material. This viewpoint though was a decided minority position, both within and between communities.

World hunger was seen as the major area of social justice concern. Informed by Sider's book Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, Taylor's Enough is Enough and George's How the Other Half Dies (41), Most communitarians felt world poverty and the transfer arrangements that underlie the international economic order, were causes for immediate concern. Fewer communitarians felt that the nuclear threat was as significant. Interestingly, many communitarians felt that the bible both predicted and promised escape from the inevitable nuclear war. (42) To a much lesser extent communitarians were engaged by domestic issues such as poverty, pro-life, drugs, racism, sexual exploitation and prison reform, in that order.

The step from Social Justice concerns to Social Action however was less evident. A recurring comment related to the difficulties entailed in transferring attitudes to actions....

"I'm 64 and that's a silly age to become a missionary. I'm not too interested in going and demonstrating, though I did march in the peace march. I worry though that I'm not putting my concerns into practice... but I don't know how really. I think our size paralyses us somewhat....Though we do need to do it independently of the church if we're to amount to anything?...

(transcripts)
Other communitarians complained that they were 'long on talk and short on action', 'we neuter ourselves'. Most communitarians felt the call to action, but their conservative middleclass backgrounds, ill equipped them to even think through radical action and their essential caution made them less willing to attempt new and untried strategies. The more countercultural of the Christian communities had been engaged in various demonstrations over the years. The House of the New World had organised a demonstration on the steps of Parliament House Canberra in 1973 - 'Kairos 73' which rallied Jesus People from across the nation, in a somewhat ambiguous protest action. The Dayspring communities continue to emulate the pattern of the Sojourners (43) with political protests and the occasional demonstration over a specific issue. Perhaps the most vocal community in Australia is 'Brook Street' in Melbourne which has at times emulated the suffragettes by dramatically chaining themselves to various landmarks (including the Catholic Cathedral), to make a point.

However the greater majority of communities and communitarians would stop far short of this form of expression. They react in socially correct or less visible ways. Many communities support Worldvision Childcare, The Tear Fund, Project Compassion and other third world development agencies. Many, particularly X Street, generously support various causes financially, often at a level that causes themselves economic 'embarrassment'. Some Brethren communities have 'commended workers' and support their missionary work on a fulltime basis. Much of the communities'efforts overlap with their welfare purposes, as discussed in chapter five. Politically many communitarians have acted as individuals, campaigning for the 'Call to Australia Party' electioneering, harassing sitting members and other 'acceptable
NOTES CHAPTER EIGHT


5. This is part of a transcript of a conversation with a member of the Kingsgrove Catholic Parish on the subject of parish relations with Kingsgrove community.

6. Rudolph Bultmann and succeeding Christian Existentialists approached the 'Crisis of Theology' by often seeking to demythologise the biblical bases of faith by a thoroughgoing pruning of cultural overlays, particularly 1st century influences. Their approach which often was essentially agnostic, was similar in intent to the Barthians and those following Boenhoeffer. These groups of Theologians with differing interpretations of faith and the scriptures, were similar in recognising that Christianity needed to react swiftly to this worldly threat which required as an immediate response a reformation of Christian life and practice. It is in this sense that the communitarians share a sense of urgency and call to action with Bultmann and others.

7. Whilst most communitarians were ambivalent to mass evangelists such as Billy Graham; they felt that only this degree of publicity and showmanship would have significant impact on society.

8. This point has been made in note 6 above. The 'Death of God' debate deriving from Nietzsche's Joyous Wisdom was an attempt to capture the essence of Christianity whilst denying an immanent God. Some theologians attempted to rescue God whilst admitting the need to disencumber the essence of 'real faith' from its institutional and normative expressions. Such theologians and the Sociologists that followed them (cf Harvey Cox's Secular City) welcomed the Death-of-God debate as a vehicle to free Christianity from its institutional restraints.

9. This is not only a semantic but also a contextual difficulty. Many communards felt that Clergy actively misunderstood the 'real reasons' their parishoners attended church.
10. Quoted in Millikan op. cit. page 152.

11. It refers here to the Civic Religion thesis of Robert Bellah discussed in Chapter Three.

12. Preston, op. cit., page 34.

13. Ibid., page 33.


16. Millikan, Faith Active in Love, op. cit., pps. 146-147, discusses this point in relation to the church. This discussion is quoted in full in note 44 below. Millikan's thoughtful insights support the major thesis of this section; the worldview the communitarians construct as a reaction to the churches allows them to desecularise.


20. The communal aspects of the early church were an important legitimation of Christian intentional community, as has been discussed in Chapter Four. Conservative communitarians could thus be doing 'something biblical' rather than countercultural. Economic Sharing, Accountability devotion to fellowship and the scriptures all had their appeal. Perhaps the strongest attraction was the potential to recover '...and all kept feeling a sense of awe' - Acts 2.

22. Quoted in An Introduction to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, page 1 produced as a pamphlet by The New Israel Covenant Community undated.


25. Quoted in New Israel Covenant Community No. 2, page 2 produced as a pamphlet by the New Israel Covenant Community undated.

26. Exmembers of parish related communities suggest that denominational differences were a significant factor in them leaving. For example, the Think-Pink Christian Community collapsed under the pressures of attempting a 'real ecumenical resolution of our differences'.


33. Not ably:-
34. Not ably:-

35. This 'Guilt Trip' has been interpreted by some quite unkindly, see for an example a Christian perspective:- David Chilton, Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators, Institute for Christian Economics, Tyler, USA, 1981.

36. Crisis or Comfort, (no editors named) Hexagon Press, Sydney, 1980, see note 19 above for fuller citation.

37. Ibid., page 124.


40. Primary sources are:-

Taylor op. cit.

42. Many communitarians felt that Revelations Chapter 9, verse 4 and others were a guarantee that Christians would avoid the tribulation which would end in (or result from) nuclear attack. See 2 Peter 3, verse 10.

43. Sojourners is the magazine produced by the Sojourner's Fellowship, Washington D.D. This is a radical social action Christian community which feels a strong call to speak prophetically on world issues. Many of the Fellowship have been gaoled for their civil disobedience including one of the elders Jim Wallis, who edits the journal.

44. Faith Active in Love op. cit. pages 146-147. Millikan is quoted at length below because he so succinctly summarises this chapter from an Australian perspective - and points to this dissatisfaction.
For Christians there is a need to assess the appropriateness of some of the theological presuppositions that have formed the groundwork of our inherited Christian social view. For we are now facing a new situation; one which does not allow us to proceed on the presuppositions of the past. Unrestrained Progress is a threat, aggressive exploitation of the earth's resources is also a threat. There is some urgency in this task. First, because the last few years have shown the worldly philosophies which promise so much for the future of human society to be threadbare and in fact more of a threat than a promise to the continuing peace of mankind. Second, there is within the Christian church a growing uncertainty about the capacity of inherited Christian doctrinal systems to provide a substantial contribution to the understanding of contemporary world problems. It is even true that the church has learnt in some areas how to grow and develop a certain enthusiasm and at the same time to avoid the issues that loom so large and threateningly above us. This is obvious in many areas of the Charismatic movement.

In short I believe the church is at a critical point in its relationship to Australian society. The effectiveness of the churches' witness will in a large measure be decided by its capacity to respond with real precision to the new philosophical and social situation in Australia. The danger, I fear, is that the church will retire into conservatism and privatism....

I believe we will also reinforce society's stereotype of Christianity as a private religious option that is to do with the internal practices of individuals but does not have a larger social expression. It is the present stereotype which is rendering the Christian message more and more irrelevant to the life experiences of most Australians.

As I said before, one of the great dangers facing the church is this retreat into privatism, the belief that Christianity is located entirely in the life of the believer, and it doesn't have a larger dimension which relates to the grouping of people in society. Christianity is losing ground in Australia because the church has lost its capacity to show the vitality and relevance of Christianity to our society.
45. This is perhaps the central contention of the body of Schutz's work the attention to the lifeworld as the ultimate reality.... See Alfred Schutz, *Reflections on the Problems of Relevance*, (Ed. Richard Zaner, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1970).


48. Here paraphrasing Cox, op. cit., page 27.

49. This is the point made by Peter Glasner so eloquently (see discussion Chapter Three). Schutz has succeeded in definitively explaining why it is not possible to apprehend the religious directly other than in one's own experiencing. However, unlike Glasner, he does not then dismiss the possibility of studying 'the religious' rather he specifies the limitations of any such approach.

50. Cox, op. cit., page 74, discusses this point more fully than possible here. Schutz felt that we are 'living in' various levels at the same time with some aspects of the various provinces and actions 'being closer to the core of my personality' is a Psychological adjustment of various aspects of my personal lifeplan.

51. Cox, op. cit., page.
All of this is subsumed in a religious system: no other body of Knowledge would suffice. Religious Knowledge and practice is arbitrary, transcending all empirico-rational tests as irrelevant and providing overarching meaning and final legitimations to those who commit themselves totally, who in giving all will receive all.

Bryan Wilson.
CHAPTER NINE

RELEVANCE

The body of this work has argued that a small group of Australian Christians, have attempted to alter their social context to create another environment, more conducive to the maintenance of their religious worldview. In so doing, they shift social context rather than the elements of the worldview itself. Despite the toils of secular attack, they remain Christian and Christianity remains their context of ultimate significances. To the extent that they remain meshed within a Christian ethos and this legitmates their belief and actions; community may be considered successful. As such community may be considered a valid alternative to the established church, as a receptacle of Christian practice. Their communities provide a site, at which clear and unambiguous concentration on the religious, may be encouraged and as such provides a clear example of intentional desecularisation.

To what Purpose? It is implicit in the discussions thus far, that the worldview orients the person to reality, legitimates his or her actions and provides a sense of at-homeness, within which the individual is relevant. This final discussion considers the process of community building as a specific instance of desecularisation as a means of relevance and in doing so evaluates the substantive contributions of this thesis.

Schutz distinguished three sets of relevances, the topical, the interpretive and the motivational. The last set are of
particular concern as the study has discussed the *because* motivations and the chains of *in order to* motives that are built upon them.

Community as a social form is particularly an expression of motivational relevances. However this study as a whole has wider relevance to sociological theorising than an explication of a particular historical instance of communal motivations. It demonstrates a specific instance of a wider secularisation process, that is emerging from the body of research in this area. It may be argued that the ideal of secularisation as a sociological concept is undergoing paradigmatic shift from one historical conception towards another. (1) As such it is one of the few studies, particularly in the Australian context, that provides a concrete example of Secularisation theorising as a *process of change and relocation*.

Luckmann's major contribution to the sociology of knowledge was to demonstrate clearly that the ideas that surround the theoretical concept, Secularisation, had undergone a paradigmatic shift. Previous concepts had stressed the inevitability of secularisation occurring as a reaction to social forces such as modernisation, industrialisation and structural differentiation; while the theorising that underlay these conceptions reflected the ideological commitments of the theorists to notions such as 'enlightenment, evolutionary progress, loss or decline'. Luckmann, and to a lesser extent Berger, were able to demonstrate convincingly, that within the religious area, *decline* and the other 'consequences' were essentially theoretical blinkers which imposed a certain conceptualisation on the data. They showed that at a theoretical level it is possible to see secularisation as a process of change and relocation of religious belief into newer contexts.
One of the consequences of this paradigmatic shift, which has so revolutionised the area of the sociology of religion has been a concentration on newer transformations of religion - and theory which does not ignore the possibility that established belief might reconstitute itself into newer expressions. This idea is not new, Troeltsch and others argued in the 1920's that such reconstitutions would occur. What is new, is the realisation that the base on which these changes would be legitimated has fundamentally altered.

This study of the communitarians makes the significant point that Christianity is transforming itself in response to these pressures into newer expressions of an old belief. The communitarians demonstrate an attempt to reverse the privatisation that has occurred. The vigour of newer theoretical conceptualisations of secularisation has concentrated on changes towards, whereas this study makes the point that perhaps secularisation could also be understood as a process of resacrilization. Or at the very least a dialectic response to privatisation. The communitarians as a privatised group of cognitively secularised Christians are transforming the contexts of their worldview to recast Christianity into a newer and perhaps more relevant form. This is significant. As Lyon has suggested, the paradox of cognitive secularisation is that privatisation may extend the scope of religion to embrace all aspects of social life. (2) It would seem that the outcome of cognitive secularisation may be as much sacralization as secularism. This study sounds a note of caution to those theorists that would see the 'Invisible Religion' as a necessarily secular phenomenon.
Michael Mason lamented the lack of empirical validations of Luckmann's work. This present work is an empirical study that responds to the often heard criticism of phenomenology, that such theorising is significant but there are few exemplars to demonstrate in a concrete way specific situations in which the theory may be demonstrated. This research project has responded to this challenge and has shown both a concrete instance of the secularisation process at work as well as giving an account of reactions to it. This extension of Luckmann, Berger and ultimately Schutz's thought, to the field, demonstrates the importance of the phenomenological perspective to the actualities of theory grounding.

**SECULARISATION**

One of the most distinctive features of this study was the reported degree of commitment of the communitarians to their churches when communicants. They were active far beyond the norm for their congregations and were committed to their interpretation of the consequences of a Christian lifestyle. We may speculate why they were so committed perhaps because a substantial proportion were converts, or because they represented a distinct personality type, which stressed achievement by conformity; however for present purposes they were vulnerable because of their commitment. Because they invested more of their personal legitimacy in the purposes of the congregation, they were more at risk of being disconfirmed by the discrepancies and incongruities of the official received worldview. They were less able to distance themselves from the congregation as the primary social group maintaining their worldview. As has been demonstrated this almost inevitably led to their becoming privatised, as each encountered the distance between the rhetoric and the actions
underlying the official worldview.

Thus they become privatised in as much as they become aware of the extent of secularisation within their primary referents and lose the capacity to unthinkingly and unreservedly contribute to the official worldview of the group. They *realise* their responsibility to critically contribute and with this recognition comes the death of innocence as it were. They now can no longer see the church as the taken-for-granted locus of belief and make the transition from naive to informed social actors. With the loss of this taken-for-grantedness, they realise that the locus of belief is now personal and essentially private.

However this privatisation does not directly equate with being secularised. For the communitarians, though they may briefly lapse from the systems of relevance that guided their actions, never the less continue as Christians, even though privatised. The pattern of belief remains substantially the same. Rather as they become aware of the partiality of the official worldview of the church, they realise the extent of cognitive segmentation practised by church members to reconcile the conflicting demands of a pluralist society. This recognition is more fundamentally the experience of secularisation. The communitarian becomes aware of the seemingly limited applicability of the truth claims of the Christian worldview. Put another way they become aware that the symbolic universe has fragmented.
This is perhaps the single most important motivator to community. While an uncritical member of the church, subscribing to a worldview that is explicitly held to be the integrator of the provinces of meaning and give an answer to the ultimate question of social formation; the communitarian is protected from the tension that exists, between the various provinces of meaning. In the secularised state he is aware painfully that the normative and institutional expressions of secularisation, he could once see as external signs of 'ungodliness', are important sources of confusion and doubt within the House of God. When his worldview breaks down and he is forced to seek meaningful and relevant directions individually, the person experiences profound disorientation. It is to relieve this tension that the communicant makes the journey to community. Community becomes an attempt to reconstitute the worldview on a more accountable footing.

The extent of psychological disorientation attendant on this breakdown of the normative basis of a person's life should not be underestimated. Often this loss entails a disorientation of anomic proportions. However, for most communitarians the change in worldview is profoundly disorienting, though not truly anomic. This stems from two main areas. Schutz talks of the shock experienced when in normal life one makes the transition from one province of meaning to another. (4) Though he speaks of different kinds of shock there is a basic discontinuity that arises when one tries to translate one system of relevances into another. For the communitarian, this arises as he is now faced with the privatised responsibility of adapting religious experiencing into concrete lifeworld actualisations. Tension is experienced as aspects of the lifeplan are altered as a result of the loss of naive certainty
and the primary reference group, the church, and its chief legitimators, the clergy.

The second source of discomfort is perhaps more fundamental. This is the loss of relevance. The communitarian orients himself towards the lifeworld, by the systems of reference laid down by his context and past experiences and by the systems of relevance that underlie the ongoing themes of the lifeplan. Together these aspects channel action in a way that locates the person in his social context. With the breaking down of the worldview the communicant starts on the paths-to-community and loses in succession: his primary reference group, the certainty that underlaid the reflections on his past actions, (that in part provided meaning) and then much of his forward momentum by losing substantial proportions of the lifeplan. For example a committed churchgoer who discovers his worldview is partial, irrelevant to his primary referent and secularised; is forced to question all of those events which in the past legitimated his ongoing actions. At the same time he might lose the social group in which he expresses himself and many of his future plans and aspirations become unattainable.

The personality type of the average communitarian makes this discomfort more profound. Gabannesch in another context drew a pen picture that graphically describes the communitarians of this study...

'Following the dictates of Authority, focusing on external consequences to the exclusion of internal processes; being intolerant of non-conformity, dissent,..., and having moral standards which strongly emphasise a balance to the letter of the law.' (5)
While a generality, this picture describes a group ill prepared to experience the profound changes that cognitive secularisation brings.

**DESECULARISATION**

Communitarians react to this secularisation, and this is a study of that desecularisation. While there is large body of work that explicates the consequences of secularisation there are few works that deal with reactions to this process. Perhaps the closest areas of research are those that observe transformations between denominations and other religious expressions, the corpus of research that surrounds sects and other contemporary transformations of religion. Also there is a smaller but no less vigorous research interest in the process of conversion that often underlies such transformations. Sects were discussed in Chapter Four and now discussion turns to the work on conversion to further examination of community as a desecularisation device.

The process outlined in this study arises out of the instability that a change in taken-for-grantedness entails. The communitarian faced with a breakdown of relevance systems, is plagued by significant losses, many of which impact on his identity. The pain this engenders acts as a powerful incentive to change his circumstances and retain a sense of personal stability. The work of the conversion theorists concentrates on shifts of worldviews rather than the maintenance of existing systems. However by contrast it may be seen that it sheds some light on those groups who seek to transform their social contexts to avoid transforming their beliefs. The theoretical assertion is made that community is an attempt to desecularise by changing social contexts rather than changing the social construction of reality.
They do this out of their belief that we are what we do and they may become desecularised by adopting a context more suited to the existing worldview than the church. Community becomes a means of grace, and a salvation of identity.

Kelsen, an Australian researcher in the field of radical self change or conversion, identified some groups that did not fall within the parameters of a conversion experience and who sought intra-world solutions as did the communitarians....

'The beginning, a crisis, does not by any means make conversion a logical consequence. Indeed the solution may be a rationalisation based firmly within the logic of the existing world-view of the individual. A performer sees himself, including his sense of happiness, success, failure etc., with reference to what he is doing and if there is a sense of failure in this, then the first solution sought is an intra-world one. That is, he will change what he is doing in order to change his self, his sense of happiness and so on. This is not conversion. The taken-for-granted has not altered. Our individual still takes for granted that he is what he does.' (6)

The communitarians attempt to desecularise by first challenging their congregations to relevance and then by changing from church to community. Both are strategies that remain based on the same set of beliefs and expectations. Their beliefs have not failed but rather their contexts of expression. Their identity as Christians, even though shaken, and sometimes passing through an unbelief phase, remains intact. Communitarians revealed a convincing repertoire of rationalisations that allowed them to account for secularisation and the problems of belief in a technical age.
The motivation to desecularise rather than to transform the worldview into some other equivalent lies ultimately in the psychological. Kelsen has shown in his thesis the necessary conditions for such change to occur. With the communitarians, the extent of the felt dislocation was less than the crisis Kelsen feels is necessary to lead to conversion. Rather they experienced deprivation. The communitarians are essentially conformity oriented and see themselves as part of the 'great silent majority' which in their somewhat hopeful estimation remains largely conservative and holds to a residuum of Christian mores. Realising the extent of cognitive secularisation within the church, they become uncomfortably aware that they are truly socially marginal, rather than mainstream. This accounts for both their attempts to desecularise and for their commitment to reinstitution of conservative mores as a basis for social transformation. Ultimately they seek changes to increase the base of their sociation.

Lofland and Stark (7) have delimited a process close to that outlined above. In a seven step process to cult membership they suggest the person passes through four stages to the point of choosing between alternatives. Firstly a felt tension, which then leads to a religious problem solving perspective. This in turn leads to the person becoming a religious seeker, or not convinced of any one alternative. The fourth stage is the turning point, towards change. Communitarians in the paths-to-community go through a similar process in as much as they consider alternative worldviews and sites while maintaining a religious perspective. At the turning point few choose to leave the bounds of a conservative Christian expression.
Glock sheds extra light on the process of desecularisation and again by comparison with the conversion experience. He feels that...

'a necessary precondition for the rise of any organised social movement whether it be religious or secular is a situation of felt deprivation.' (8)

The deprivation may be economic, social, organismic, ethical or psychic and which leads to felt deprivation or a sense of frustration. This in turn leads to distinct changes in organisational affiliation, belief structures, identity changes, attitude reorganisation and shifts of enthusiasm. There can be seen some clear parallels with the formation of community as a desecularisation device. The experience of community becomes a corrective to these felt deprivations. By providing a site where they may be contractually minimised.

In summary then it may be said that the Paths-to-community process outlined in Chapter Seven is an overview of all of the above discussion. The communitarians as committed churchgoers, exist within a relatively taken-for-granted context, where their worldview and the life plans that stem from these are essentially governed and legitimated by the church as their primary referent. As they are highly committed to the church and by inclination active, they are vulnerable to cognitive secularisation; and to a realisation of the extent of cognitive segmentation present within the church. Usually they have a 'Rubicon experience' that challenges the communitarian to seek solutions to these discrepancies. As these solutions fall down so does the systems of relevance and reference that sustain the worldview.
As Berger has said the degree of success of a worldview is equal to the success of internalisation of the taken-for-granted reality; which in turn is equal to the degree to which the individual does not question it. (9) When the taken-for-grantedness of the symbolic universe is threatened or altered then radical change may occur. (10) The communitarians become privatised as their attempts fail. The felt deprivation then becomes the motivation to reconstitute significant elements of the lifeplan into another context. Community becomes a desecularisation device as a means of finding another context in which Christian belief may be maintained while the threatened collapse of the symbolic universe is dealt with. This is a transposition of the social primary referent of the communitarian. This explains why community is so highly intentional. The degree of personal destabilisation or felt deprivation is reflected in the far reaching social changes conservative Christians will make to protect their worldviews.

COMMUNITY AS RELEVANCE

Thus far has been addressed the context of the change to community which is possibly the greatest contribution of this research project. It still needs to locate the ongoing community phenomenon in the larger theoretical context. One may pose questions in conclusion, that address the introductory question - Why Community? One may ask why the choice of a communal alternative? Why did the communitarian feel this goal to be useful, needful or convenient, as opposed to some other alternative? What are his ultimate goals and how do these impact on his lifeplan? In short what holds the communitarian to
Christianity as a meaning system, that would entail such an unusual social expression? All of these questions are questions of relevance.

The study has been pervaded with an element of bitterness on the part of communitarians towards the church and institutionalised expressions of Christianity. This is in part the communitarians' awareness of the extent of apathy within much of the established church, the 'social or leisure time Christianity', communitarians were so scathing about. Perhaps more fundamentally, the bitterness is a reflection of the degree of dislocation experienced when their reasonably comfortable existence was disturbed by the collapse of the taken-for-grantedness of their lifeworld. They found themselves grappling with issues they were ill prepared to grapple with and indeed often resented having to do so. Community becomes an expression of this bitterness, an intentional expression that they will protect themselves from future repeats by controlling the social expressions and directions of the context in which they practice their Christianity. Firstly community is a safe place to reconstitute a worldview.

However this does not answer why the communal form. As discussed most communitarians feel the church is potentially the best place to express appropriate Christianity to the world. The communal form is the best alternative they could find to the church. Wilson comes closest of the many theorists read in pondering this question when he suggests, while discussing contemporary transformations...
'What the modern world has lost in losing its traditional culture has been the basis for legitimated control. That loss has occurred as our social order has shifted its basic locus of operation from local community to a societal system, a nation-wide coherently integrating structure of roles and institutions...(if) we eliminate affectivity and the diffuse concern that once accompanied man's control of at least local and communal affairs. We need not be surprised if effective socialisation goes by default....
The cults...express resentment and anguish. (They) often establish communes and despite their many innovations, they clearly cater to a conservative demand for community - a demand that can no longer be expressed in the now discredited traditional terms.' (12) (Emphasis added)

This quote has the essential ingredients of an answer to these questions. Communitarians choose community because they view the world through essentially gemeinschaft eyes. They see the world as an interlocking series of local communities that are collectively the body of Christ. (13) They see the world from within the ideological constraints of Scripture based on a local community concept of society. One of the most poignant aspects of the research project was reading much of the literature produced by the commun­itarians themselves, which had as an implicit assumption, that one could have a worldview that embraced all aspects of society and which was capable of largescale social control and change at a local neighbourhood level. In a complex segmented and structurally differentiated society this is clearly not the case. Communitarians were thus ideologically out of step within their wider society. For this reason community became a desired alternative to the church, precisely because it allowed the establishment of a context that was felt capable of manipulation, on the terms of the communitarians.
As has been discussed in the preceding chapter on the worldview of the communitarians, most view the institutional and normative expressions of secularisation as evidence of societal decay. The collapse of the Christian moral consensus leads inevitably in their view to a society that is incapable of any meaningful relevance system beyond the individual. Morality becomes equated with the expedient and, communitarians feel, essentially relational. They are clear that any system of relevance must have a substrate that is imposed from without. Ultimately this is lodged in the religious.

Schutz maintains that the ultimate search for meaning is in relation to the 'fundamental anxiety' of the Existentialists...

'But in a word, we want to state that the whole system of relevances which govern us within the natural attitude is founded upon the basic experience of each of us: I know that I shall die and I fear to die. This basic experience we suggest calling the fundamental anxiety.' (14)

Communitarians were emphatic that this question was the preoccupation of any 'adjusted life', the 'basis of all moral order' and the 'central question of existence'. This answer may only be sought within the world of the religious and all other meaning systems were spurious, particularly those based on scientism. For this reason it was necessary to have enclaves within a society in which the religious could be pursued as a means of generating meaning for the wider society. Wider society inevitably meant the established church, on any level other than the rhetorical. Community became a means of encapsulating 'the truth', within a context that could be seen as 'appropriate' and hence the communitarians high commitment to modelling.
Lastly community was a solution that permitted the communitarians to derive many of the traditional advantages of the communal form. Economic sharing gave greater personal freedom to pursue non culturally normative activities. It provided emotional security and affectional bonds to those seeking to challenge the existing structures. It provided a reference group that had a high level of internal cohesiveness and hence legitimation. Lastly it provided an emotional alternative at a time when alternatives were needed.

ON THE ACCESSIBILITY OF RELEVANCES

Before concluding, a few critical remarks need to be made on the relations of the perspective of the social sciences to the lifeworld and the world of religious experience. Following Husserl it is axiomatic in phenomenological theory that one may never really grasp the experiencing of another and ultimately all such theorising is the artificial abstraction of 'facts' from the lifeworld or other context. Thus social science theorising is essentially a systematic net of topical and interpretational relevances from the perspective of the researcher, who inhabits yet another world or province of meaning; that of the social scientist. 'Facts' as discussed in this study, are those parts of the common experiencing of the social actors which characterise certain aspects of the interpretational relevances. As Schutz has stated...

'This does not mean that, in daily life or in science, we are unable to grasp the reality of the world. It just means that we grasp merely certain aspects of it, namely those which are relevant to us for carrying on our business of living or from the point of view of a body of accepted rules of procedure of thinking called the method of science.' (15)
This immediately admits the possibility, indeed the probability, that other interpretations of the data here presented are possible. This is both possible and encouraging as it would indicate not contradictions of theory but rather differing selective attention. The test of this theory's groundedness is the extent to which other theorists can enter the topical and interpretational relevances of the study. As sociological constructs from this perspective are essentially second order constructs, it is important that the grounding of the theory lie with the social actors themselves. For this reason it has adopted the ethical and methodological decision of sharing all such theorising with the communitarians in the hope that this may become less a theoretical interpretation and more a shared lifeworld experience. (16)

An important point of departure of this study from the cannons of phenomenological enquiry has been this joint discovery of the theory underlying the construction of community. Schutz and others see the 'bracketing' necessary for scientists to adopt a systematic system of reference to the field, as a process of distancing one's self from involvement in the ongoing social construction of reality. As Schutz puts it the events in the social world are...

'not the theatre of his activities but merely the object of his contemplation.' (17)

The researcher is essentially removed from the field by his different scientific systems of relevance. However this ignores that the social actors under study may be as informed in the 'scientific systems of relevance' as the researcher and as such, as capable of involving themselves in the activities of the researcher, as he does in theirs.
This point has been stressed in the preceding chapters; it suffices to say that Schutz and others underestimate the extent of this cross referencing. It should be noted that often the social actor is as much capable of entering the relevance system of the researcher as are other theorists. To suggest otherwise is to negate the value of all theorising. If the informed social actor cannot participate in the activities and constructions of the theorist, what hope has the sociological readership? This is an important philosophical point. If sociological theorising is to become a valid reflection of any primary social reality it will have to increasingly be cast in forms that are meaningful to the social actors themselves. To do otherwise is to neglect an important source of collaboration and to increase the derision in which sociological theorising is so often held. Schutz concedes this point himself in maintaining that an understanding of the other, and hence all sociology, is only possible by reference to the motivational relevances of the other. (18)

CONCLUDING DISCREPANCIES

As discussed in Chapter Two the grounded theory approach adopted, generates many categories that do not become saturated or part of the emerging theoretical conceptualisations. As the grounded theory develops, such areas become 'reduced' as not directly significant to the emergent theory. It has been maintained that the grounded approach is a wasteful, frustrating methodology in as much as one never feels that the study has satisfactorily concluded, or that all avenues have been pursued. Indeed the very richness of the approach throws up many such unsaturated categories that are tantalising alternative research areas. The study concludes with a brief discussion of these areas as directions for future research.
Perhaps the greatest unanswered question is why do some communicants choose community and transform their social contexts, and others presumably lapse into disbelief, apathy or some other transformation? In the study an awareness developed that the communitarians were only a small percentage of those that enter the paths-to-community process and then at the stages of disengagement-to-privatisation choose other alternatives. As the methodology concentrated on an 'after the fact' examination of the motivations to community, it dealt with the process as a set of historical *because* motivations. It would be theoretically interesting to identify those within the church who are starting on the paths-to-community process and then longitudinally examine the process and alternatives chosen as an *in order to* set of relevances. This would be a complicated exercise methodologically. However it is predicted that few people would choose the communal alternative as a means of transforming their locus of faith. The researcher's brief forays into the churches would seem to suggest that more people at the privatisation phase would then choose parachurches or alternative churches (particularly those 'fundamentalist shifted'), than either community or 'alternative realities' sites.

Allied to the first consideration is the question concerning what factors underlie the choice of alternatives, rather than the alternatives themselves? As Kelsen has suggested this is perhaps ultimately more psychological than sociological in genesis. It may be possible to hypothesise a continuum of alienation or deprivation that underlies the paths-to-community process with perhaps degrees of felt deprivation as the crucial denominator in choosing alternatives.
Thus those experiencing an anomie reaction of crisis proportions may be more likely to choose worldviews that involve conversion experience type transformations such as the adoption of Asian or cultic belief systems. Those who are less deprived, communal or housechurch, or other non culturally normative alternatives. Those even less deprived, parachurch involvement as a supplement to church membership, and so on. Conversely it may be that a particular personality type, perhaps those who achieve by conformity, are more liable to communal alternatives? These problematics remain an interesting area of speculation for further research.

Another important area is an exploration of the lifeworld of the community and the examination of the lifeplans that communitarians hold. This study has examined the communal form to address itself to the question why community? rather than why communities? The subtle differences between these questions are more of emphasis than actualities but the concentration on individual motivations still leaves a need for an enormous area of detailed description of the Christian communal form both to validate this research project, as well as to address the ongoing significance of this social event. If we have erred on the side of intentionality and only developed the description of community to distinguish it from the countercultural, this is perhaps an overreaction against a vast communal literature that is essentially descriptive; as well as the impossibility of a first work in the area covering the entirety of the community phenomenon. There is still a sufficiency of unanswered questions to engage other researchers.
Another area of the study that was of necessity curtailed was the relationship of the communities to the churches. Though this has been addressed in several areas in passing, particularly in the contexts of leadership and the parish related communities, there still exists a large area of ambiguity around community as a Christian phenomenon. Are communities a major alternative form of the church? This is implied by the modelling so important to the communitarians. They see themselves as an appropriate expression of Christianity. It would seem at this late stage of this research project that a number of churches are now calling themselves 'communities'. Perhaps this points to a certain success. (19) How do the churches view community? Again this has only been briefly viewed. It would seem that most Churches are hostile or indifferent to communal expressions, seeing them as a weakening of an already beleagured Christianitas. However other denominations are starting to consider the communities movement very seriously - but whether seen as a challenge or a threat remains uncertain. This area is a further rich source of theoretical exploration and would do much to illuminate the process of changing worldviews in society.

At the level of the phenomenological, several interrelated questions remain unanswered in part. Firstly it is axiomatic that all social actors contribute to the construction of a social reality via their conscious systems of relevance and subsequent lifeplans. However it is also true that most people exist within a social context that predates them. Even in times of rapid change or personal crisis, large elements of the social context remain determined by the legitimations of the past, in which leaders however conceived, have an important role. This has been discussed by Berger and Luckmann (20) yet this
study has found community to be a committed core expression in which the role of leadership in legitimating worldviews, was at best ambiguous. As leadership has an important legitimating role and as Christianity is essentially hierarchical in most of its organisational expressions, it is an area of interest to further clarify the role of leadership in the social construction and maintenance of a Christian communal reality. This is discussed further in the first appendix, however it warrants a further study. It is hypothesised that the low profile of leadership aspect of community is a temporary phenomenon that reflects the disillusionment of the core and will change as the community movement institutionalises itself.

There are many reasons for living in community and the core which comprise this study demonstrated clear in order to motives. However when taken as a group, the purposes of community are subject to levels of interpretation. At one hand there are expressed in order to motives such as welfare, intercessory, church or church relatedness. These intentional purposes are capable of interpretation at the sociological level as desecularisation, or modelling appropriate Christianity, or the themes of Chapter Eight. However the communitarians while agreeing with these theoretical constructions, are also interpreting their actions in such ways as to present a confusing and often contradictory picture. Thus while two communitarians may agree that community is a desecularisation device, they may see desecularisation as avoiding the church, as was the case with X Street, or 'changing the Church' as with Cobbitty Community. One group hoping the Church will collapse and the other reform. The lifeplans and the intentional collectivities that underlie these divergences build a picture of community that is
anything but unified in purpose or intent. While it is possible to speak of community as a desecularisation device being a Schutzian 'higher order concept' it remains to be seen whether there is a Christian community phenomenon or phenomena.

CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPT

The discussion cannot end without dwelling on the success or otherwise of the communal venture. One cannot pretend to assess the future of these communities as an ongoing transformation of the Christian, the religious. It is problematic as to whether this could ever be successfully undertaken. This study is at the beginning of the communities' movement; assessment is a task of the future. Here is merely recorded the contemporary health of the movement in its first decade as a self-conscious entity.

The failure rate of Christian Communities is perhaps the highest of all of the communal forms examined. At the start of the study it was estimated that the average lifespan of a community attempt was in the order of nine months. At conclusion of this study perhaps a majority of precommunal groups intending to form Christian community do not manage to surmount the many hurdles that plague the communal venture, housing, finances or even purposes. Of those that do now form community perhaps the average lifespan is six months. For every small community that passes the two year mark, several do not survive the first few months. The failure rate of communities is such, that one of the networks of communities will not accept membership of a community until it has passed the two year mark, (which compounds the failure rate of those communities left to their own devices).
It may be said that the self-consciousness of the Christian communal venture rarely extends to more than an immediate geographical networking at its beginnings.

The failure rate of communities is only paralleled by the failure rate of individuals within communities. Partly this reflects the power dynamics of the committed core controlling communal purpose and purse strings but perhaps also the stresses of the communal life. At the personality level, few people are capable of the sustained self-denial so necessary for the communal venture. To this must be added the uncertainty of the communal as an alternative for an essentially conservative social grouping. The ambiguity of the communal as a valid lifestyle erodes commitment in the face of a still largely indifferent, if not hostile Church; which ultimately still seems an important if not primary referent. It was not unusual in this study to find communities of two years standing where the original members and purposes were only a vague memory of the current members.

Perhaps more fundamentally, this thesis' studies of ex-communitarians found high levels of bitterness towards the church and community. Many ex-communitarians were so disillusioned by their experiences in community that their attempts to counteract secularisation led to them becoming even more secularised and at risk of losing faith all together. Like the attention seeking suicidal threat, the failure of community often brought on a personal crisis that made loss of faith that much more likely. The failure of community led to many people losing their faith or substituting non-Christian
belief systems, as by analogy, often the cry for help, unanswered, provokes serious suicidal behaviour. By surveying thirty-two excommunitarians, eleven persons were found, who felt they had 'lost their faith as a result of community.' Such high levels of loss of faith shows the extent to which support and belief are inseparable in a modern-other-directed age. Given the social and other costs of the communal support context in a privatised world; it would seem that the communal was often the last ditch of faith.

In contrast to the above was the continued optimism of those in community. Often people attempted to construct another community having learnt from preceding attempts. In many communities the majority of the core were at least 'secondtime rounders' and often optimistic that they would 'crack it this time'. Most communitarians felt that their ventures were significant and even those disillusioned by their experiences were never the less satisfied that they had taken some responsibility for their own belief and its consequences. As Cock stated in 1977, for each countercultural community starting, several religious communities have also started. Since the start of this study, the numbers of communities surveyed at any one time has continued to increase steadily as the communities recycle themselves. There is an increasing self-awareness reflected in the emergence of new community networks. If it does not reveal itself as a passing fad, perhaps the most optimistic sign is the increasing numbers of mainstream churches reconstituting themselves as 'communities'.
NOTES CHAPTER NINE

1. Several writers have made the point that secularisation as an idea has undergone a Kuhnian paradigmatic shift and this is an implicit assumption that underlies Luckmann's work in particular. David Lyon in "Secularisation and Sociology: The History of an Idea." Fides Et Historia 13 (2) 1981, pages 38-52 discusses this shift identifying four stages of secularisation theorising:-

- The enlightenment thesis of the nineteenth century sociologists Comte and Saint-Simon. The early years of this century saw secularisation as change and loss, seen in the work of Durkheim and Weber. The mid-sixties saw the refinement of secularisation as 'modernisation's partner' with Talcott Parsons and Bryan Wilson as chief prophets. With the work of Luckmann and Berger 'Change and Relocation' has become the current purview.

2. Ibid., page 49.


'A more serious complaint concerns Luckmann's failure to test his own theory in empirical research, or at least to come half way to the researcher by presenting it in a more readily operationalisable form.' page 234


12. Bryan Wilson, Contemporary Transformations of Religion, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1976, pages 102-103. Wilson is one of the few theorists to address the issues of the communal form as a conservative religious phenomenon.

13. This is perhaps most noticeable in the writings of David Clark a Methodist Minister and Sociologist in the United Kingdom. His Basic Communities S.P.C.K. London, 1977 bemoans the loss of the Tocal community and the cosy assumption that the Church was once a homogenous and relatively settled group in society.


'The symbolic Universe shelters the individual from ultimate terror by bestowing ultimate legitimation'. page 120.


16. Really the issue is a matter of degree. It is not possible to bridge the gap of personal subjective experiencing (and in this the researcher is more of a solipsist than Schutz, Berger and Luckmann) but yet common experiencing or intersubjectivity is possible to a degree. There is no reason why the area of theoretical interpretation or province of scientific contemplation need be inaccessible to the social actors under study, to as much a degree as the intersubjectivity of the lifeworld. This is particularly the case in a participant observation study, where the field is composed of critically aware people. However for a contrary position see Cox, op. cit., pages 218-225.

17. Quoted in Cox, op. cit. page 215.

18. See further discussion of this point in Cox, op. cit. page 213.

19. This is indeed a dubious use of the word 'community', as it appeared that little change resulted in Church structures after becoming a 'community'. The exception is when a core group within the church lives communally and as such model alternatives. There is increasing evidence that 'Community' is becoming a fad in Australian Christianity while somewhat ironically it seems to have stopped being a fad in the U.S.A.

20. For further discussion see Berger and Luckmann, 1967, op. cit., pages 116-126.
APPENDICES

1. LEADERSHIP OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

2. SAMPLE OF RECORDED TRANSCRIPT (VOLUME TWO)

3. SELECTED DOCUMENTS

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY
APPENDIX ONE

THE LEADERSHIP OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Two groups bring their intentions to the formation of community, the committed core and the leadership. This thesis concentrates on the committed core of community as the major group that constructs, directs and in a very real sense, is the power base of the communal venture. As has been demonstrated in this study, community is a venture that is marked by low levels of direct leadership. This is partially the heritage of the Anabaptist tradition which stresses distributed leadership amongst an eldership group, rather than a strictly hierarchical clergy-congregational arrangement, and partially a residual bitterness, pervasive throughout the communities studied, that the clergy and leadership of the established churches have failed in their primary task, the translation of the faith into relevances for each successive generation. The feeling that the clergy has not proven equal to the task has been discussed in some detail in Chapter Eight; however, this is the majority viewpoint of the biggest single group of community, the core and as such relative to their own circumstances. What of the leaders of community?

Many communities are formed by leaders. Individuals that by their energy, initiative or resources are able to provide the conditions under which others may coalesce into the communal form. To what extent do these leaders determine the meanings of community. To what extent do they direct its purposes?
METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

These rhetorical questions may only be answered with a degree of hesitation. It would seem that the leadership, to the extent that it exists, plays a relatively small part in the overall life of the communities studied. In most communities, leaders were leaders by virtue of natural leadership potential or the accidents of initiative communal ventures. In some communities the orthodoxies of faith required clergy for sacramental observance. Communities that saw their primary task as being parish or congregation related also naturally had direct clergy/leader links. Indeed, the very hierarchical basis of Christianity ensured a certain degree of direct leadership in spiritual matters. These considerations have been discussed in the leadership section of the communitarian types in Chapter Five. However, if leadership is considered from the point of view of a power relationship in which the leaders can direct the course of communal life, then it would seem that despite having leaders recognised as such, the power resides with the core. This is however a hesitant assertion.

Why hesitant? A number of factors militate against too clear a statement of the role of leadership within the Christian communal venture. Firstly, methodological considerations. As the researcher was also the leader of a community and the founder of two Christian communities there is a hesitancy to assume that his purposes on experiences were significant in the wider communal context. From the outset, this study avoided discussing community with leadership and rather preferred to participate in the mix of communal life, to limit this potential correspondence of interests. As the study
proceeded relationships were formed with two other leaders for pastoral oversight and as a means of gaining greater access to their communities. This necessarily meant that the researcher was observing and meshing with leadership in an unsystematic way. He participated in a number of leadership meetings and was asked to provide leadership functions in some other communities as the need arose, as well as being a leader in his own community. These aspects bred a very cautious attitude to these observations of the leadership.

At the conclusion of the study six months were spent researching leadership as well as other aspects of community that had been 'rainchecked' as the study proceeded. The grounded theory approach had generated categories that dealt with leadership, principally from the perspectives of the committed core. As a comparison to the data gained thus far, six leaders were formally interviewed on their intentions when forming or adopting a leadership role in community. This represents the largest sample that was able to be obtained and as such is reasonably limited.

Another reservation or caution is the economic relationships of community. Ultimately all organisations are controlled and directed by their finances. Within community the core almost exclusively controlled the purse strings. There seemed to be no community that had an external source of funding, that did not come from the wages or income of the communitarians themselves. The adage 'he who pays the piper calls the tune' was quoted by core members in two communities visited. It would seem that this may be a variable that constrains leadership as such.
Yet another caution rests with a decision taken at an early stage of the research, to concentrate on the smaller communities, feeling that they were numerically more representative of the overall communal scene and also because their lifespans were shorter and they were able to reflect more immediately on the reasons for forming community. While there are a few large communities, and two were studied in detail, there were few leaders in most of the twenty-three communities studied. In most the functions were distributed amongst the core.

Lastly and most importantly this research was unable to find any large scale unanimity amongst the observations made by leaders. It would seem that leaders may be explained as people who are followed. Beyond this, explanations are only partial. With these few cautions in mind we turn to a consideration of the leaders of community.

THE PRIESTLY FUNCTION

All communities had a degree of spiritual oversight. This varied according to the denominational heritage and background of the communitarians. Those communities from more sacramental denominations had spiritual leadership from the ordained ministry of their churches. Those communities that were parish related and saw their role as serving the wider church naturally adopted the ordained leadership of their congregations. In all of these cases spiritual leadership resided in the normal structures of the parent churches.
However, spiritual leadership did not equal secular leadership. The decisions of the communal life were often the responsibility of other 'leaders' who were of the core and who assumed responsibility for an aspect of the communal life. As community is a whole-of-life commitment to a group purpose at a particular time, these informal leaders often had a much larger impact on the structure and even spiritual functions of the community as a whole.(1)

Thus there was a degree of divergence in the organisation of community and its purposes that did not have a parallel within the established churches. Leadership and spiritual oversight were largely independent even when located in the same person. Often a spiritual head of the community would otherwise have a largely subordinate role in the other decisions of the community. It seemed that often clergy, or clergy substitutes, were selected for their adherence to the concept of a priesthood of all believers (2), even when the church structures they derived from equated priesthood with leadership.

For example, several communities within the Catholic tradition had Priests or spiritual advisors who were independent of the community, the parish in which the community was located, or some times even outside of the Catholic community of faith. One communitarian, whilst acknowledging the orthodoxy that only priests could transubstantiate, remarked:

"Our life as communitarians or people in his (Jesus') church demands we take some responsibility for our selves... We need our priests as our jugglers of the arcane symbols but they really need us for everything else."

(transcripts)
another was blunter ...

"We don't need them to do the magic bits"

(transcripts)

The divorcing of the spiritual leadership from the other aspects of the life of the community was not a compartmentalising of 'the religious' off into a specialised area of communitarian practice rather the reverse. Community equalled Christianity. Thus all aspects of life were thought to be religious and to restrict these to a spiritual leader was impracticable and ultimately defeating of the very purposes of community. Community was seen as the 'Body of Christ' in fact. All had a responsibility to each other as spiritual guardians.

**LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY**

In practice the degree of fundamentalism that lay in the structures of the community dictated a degree of leader control of behaviour. A significant number of ex-communitarians were interviewed, who had experienced larger communities in Sydney and on the North coast, where the leadership of the communities seemed to have prescribed strict codes of spiritual practice, which 'spilled over' into all other aspects of life, particularly sex roles. However, on investigation it seemed that even in communities where the leadership seems to exert some direct 'spiritual oversight' of strictly non-spiritual behaviour (the time one should go to bed for example) this was again done with the explicit approval and often at the direction of the core of the community.
This insight tied in well with the established theory of leadership within organisations, which delimits the differing tasks of leadership. Within those communities that recognised leaders, there developed a traditional split between task and affective leaders. Thus, in more fundamental communities particularly, the leader was the emotional or affective leader who was able to achieve consensus and bring about a heightened sense of community purpose by representing all that the community's core stood for or hoped to achieve. The strength of leadership thus flowed from the ability of the leader to represent what the core felt community, and only then, leadership, should be. Affective leaders ranged from the charismatic to the conventional and their position within community demonstrated the diversity of forms that affective leadership might take.

Most communities had task centered motivators that were only incidentally leaders. Unlike the affective leaders which could be placed into leadership positions, the motivators were less likely to aspire to leadership and most had a definite antagonism to this role. They saw themselves as the quintessence of the 'Body of Christ' in action. They were committed to the laity having the ultimate responsibility to carry forward the Christian message and were the most antagonistic to felt failures of the established church clergy. Most task leaders saw themselves as the 'most committed' of the core and were often the initiators or the financiers of the communal venture. While these 'leaders' were responsible for much of the forward direction of community and as such its expression, they practised distributed leadership, encouraging others within
their communities to develop task based responsibilities. Of all the identifiable groups within community these motivators were the least hierarchical in orientation.

These findings relate to those of other researchers of the wider communal form. Cock in his epic study of Bourgeois and Counter-cultural communities remarked...

'As far as leadership in these communities was concerned, I found in Australia as Rigby did in Britain, that little direct and explicit leadership was evident. In a minimal sense, a leader was one who attempted to consider the groups interests, often irrespective of his own. Power did not rest in the hands of one person, as the search for alternative community was a movement of many. So the 'leaders' were of a numerous and diverse kind, providing differing answers and fulfilling needs in differing areas.' (4)

As pointed out in Cock's quote, this has been the experience of many other theorists internationally, which should cast certain doubts on the hierarchical nature of religious communities as discussed by Metcalf and examined in earlier chapters. While it is certainly the case that community is hierarchical in the sense of a dominant group (the core) with an established 'pecking order'; it is not the case that Christian, as distinct from religious, communities have a hierarchical leadership in Australia. As Cock again points out (5) in his research, Eastern religious communities did have strong male 'guru' type leadership, but other more indigenous communal ventures saw this as a cause for alarm, rather than a model to be followed. It is maintained that this is decidedly the case in Australian Christian community with the
core viewing with equal suspicion: the leadership aspirations of the established church's spokespersons: the cultic messiahs; or the gurus of the eastern philosophies. This once again points up the very diversity of the communal form and the theoretical dangers of purely structural accounts of community.

THE LEADERS

This study has concentrated on the motivations and aspirations of the committed core of community almost exclusively. What of the aspirations of the leadership - that other group that brings intentionality into community formation? During the course of the research project many observations were made that confirmed the relationship of the leaders to the core as discussed above and of the difficulties in identifying leaders as such. However, to balance the discussion thus far six affective leaders, identified as such by their communities, were interviewed at the conclusion of the project. Discussed below are their responses on a range of significant issues, which arose out of the main research project itself, the themes and categories of the grounded methodology.

Leadership. None of the six leaders were ordained clergy though two were recognised as such by the state and licenced as religious celebrants. As a group they had a great sympathy for the clergy of the institutional church, but felt that organisational constraints were the chief cause of the lack of impact of most ministers. Two leaders came from sacramental denominations and insisted on the
spiritual prerogatives of their clergy, whilst pointing to the usual confusion of this role with organisational or bureaucratic leadership. All six leaders felt the Church and its clergy were relatively powerless to halt all types of secularisation.

As a group these leaders were basically effective. They expressed their role in terms of 'giving voice to the needs of the community', 'challenging each person to the fullness of Christian love', 'coalescing the purposes (of community)'. They saw their role as a bringing together of the many motivations that placed a person in community and sustaining those purposes. One leader expressed it this way ...

"You're often sure why you want to be in community but... not so sure why you remain there. My job is helping the community as a whole to locate itself and to help each person get their act together in it."

(transcripts)

These effective leaders often combined affective leadership with spiritual oversight. They were the elders or pastors of their communities and were refreshingly candid about the opportunities this gave them to propagandise and strengthen community life 'from the pulpit' ...

"Community is such a deviant lifestyle. It's not mainstream in any way you know. That you take any opportunity to get your message across; and often your sermon is half what the Lord says and half what you say... in the community's interest."

(transcripts)
While as a group they were divided on the question of headship or the authority structure within Christianity; they all agreed that community needed recognisable spiritual 'reference people', who could be appealed to in times of doubt or spiritual uncertainty. All stressed that this was not necessarily a leader's role but the responsibility of any mature or 'spiritual' Christian and as such should be distributed 'around the body as a whole'. Thus they reinforced a non traditional split between spiritual oversight and the clergy.

Equally the leadership recognised their dependence on the core of community for their position and their ongoing direction. One leader summed it up this way...

'the community paid my salary. In the Churches the congregation pays their ministers too, but the immediacy isn't there... the organisation they all belong to gets in the way, allows the minister, and the congregation for that matter, to distance themselves from each other.

Here I know that I'm responsible to the community because I can't hide from them and because I'm really - well just, their expression. I'm there to do a job but its their job not mine... This breeds a certain accountability...'

(transcripts)

These leaders were also unusually modest about their respective contributions to community. Most felt that community would be as strong without them if not stronger...
'I started this community but I know its got beyond me or anything I want to do as a leader. I could leave tomorrow and it'd go on. This is the beauty of this community, you're not trapped in it by anything. Community has its purposes and they're stronger than anyone of us.'

(transcripts)

MOTIVATIONS TOWARDS COMMUNITY

All of these leaders interviewed had read and discussed a wide selection of the communal literature and were able to give sophisticated responses to the question 'Why Community'. As with the core they distinguished between in-order-to and because motivations. Additionally they were able to give an overview of the communal movement as a whole, divorced as it were from their own personal biographies.

At the level of metamotives the leaders disagreed on what the community phenomenon meant, though the diversity of their responses showed an interesting core of agreement from a theoretical perspective. One leader felt that the Christian Communal had arisen 'due to the slackness of the churches' and was 'another reformation'. Two leaders felt that community was 'a demonstration of the gifts of the spirit in our midst' - a reflection of their communities' charismatic renewal emphases. Another leader felt that community was 'essentially an epiphenomenon', which acted as a vehicle for Christians to express their uncertainty about the directions of the church as a whole. Another felt that community was the 'striving for new alternatives towards 2000' while somewhat
paradoxically the last leader felt that Community is 'how the church was in the beginning and should always have been'.

While these metamotives appear on the surface to be somewhat contradictory, they are explainable in terms of the major theses of this research project and do not differ substantially from the themes discussed in Chapter Eight. As such they do not substantially differ from those of the core. However, at the level of personal motivations towards community they differed substantially with regard to because motivations in that they were individually mutually exclusive and differed from those of the core explored in the Paths-to-Community chapter. In this respect they were clearly differentiated from the core and the other groups within community.

One Leader felt his 'call to community... was a call from God'. He felt that he was effective in his home church and reportedly 'Felt at a loss in community sometimes'. This leader felt that God had challenged him to lead a community (which he had not founded), directly, 'a road to Damascus experience'. This leader, who felt community was 'another reformation', was perhaps the clearest example of an affective leader within his community. He was little concerned with the tasks of community but acted as a focal point in clarifying and sustaining community values. This leader had been approached and asked by the core to join and take on a leadership role at a time of great uncertainty within the community and came from a 'successful lay ministry within his home church'.
Another leader felt community was 'a functional alternative to the mainline churches' and he was a 'functional alternative to a minister'. His route to community came at a time when he was personally challenged by a 'call to fulltime service within the church' and joined community as a way of answering this call without becoming 'too entrenched in a bureaucracy'. Like the first leader he was engaged in the church and reasonably satisfied with his personal commitment. Unlike the first leader he was critical of the church and felt that it was 'drifting towards irrelevance'. His decision to join community was a compromise between these two elements. As with the first leader he was an affective leader and had joined an existing community.

Two other leaders started communities and felt that in so doing they were 'arresting the erosion of belief by providing sites for the expression of appropriate Christianity'. Both were critical of the church and were personally hostile to organised expressions of Christianity. Both felt that a certain degree of independence of the individual believer brought a desirable degree of anarchy (health) to Christianity. However, at this point they diverged. One leader felt that community for him was an expression of the way forward, via the charismatic renewal, to a restructuring of the Churches and 'more relevant Christianity'.

The other leader felt that Christianity had become 'irrelevant' and community was 'a return to the Catacombs'. A remnant in hiding of the 'true believers'. Both leaders had experienced significant degrees of alienation from the established church but neither leader
had been a member of a church. Despite their divergent viewpoints, both leaders had become Christians as adults, had 'checked out the churches', had decided to avoid becoming committed to these structures and had formed their own small communities. Both were articulate in expressing many of the issues discussed in the main body of this thesis and were informed on such issues as secularisation, relevance, and the communal movement in general. Their orientation towards community was thus an avoidance of the problems they saw Christianity facing.

Yet another leader expressed satisfaction with her denomination but felt 'they had missed out on a few things'. She founded community to meet her personal domestic situation and to rectify these felt shortcomings within her denomination. Her community becoming in effect an intercessory community to meet these needs. While she was articulate in addressing the problems of the churches, she felt 'they were overrated and shortsighted', believing as she did that the 'church is still the place for Christianity'.

Another leader, who refused to be recognised as such despite his community identifying and confirming him in this role, felt that confusion had marked his personal journey to community. Together with the members of his church, that became the core of the community, he felt that 'his personal walk lacked something'. Together with his peers, community became a place to grapple with this confusion as 'timeout from the church' and was eventually answered by an exposure to the Charismatic renewal 'which sorted us out'. While the original communal effort was short lived being little more than
a student household it sufficiently 'whetted the appetite' to lead to another community effort. This leader feels that the Church is relevant but lacking the 'fullness of the spirit'.

These biographies differ from those of the core in their journey to community. They do not have the well defined succession of engagement through disillusionment towards a reengagement in community. Perhaps this difference is a significant factor in their eventual adoption of the affective role. Unlike the core they experienced no profound sense of loss at a personal level, and as such were perhaps more readily able to express a degree of rapprochement towards the church and established Christianity that aided them in becoming leaders. Theirs was a less personal sense of the Church's failure and consequently they were perhaps more able to take an optimistic view of Christian progression, as they were above all else optimists in this regard, however divergently they felt that direction should take. They differed in their view of the extent of cognitive secularisation they felt the Church had suffered and at the conclusion of these interviews when discussing findings with them, they gave mixed responses to the desecularisation thesis, most feeling this would be true of the core but not themselves. Parenthetically it is interesting to note that affective leaders were able to identify task leaders in their communities and assigned the paths-to-community progression to these leaders without exception...

'While what you say isn't my case (paths-to-community) it coincides with R's background and her disillusionment, Jim, and I guess the source of her strong commitment to the tasks of community.'

(transcripts)
THE PURPOSES OF COMMUNITY

The affective leadership agreed with their core on the in-order-to motives of their particular community. The purposes underlying these motives were equally the same as those discussed in Chapter Eight as themes to which the core addressed themselves. The leadership recognised that the purposes of community were often not connected directly with their own because motivations but rather expressed the directions and agendas of the core. This at once illustrates the difference between the leadership and the core and points out the essentially other-directedness of the affective role. The leadership felt that their purposes were to express and articulate and encourage the purposes of the core and that their own in-order-to motives at a personal level were secondary to this task. This allowed two leaders to agree that community was a desecularisation device for their core members, whilst rejecting that they were in anyway cognitively secularised themselves. All six leaders clearly felt they were in their positions to give voice to the core's needs, even when this crossed their own.

One of the few linking characteristics amongst the affective leadership was their psychological need for the role they found themselves in. Beyond the simple definition that leaders are people who are followed, is the truism that leaders need to be needed. Three leaders were 'upfront' in this regard when speaking about the differences between their purposes in community and those of the core. One leader expressed it this way...
'I have a need to organise, to lead, I always find myself in this role. I always will ...

(transcripts)

Other leaders were less direct and spoke in terms of 'being given a Pastoral gift', 'the body recognising and ordering the body ministries' or simply 'They wanted me to do it'. However, all six leaders advanced the notion that the leadership role was emotionally rewarding in itself.

SUMMARY

This brief account of six affective leaders illustrates their similarities and differences from the core they represent. All differed demographically from the core (as discussed in Chapter Five) on educational and socioeconomic dimensions amongst others. Again they were not representative of the paths-to-community process which also demarcated them from the core and established a significant difference in outlook between the two groups. The affective leadership were there to serve the core and to express its intentionality. In this they came closest to the community ideal of suffering servanthood as discussed in the body of the thesis. This leadership adopted the purposes and aspirations of the core before their own and the in-order-to motivations of the community which they expressed became synonomous with their success as leaders. They saw their role as the facilitating of community survival and the strengthening of core to pursue their own ends.
This overview once again demonstrates the importance of the committed core of community as the central group within the communal venture and the degree of intentionality that marks their purposes to the extent that leaders, such as they had, (and at least 50 percent of communities did not have leaders,) affectively developed the intentionality of the core. To the extent that community had task leaders, these individuals saw themselves as the core and avoided any other appellation.
1. Within the sociology of leadership the distinction is often made between the formal and informal leaders of organisations. Formal leaders are those who occupy positions of higher status than the group and are designated as such. They occupy positions with ritual responsibilities and ostensibly have power ascribed to their position rather than to the occupant as such. Informal leaders on the other hand are those who are in the position to effect change and often do not occupy a designated position of leadership or power. However, they are the effective leaders of the organisation in as much as they have control of resources, the ability to set organisational priorities or otherwise influence the followers. Formal leaders may well be as effective as informal leaders. However, within community the differentiation between the spiritual and secular leadership parallels this split with the spiritual leadership occupying positions of formal authority, particularly in sacramental-linked communities, while in practice having little real control over the community they serve.

2. The priesthood of all believers is understood in this context to mean subscribing to the Anabaptist ideal of each person having an ultimate direct responsibility to God rather than their relationship being mediated by any human agency. As such the highest office recognised is that of the individual believer.

3. As Leadership theory recognises formal and informal leadership categories, so it also makes a division into task leaders, who are goal oriented and focus on what the group wants to achieve; and socioemotional or affective leaders, who handle the social aspects of a group or organisation by being the encourager, the expresser of group values and aspirations, as well as individual aspects of one-to-one relationships within the group. Rarely are both aspects of leadership combined in the one person and then most usually in the charismatic leader. Within community there is a sharp division between the two roles with approximately fifty percent of communities having affective leaders, while the majority of communities distribute task leadership amongst the core. For further discussion see Yukl, G.A., Leadership in Organisations, Prentice-Hall N.J., 1981.


Appendix two contains a sample of a recorded interview that illustrates many aspects of a core member's journey to community. It illustrates the psychological and paths-to-community factors that underlie the choice of a Christian Communal lifestyle. This tape has been chosen as a sample from over two hundred hours of recordings because it has been completely transcribed from tape to typescript whilst most transcripts are partial and because the person concerned was willing to allow this transcript to become a public record.

This is a complete unedited copy of a conversation that was recorded on the 8th of November 1983 at Cobbitty Community.
J. Mandy you live in a small Xian Comm. on the rural outskirts of Sydney. Do you want to tell me why community is for you?

M. Why did you start with that question. I'm not that clear about that!! ... There were two parts. One I prefer to emphasise more than the other one. Never mind. The two points were that the lifestyle that I was leading was pretty distressing in terms of it wasn't me in many ways. There were a lot of things I found distressing too - so part of it: The first part of it is running away from something I don't like and I feel was just too much effort to rearrange. Too much hurt involved to the people.

J. So that was your personal circumstances?

M. The other part was definitely me affirming that regardless from where I come from, it's a positive step that is good for me regardless of my prior circumstances. So what I see about community is that it must be. I really believe that it's the way that people are intended to be, relate on that level, not as isolated individuals or couples but so there is a feeling of togetherness.

I really think that one of the things that is missing in society and causes so much strife is that there is no feelings of togetherness. There is a sense of isolation and powerlessness. So community provided that feeling of togetherness, provides an opportunity for growth, provides an opportunity to be stronger than you can be individually.

I suppose not strength in numbers but there's a sort of complimentary thinking operating where you get support from other people and in turn it allows you to help other people more effectively or be yourself more effectively or whatever...

J. So it essentially, provides some sort of social platform for yourself to actualise yourself more?

M. Yeah. But that actualise myself is more a bad term because I can actualise myself more in the situation I was in but I didn't particularly like the self I was actualising. And so it's not that I want to change myself but there's parts that I want of me that I'd like to flower that have been really restricted.

J. What are those parts?

M. Those parts are basically a gentleness that I have in my nature that I haven't had sort of, the circumstances, I've been in have been tense and really great for growing but I've really had to fight within them. And I've seen myself, particularly with Vic, I seem really, really pushy, agro, domineering bitchy parts of myself come out and all that's part of me too; but it's like I was reverting to a sort of a life, childishness in getting what I want out of life and demanding my own way. And parts of me that I want to accent and blossom are that gentleness and loving and fairness.
Plus in community it's important for me to be able to be in a situation with other people where I can converse with people about things that interest me and interest them. So it's a meeting ground at that level. I don't know the people really well yet in this community, not really well. I feel that there's a real possibility for a meeting place: A psychological and emotional meeting place where everyone can draw strength from and give in a big arena that generally doesn't happen out there, and only as far as I can see it happens in community!!

J. Right. So community, is it some sort of haven or is it...?

M. Shit!! No! No! I... Arghhh! ... Being new to community I have really had... and in a sense being new in a relationship with God again I've really had to control, watch myself, - control myself. It's part of an 'I don't want to give them bad impressions business' and it... I don't want... the decision to move... this involves a decision to move here because the cost for me to move here is really great because in terms of leaving Vic and in terms of giving up a lifestyle I've become accustomed to and I can see that there's no way that things that I had outside I will have in community but its... my decision to move here is a kind of... I knew I was giving up a lot. I really didn't want to do in some ways but I feel I had to do it. It was like a ... well it was really was part of ... Yeah it was really I've got to rescue Mandy! This is why I'm going to do it and this is how I'm going to do it and these are the costs and God had been relegated to a corner of my life and that was part of the got to get that fixed up. Got to fix up Mandy, got to sort it out. Got to do it even though emotionally it cost me a lot!

J. Can I pick up on that point a little? How long have you been a Christian?

M. I've been ... I don't know? I, well I guess I started going to church and made the usual acceptance traipsing out the front bit when I was about nine I suppose.

J. How long has it been since you've been going regularly to church?

M. Six - seven years?

J. And you are sort of, almost 'got to rescue Mandy' part of what saying is pulling God out of his corner and making him a bit more central in your life? Why wasn't that something you were able to do in the church?

M. I've seen some people who appear to be able to do it within the church structure but... and during the time I really felt that some periods of my relationship with God were really, really - but looking back on it there were so much of a meeting place and I was such a desperately lonely individual that church offered a great social trip for me and I'm not quite sure that the same thing can't be applied in some measure to every person - but I guess you could say the same thing about community. I didn't see God manifested in people's lives there. Straight away I can see that here.
J. So in what ways do the two places differ?

M. Church is full of individuals and the times they do meet psychologically or emotionally are like a 'present'. Like a once a week event, a ...

J. A Reunion?

M. Yeah! A reunion! So that's a difference. There's ... I really didn't see or have the opportunity to see, in all of their lives, the daily manifestation of their religious walk. And what I did see didn't thrill me too much anyway!

J. So what was religion in their lives?

M. I couldn't find it really. Religion was in the prayers and in the meetings but because I couldn't see them on a really intimate basis I couldn't see how their relationship with God affected their daily lives because there wasn't the opportunity to do that unless you made a pest of yourself and ...

J. So you were after a deeper religious experience? Not only for yourself but also with the people you were with?

M. Well it makes no point in having it for yourself. If I can't share it with other people.

J. What happened? You'd been six or seven years out of church. What happened in the meantime? You moved from church to where? And what happened and those sorts of things?

M. Well there was that dissatisfaction to start with plus I was going through a hell of a lot of problems myself regarding me not being your attractive opposite sex stereotype and ... oh... feeling sexual and not being able to discuss that with anyone and not being recognised by any of the guys in church and suddenly when I started going outside of the church I found that there were some really nice males out there. Not all of them bastards and some who were interested in me and some who thought I was lovely and some wanted to sleep with me and that was really attractive. To feel like that was such a release when I've been in the church and you could measure the ... who related to who. If you took the most attractive male and most attractive female, there they were together. Next on down the ladder you know and we were considering myself right at the bottom of the pile.

I had the role of all sorts of 'sister' dash mother confessor to all of the males and their problems with the other woman and meanwhile I was feeling desperately lonely and sort of unwanted and unappreciated myself. And I found acceptance in all sorts of strange ways. There were parts of me that wasn't all of me like ... being understanding or able to listen or whatever but there was, I guess ... I really
resented in a way not being able to have a relationship with one of the guys of the church. Of all people their values ought to be different, from the outside world and I found that really hard to cope with. When I found that outside the church. I really ... I dug it! I went for it! I went for it with whoever, whenever. I just went for it! So for about three years after that I led a pretty promiscuous and hither and thither life.

I won't say I found it meaningless because I didn't. I certainly was getting what I wanted at the time but towards the end, it - not speaking religiously as if it was sinful or anything, but it ceased to have its value for me. It stopped to work that promiscuity and that lifestyle stopped working for what I was using it for. So I had to go through another period where I started - when I had to, started the exploration of myself and my development socially.

J. What was your Christian life at this time?

M. I can't ever remember forsaking my belief in God that Jesus was the son of God, it was kind of 'you leave me alone and I'll leave alone'. Kind of 'what I was doing as a Christian before wasn't much better than what I'm doing now anyway' so what's the difference? So long as I wasn't running around hurting everybody and I was basically trying to be some kind of nice, basically considerate person that Christian ought to be. Then the personal problem that I was going through and the passion I felt for Psychology and was guiding me into all sorts of strange philosophies just took first place. Particularly since I had started University then and there were so many things I think about but I often thought about God and I often thought 'when I'm sorted out one day I'll be back to God.

Almost a strange reasoning but I think about it now then that is what I was reasoning, that there's always time. But what you don't appreciate in those situations is that to be a Christian is more or less a joyless state of obedience. With many trials and tribulations! And too many other people who are human Christians. You don't appreciate that ... then you start to look for how God can manifest in your life and as a Christian the joy you can have like that and the development as opposed to your stereotype of the joyless obedient slave.

J. The doing it by the number Christian? And when you started your three years of self discovery and search for yourself..?

M. I guess I started to put together a few things ... just how much impact my parents had on my upbringing and the crazy things, particularly having been so spoilt... but also a lot of tenseness and misery in our family. The other thing was that I began to not look at the past but to see myself in a different way, how I was relating from moment to moment. And when I started to do that and I met a couple of people
who really accepted me in a concrete way and still devaluing myself... and the feeling of sort of intrinsic value myself that wasn't totally dictated to by the sense of pressure I'd felt before about being overweight. So I guess how I see the new, I had new horizons or however you want to describe it. So I started to feel a lot better about myself and that I was something of value that I wasn't really going to be a mixed up child all my life. That there certainly was a possibility an awareness of sorting that out.

J. And how did that affect your relationship with God?

M. It didn't immediately but I hope. It's difficult to see what you're going through now clearly but I hope that the culmination of that sorting out period was that I've stopped having such an excessive need to rebel and do my own thing.

J. And yet if I've got you right you were very much in a sort of private space?

M. Yeah.

J. You had opted out of the church almost because, well two things. Not being able to get what you wanted oh, from the social structures of the church which you saw essentially as a social club in any case? If I've got it right?

M. Yeah.

J. And your rebellion period when you said you were essentially taking a raincheck on God. And then during this other period when you were sorting yourself out you were, if I've got you right, you were still in an essentially isolated space as a Christian. Is that right?

M. Oh Yeah.

J. So what was your relationship with him then? You said earlier that your relationship with God was something that had to be expressed with people.

M. Well you know the damn thing was that when I wanted to start recognising God in my own life I was living with the two absolutely wrong people to do it with! I can't pinpoint why at that stage of my live I started to return to God or God started weighing on my mind again but God just did and when I wanted to share those things and start, start sharing the reality of him manifest in my life I couldn't because I was in a totally different cycle with two different people who don't believe in God and who don't, have a different lifestyle. So on one hand I was wanting to further my development as relevant to me and I was in a situation that was just impossible to do it. Not impossible, but impossible to do in a ... I explained to Max once part of the reason I had to join Christian Community was because I didn't want
to make the mistake of trying to do it as an individual; and the situation I was in, I as an individual would have been trying to, even if I pushed off to church every Sunday. I would have been with those two people in that cycle and still trying to do it as an individual.

That doesn't make any sense to me now that I think about it, people trying to be Christians as Individuals. So I really felt that if I was going to try to do it yet again and get my relationship with God right, I might as well get the starting conditions a little bit more favourable! You know?

J. That puts it very succinctly.

M. And I felt it's a little bit more hopeful if I was in community rather than if I started reading my bible every morning and praying every morning. Living according to Vic's and Judith's rules.

J. And so what are the things you reckon you should get out of community? As precursors of the joint relationship with God?

M. Now? What were my Christian life mean to me?

J. Yeah, what are the things that Christian community would give you so that your Christian life, essentially a relationship with God isn't it, ... ?

M. The first thing that comes to mind is that when you are a Christian in the church you have to hide your faults. And so in a sense they never get worked out. The problem areas never get worked out because they get left in the closet. But in community you can't do that so I ... I see you can do it but not so easily and so I imagine that other people will be sort of constantly challenging me in a way that makes sure that all those hidden areas are brought out into the open and dealt with.

Whereas in the church I saw that not happening, because of the structure of relating and the time of relating.

J. 24 hour a day Christianity?

M. Here?

J. As an ideal perhaps?

M. Yeah, yeah.

J. Well why can't that happen in the church?

(laughter - prolonged)
M. Well I think I just said why. Because there is so many opportunities to hide an plus you don't realise things in yourself unless other people bring them out either.

J. I guess the question I'm asking is why do they hide? Why can't a church be a community? What went wrong?

M. It's very hard to ... I can see the things the church does that shows its not a community but I can't say why it happened that way.

J. What are the limitations that you see, perhaps not the genesis but the limitations that hold not what they're doing wrong, the limitations they are up against. Is it a structural thing or is it the way people view church or what?

M. I guess it's a combination of everything. It's... it has to have something to do with the organisation of church life and the implicit rules of interacting. What's allowed and not allowed and how much room for honesty. How much is not there but I don't exactly know but where there are normally accepted not doing it but why they're not doing it there is no contact, there is not interpersonal commitment. Saying I care about you. Although if you talk to most people in the church they'll say it there but in comparison to community I don't see it there as much. It sort of... its what goes on in their lives is so necessary. Knowing what's happening on a daily basis is so necessary for developing that relationship. Not a piecemeal sort of 'I'll listen to you sort of thing'. Not a piecemeal I care in words but it got to be some sort of interference.

J. Accountability?

M. Yeah.

J. What do you do to a church, the churches you have had some experience with to make them communities? Do you think its possible? Or is it too organisationally entrenched?

M. Well I guess if its possible you could always contract with them to reorganise their relatedness and their commitment to one another I'm not sure that so many people haven't inculcated the values of the society that they can't see that that's what Christianity is about anyway. People have inculcated the values of successful middle class independence and they're saying Christians ought to be like that, like the values of this society. So when you've got that sort of confusion how can you possibly... I mean if you haven't got a clear ideal of community and an ideal of what they are after and if they can't distinguish that from what is not Christian, rather societal, how can you bring about the change anyway? I don't see it as possible in other words
if they are not aware of what they are in to and their values are and if they are not willing to change those values.

J. It seems almost as if society's values are coalesced with the protestant individualism and every man and his God and ...

M. Yeah that's right.

J. It seems then that community as a structure is a very different value system or worldview?

M. Yes, you see I was thinking about Kropotkin today. In community you have the chance to do the sorts of things that he says but not in churches, that you should encourage mutuality. Encourage existing areas of mutuality in the system. So when you have people living together and sharing a common ideal you have a very big area of mutuality to start with and I see this as one of the basic things that is standing for community as a structure. I'm not talking about our all being committed to God and God will, give us our rewards but structurally I see that there is a whole big area of mutuality that we can join. In a church I don't see that kind of thing, that's against them from the start. Because there isn't, that commitment and mutuality and so if it's not there it's darn hard to encourage it.

J. Mutuality is based on?

M. Mutuality is based on I guess a common belief system, common goal common values ... give and take?

J. So how do you specify the value system? Needed for that mutuality?

M. Well I'm not sure that nonchristian communities couldn't work but I'm sure that if any community works it's because people are trying to implement their Christian lives according to God's precepts. So it's not any one of us that's going to be humble or giving. It's all that have to be humble and giving you know? There's some sort of relative differentiation that mutuality we're all wanting to be like God's children towards him and one another.

J. I guess the thing that goes around and around in my mind all of the time is the church as an organisation should be those things and it isn't. I wonder what it is about it that makes it something else.

In listening to what you're saying, it sort of seems that for some reason or other you ended up with a very different value system than the people in church of your experience. I'm wondering I guess what it was that made you different from them and their value system. Was it purely not being able to fit in with the social system that was going on or was it something else...?
M. On a personal level the psychology I learnt taught me the value of being open to have honest directions. I really hate people cutting off from their emotional life as it ends up in so much rubbish, that gets incorporated into the personality and so much bullshit going on. So personally I can see that ... I want to be in touch with my emotional life and I can see the way for me to learn and grow is community. The other part is my belief about underdog top dog and thing about larger society. I'm sort of a communist in the sense of the world equal distribution of wealth and that sort of thing ...

J. Communalist.

M. Yeah Communalist. Socialist. I guess Uni. influenced my opinion politically though I do come from a lefty background. So I, its a combination of interpersonal honesty and being real. Rather than playing games. The other part is my ideological beliefs about sharing with others that don't have it.

J. And that wasn't going on in the churches?

M. It was for some very lovely individuals but then I saw some people who would do that. In the early days the Pilgrims would help out Peter E. when he was a real turkey off the streets and other people would point the finger at them and say 'he's hopeless and frown on people less fortunate as far as education and health etc. That strikes me as a real sick thing. (Although recently I've discovered quite a lot of it in myself!) But I'm aware of it and would really like to be eradicate those dreadful attitudes. Because I don't believe them up here its just that it comes in you ...

J. Why is your commitment deeper?

M. Its vastly deeper here because my responsibility is, a hell of a lot more is placed on me here being part of the community. I don't want to be hurt in any way. Before I even made up my mind to move into community I was shit scared of the responsibility of being accountable to other people. The effect, the essentially powerful effect, I don't know why this works, of each individual has on the functioning of community. I was really frightened that I wasn't a good enough person, that I wasn't or wouldn't conjure up the commitment to do justice to the members of community.

J. Why?

M. My attempts to commit myself to the church had led to so much bitterness and pain I'd avoided going at all. I was not prepared to commit myself until I found a group that was prepared to really commit themselves to wholly, you know without reservation. When I found this here I was scared shitless that I'd not match up and be hurt again, but I was determined to avoid committing myself to any group which practices the hypocrasy of saying they were caring and in practice weren't.
One of the hazards of researching community were the strong pressures exerted on the researcher to conform and to reform 'from your deviant perspective'. These pressures ranged from scathing condemnation of Sociology and Sociologists; polite and quite definite assertions that it was impossible to comprehend another's religious experience; direct appeals to forsake the ungodliness of secular study and enrol in bible studies; proselytisation; appeals to join the community under study; and to the occasional attempt to 'take over' not only the researcher but his community as well.....
7th October, 1982

Please see print copy for the next 2 pages (this is a letter)
An important aspect of the research was sharing insights and data with the social actors themselves, (principally with the Cobbitty Community and Vaughan Bowie). This brought the evidential meanings of the researcher closer to those of the communitarians, and provided a rich source of comparisons.

At the write-up stage of the thesis, two rough copies were made available to interested communitarians on a circulation basis. This provoked considerable comment, of which the following letter is a fair example:- strong agreement with the desecularisation thesis; moderate recognition of the paths-to-community process and circumstantial comments on the aspects of the analysis that reflected unfavourably on community.

The writer, Mathew Clarke, is involved with the Fusion Communities and a prime mover in attempts to link up and make the community movement more self-aware. It needs to be said that the thesis does not state that eighty percent of communitarians are on social welfare benefits, rather this is an upperlimit in some welfare communities.
Few communities had a formal covenants. Perhaps this reflected the state of uncertainty of this new communal movement. Most had 'guidelines' for adopting new members. Those communities which covenanted, were usually networked with the Related Christian Communities, which encouraged covenanting as a means of solidifying purpose.

The following covenant, though taken from a Victorian community listed in Noel Preston's work *Christian Communities in Australia*; is an excellent example of the genus. See also X Street's covenant in Chapter Six.
YARRAVILLE GROUP COVENANT

We covenant that we will have a specific commitment to each other and to God's work in the locality...

(a) By attempting to live within the Yarraville area, and as close as possible to another church household;

(b) By meeting weekly, having a simple meal and time for worship, mutual encouragement and the stimulating of ideas and action;

(c) By agreeing to share more freely the things we own;

(d) By having a common fund for group initiatives and projects, consisting of voluntary contributions, whether regular or spontaneous, given sacrificially over and above our regular church giving;

(e) By participating in the mission of the community by showing concern for others and witnessing by lifestyle and words to the reality of our faith;

(f) By developing support, openness, sensitivity, forgiveness, confidentiality and by discussing important matter in our lives, affirming each other's gifts and respecting the individuality of each other;

(g) By agreeing to pray daily and to pray for each other and our church;

(h) And by agreeing to explore the daily implications of Christian lifestyle.

Signed......................... 22nd September 1982

From:- Noel Preston
Christian Communities in Australia
BIBLIOGRAPHY

AND

SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHY


Borsodi, R., Flight From the City - an Experiment in Creative Living on the Land, Araluen, Melbourne, 1948.


Haralambos, M., *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, University Tutorial Press, Slough, United Kingdom, 1980.


Herbert, T., The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia 1838-1938, Lutheran Book Depot, Adelaide (University of Adelaide Library), 1938.


Hynd, D., The Local Church as Community, Zadok Centre, Canberra, 1983.


Jackson, D., Coming Together All Those Communities and What They're Up To, Bethany, Minneapolis, 1978.


Martin, D. et. al. (Eds.), Sociology and Theology Alliance and Conflict, Harvester Press, Brighton, 1980.


New Israel Covenant Community Pamphlet No's. 1 and 2, No Date.


Whyte, W., Street Corner Society, University of Chicago Press, 1943.


**SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHY**


