

**KNOWING ONE'S OWN
COMMUNITY; SUGGESTIONS
FOR SOCIAL SURVEYS OF
SMALL CITIES OR TOWNS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649090006

Knowing one's own community; suggestions for social surveys of small cities or towns by Carol Aronovici

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

CAROL ARONOVICI

**KNOWING ONE'S OWN
COMMUNITY; SUGGESTIONS
FOR SOCIAL SURVEYS OF
SMALL CITIES OR TOWNS**

Department of Social and Public Service

Social Service Series

Bulletin Number 20

Knowing One's Own Community

Suggestions for Social Surveys
of Small Cities or Towns

SECOND EDITION
REVISED AND ENLARGED

By

Carol Aronovici, Ph. D.

Director of the National Bureau
of Municipal and Social Service

Boston

American Unitarian Association

25 Beacon Street

FOREWORD

The intelligent public in the United States is slowly awakening to the dangers of the wasteful and cruel leakage in our human resources. Business men and social workers, church-workers and statesmen, university professors and labor leaders all agree that the mistakes and sins of our industrial life, the neglect and blind self-interest in the business world, and our ignorance and indifference towards the machinery that has to do with the political and administrative affairs of the country, are placing a heavy burden upon human life and human achievement, and are wasting invaluable human resources. This is quite as true of the small town and village community as it is of the vast territory of the United States. The American mind is eminently practical and measures values in terms of concrete returns, but while this characteristic has led to momentous advance in the business world and in the fields of science and politics, the achievement has been individual rather than social, and progress has been largely confined to certain classes but has not materially affected the masses of the people.

What is needed is a realization of the principle that the welfare of all is the ultimate goal of the

Foreword

community, that our present waste of resources whether they be human or material is a direct handicap upon civilization and progress, and that our present industrial and business prosperity is far from yielding its full return either to the individual or to society.

The conservation of natural resources has become an established principle in our national economy, the possibilities for increased industrial efficiency and productivity without increase in the use of labor are engaging the attention of the business world. On the other hand the conservation of human resources, the increased efficiency of community life, community production and community development are still in the background of our national achievement. The point of view is not one of improvement of resources but of use increase, not one of co-ordinate development but individual use efficiency.

The advocates of conservation of national resources and the practical managers who are testing the efficiency limits of our labor and machinery are rendering valuable national service, but their work is of the present, is largely material, and aims at human achievement with the human element left out.

We believe that human nature under proper conditions is capable of vastly greater efficiency, service and happiness than present conditions have ever made possible of attainment. Each locality pre-

Foreword

sents its own special problems of human conservation and community efficiency, and it is the purpose of this bulletin to guide public spirited citizens in the work of ascertaining the conditions that prevail in their own community, particularly small cities and towns. When the facts are known and the good is balanced against the bad, a consciousness of public responsibility is bound to result which will blast the way towards improvements of a constructive, far reaching and permanent character. This will result in a standard of human efficiency that will affect both production and its rewards in a manner that will create a community patriotism worthy of its brother, the national love of country and nation.

KNOWING ONE'S OWN COMMUNITY

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

NEED FOR A SURVEY

The extremely rapid growth of our cities and towns, the vast influx of foreign elements and the recent migration of industrial establishments from the larger to the smaller populational centers, as well as the progress and development of local industries, have combined to produce in our smaller cities and towns social and economic conditions which demand our undivided and immediate attention. The startling revelations of the Pittsburg Survey, the political conditions revealed in San Francisco and the inefficiency of some of the municipal departments of New York as shown by careful and impartial investigations, have thrown a shadow over the three greatest commercial and industrial centers of America about which it is wiser to be silent than proud.

Similar conditions have come into existence in other communities and the small city is coming to

Knowing One's Own Community

feel the lack of social foresight whose poison is on the increase. The remedy is close at hand, namely a careful, impartial, intelligent survey of the difficulties and problems in the way of a proper, healthful, progressive and nationally constructive development of the community, and when the facts are known, prompt action for the removal of such obstacles and problems. In other words a survey must be made before action can be determined upon and before sufficient community interest and pride can be aroused to stand back of a concerted effort toward social and industrial improvement,

STARTING A SURVEY

A survey like any other civic activity involving a conscious effort on the part of a group of citizens must be started by some particular civic or philanthropic agency, some body of men or women interested in the welfare of the people whose intentions can not be questioned and whose integrity, good judgment, moral and political standing are beyond reproach. Most small cities and towns have a Charity Organization Society, a Young Men's Christian Association, a Board of Trade, a Business Men's Association, a Grange, a large Women's Club, a University Club or some other similar organization or agency which is backed by prominent men or women or both. The person or persons interested in making a survey should select the most prominent, the most respected and if

Suggestions for Social Surveys

possible the best financed organization in the community to back the work. The main conditions to be observed in selecting the organization should be as far as possible a complete absence of sectarian affiliations, political color or special industrial or public service interests.

When the organization has been decided upon a carefully selected special committee of persons from various walks of life should be appointed with instructions to plan and organize the survey under the auspices of that organization. This committee should not be so large as to be unwieldy, nor so small as to be in danger of being one-sided or not representative of the best elements in the organization. A committee of ten persons in localities under ten thousand population and of fifteen to twenty in localities over ten thousand with special sub-committees would probably prove most efficient.

THE POINT OF VIEW

The committee being chosen and ready to work it is important to decide upon the point of view from which to approach the task, and in deciding upon such point of view several steps must be taken before a final decision is reached. The advice of some outside expert familiar with the method of investigating conditions and acquainted with the problems of small communities will be found valuable, and will prove the easiest and surest way of deciding upon the point of view from which the survey