

families above each other vertically. In life then we can never actually see the reality of high density in the way Calhoun's rats could. In a block of flats we are kept from pestering our neighbours constantly by the technology of high-rise structures. However, some problems may remain. The family is not our only territorial unit, and high-density housing schemes may find it hard to deliver a structured hierarchy of territorial experience that may be important to us.

The territory as social reinforcement

The potential of shared territories for the development of social cohesion is now well recognized. An interesting example of this was revealed in a study in Singapore of why there seemed to be little sense of community in the otherwise remarkable public housing provided in this rapidly advancing city/state. Walter comments on this by comparing the reality of life in the HDB high-rise tower blocks in Singapore with the traditional Malay Kampong still to be found just across the causeway in Malaysia (Walter 1978). In the latter there seems to be a very highly developed sense of community, and Walter ascribes this to several causes. First, he points out that the Kampong usually has an almost total homogeneity of race and religion, whereas the Singapore tower block does not. However, probably far more importantly, he points out that the Kampong is so designed as to leave almost no space that is indefensible, and has extremely high levels of surveillance. The traditional Malay house has much less definition of indoors, with its natural cross-ventilation, compared with much architecture with which we in the West are familiar. It is bounded on at least one side and often three sides by a verandah, which overlooks the adjacent space. There are no fences and houses are within loud speaking distance of each other. This seems to operate rather like an extended social distance, and neighbours can actually hold conversations across the intervening space from within their own territories. The whole works rather like a flock system in which the detection of strangers and intruders is a communal responsibility. A high level of interdependency thus develops, where all living within the Kampong will know all their neighbours well. Paradoxically, although the Singapore tower block has higher levels of density there is little communal space and very clearly demarcated private territories. Walter suggests a number of devices to improve community in the Singapore tower block, including opening some flats out as communal facilities such as crèches and the like.

Whilst a central shared facility that becomes group territory seems to be one way of strengthening community, a shared threat seems equally effective! I learned a truth about the sociology of territorial defence as a young architect working on a very large new housing development. The people living there had come from many different locations, and in most cases found all their new neighbours to be strangers. Such an