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### Analysis for Group Research Project: 500 block Mifflin Street

To most current UW-Madison students, the Mifflin Street block is associated with the long-standing history of student parties and riots that began in the 1960's. Upon closer examination of the houses on the 500 block however, our group was able to diagnose the stylistic and architectural features of those houses. Further research revealed trends of the inhabitants of this block; the sanborn maps, city directories, and newspaper articles work in tandem to tell these stories of the many students, workers, and even families that lived on the 500 block of Mifflin.

By looking through the Madison city directories in 10-year intervals and noting residents and their occupations, an overarching trend from a blue collar, working class to students appeared. From the 1910s through the 1940s there was a wide range of occupations. A good amount were blue collar, such as carpenters, electricians, and mechanics, but there were also many civic and service industry occupations such as cooks, bartenders, clerks, salesmen, and firemen. The 1950s saw a rise in University of Madison employee residents. There were as many as five on the block and included a vehicle operator, UW hospital nurse, teachers, and a research assistant. By the late 1960s, students had begun to move into the area. In 1966 six students lived on the block and just as many retirees lived on the block as well. The 1960s was the last period of time when many of the longer term residents, people who had lived there for 30 - 40 years, lived in their properties. By 1977 the block was overwhelmingly populated with students.

Much of the research in the Madison Capital Times and the Madison Wisconsin State Journal supported the information found in the city directories. Though there has been a long-

standing history of violence and public intoxication on Mifflin, the newspapers from earlier periods from the 1920's and 1930's reveal a plethora of advertisements for plumbers, radios, household appliances, and other items. This supports the notion that there were blue-collar residents occupying this area. In the later periods of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, newspaper ads reveal increased cases of disorderly conduct and complaints by students about other students who lived at certain houses-namely 554 W. Mifflin and 504/506 Mifflin. One especially interesting case appeared in 1972. Minnie Meier, the landlord of 502 Mifflin was fined for withholding rent from Clarence Brown due to his race. This story, along with the other cases, allows us to see into the lives and cultures of the 500 block of Mifflin.

The Sanborn Maps show us the development of the North side of West Mifflin from 1898 to 1942. As seen in the 1898 map, there were only two houses on the North side of the block but by 1942 there were a total of eighteen houses on the block, and there still are today. Also by 1942 fifteen out of the eighteen houses were made into flats and three only remained as single-family homes. The Sanborn maps also show us the shift from stables to garages as automobiles became more popular. Today only one of these structures still exists at 540 W. Mifflin and is used as a three car garage while the rest of the backyards are used for parking. The Sanborn Maps show how the housing changed and how it was affected by the culture around it quickly shifting from single-family homes to flats to accommodate the inhabitants.