



This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PARENTS
OF THE SCHOOL, AN ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY FREE SCHOOL

presented by

Gary Lee Ebrecht

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph. D. degree in Curriculum

Major professor

Date May 18, 1973



of
the
by
to
of
The
The

ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PARENTS OF THE SCHOOL, AN ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY FREE SCHOOL

By

Gary Lee Ebrecht

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research project is to utilize the field research techniques of participation, observation, and interview to describe the students, staff, and parents of The School, an alternative free school; and to use the data to make suggestions for the improvement of The School.

Overview of The School

The School began as an alternative free school in September of 1972 in East Lansing, Michigan. There are twenty-two students in The School, eighth grade through twelfth. It is a school that was created because of the lack of options within public education.

There is a prescribed curriculum that is divided into four areas which contribute to growth: living by developing skills, living by developing community, living by creating, and living by facing today and tomorrow. The School has been modifying these four areas of the curriculum to more closely meet the needs of all those involved. There are very few rules and regulations in The School; yet those in The School do have expectations for one another.

Methodology

The research began in September of 1972. The researcher was a participant observer who worked from "within". Over three hundred pages of field notes were compiled. From September through April this researcher participated with, observed, and interviewed students, staff, and parents to determine answers to the following questions:

1. Why do students choose to attend The School?
2. How do those within The School define their environment?
3. How do students in The School feel about other students and teachers in The School?
4. Should there be any rules in The School?
5. What are some of the negative aspects of The School as perceived by its population?
6. How do students in The School differ from students in traditional schools?
7. What expectations do students in The School have for themselves and The School?
8. What expectations do parents of students in The School have for The School?
9. What expectations do teachers in The School have for The School?
10. Is there a difference between student, parent, and teacher expectations?

The following answers explain briefly the findings that were collected and codified by this researcher.

Results

1. The lack of options within public schools and the extreme dissatisfaction with traditional education forced students to seek out The School.
2. The School is very small. This enables students to know other students very well. It also enhances the possibility of more personal relationships between students and teachers. Size, as well as a desire to build community among those in The School, has made it possible to do things that would be difficult in other educational settings, i.e., like take several field trips to other states.
3. Those in The School see rules in a very negative way. Rules have seldom worked to the advantage of the students. Any rule that is imposed on students in The School is completely rejected and/or ignored. Rules that emerge through group interaction seem to be better internalized and accepted.
4. Those within The School want a curriculum that allows them to better understand themselves and others. They also want to be able to learn the skills that will make them able to survive financially.
5. It is extremely difficult for those in The School to know how to structure their lives in a manner that they perceive is beneficial and good for them. It often is not an easy task to find interest areas and activities that meet their needs.

6. Two central themes seem to emerge when The School is critically analyzed: a diversity of expectations and motivations, and a sense of ambivalence or the coexistence of contrary tendencies and feelings.

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PARENTS
OF THE SCHOOL, AN ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY FREE SCHOOL

By

Gary Lee Ebrecht

A THESIS

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Secondary Education and Curriculum

1973

692846

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks so much to all of you who have helped me to grow and to be happy. You can make even unpleasant things bearable.

laurie, scot, stan, bill, bill, marcia, mike, janie, bill, ma, dad, jan, chuck, dale, john, marv, chuck, troy, george, john, cliff, karen, penny, ray, alex, chuck, fred, linda, phil, dick, fred, henry, pat, sally, judy, bob, frank, jackie, jean, steve, steve, lynn, margo, brad, chuck, gayle, crash, bill, laura, dort, sue, ric, mary jo, doug, mike, nancy, jo, diane, lucy, mike, bill, kevin, juliet, ned, roger, delynn, bill, everett, denny, mike, bob, joe, fred, dan, norm, ed, ann, gina, lauren, jeanne.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES		vi
Chapter		Page
1. INTRODUCTION		1
BACKGROUND		1
THE PROBLEM		3
NEED FOR THE STUDY		4
RESEARCH QUESTIONS		5
DEFINITION OF TERMS		5
METHODOLOGY AND SELECTION OF SUBJECTS		7
DATA ANALYSIS		8
SIGNIFICANCE OF RESULTS		8
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY		9
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE		11
LIMITS AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE		11
DEFINITION OF A FREE SCHOOL		13
DISTRIBUTION, GROWTH, AND LIFE-SPAN OF FREE SCHOOLS		17
CONVENTION ASPECTS OF UNCONVENTIONAL SCHOOLS:		
PERSONNEL, FINANCES, GOVERNANCE, AND LEGALITIES		22
Students		22
Staff		23
Parents		27
Finances		27
Governance		31
Legalities		32

11

Chapter	Page
PHILOSOPHY, CURRICULUM, AND DIVERSITY OF FREE SCHOOLS	34
Philosophy	34
Curriculum	37
THE FUTURE OF THE FREE SCHOOL MOVEMENT	44
3. METHODOLOGY	47
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS	60
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS	61
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAFF	62
4. OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL	63
PHILOSOPHY	63
HISTORY	64
CURRICULUM	65
PERSONNEL	67
GOVERNANCE	68
FINANCES	69
EVALUATION	69
5. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	71
INTRODUCTION	71
PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE SCHOOL	72
DESCRIPTION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE SCHOOL	75
AN ACCOUNT OF SOME OF THE EVENTS THAT HAVE SHAPED THE SCHOOL	81
6. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS	93
SUMMARY	93
CONCLUSIONS	94
RECOMMENDATIONS	105

Chapter	Page
IMPLICATIONS	106
AUTHOR'S REFLECTIONS	107
BIBLIOGRAPHY	110

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Distribution of Schools by State	18
2. Number of New Schools Founded by Years (1957-1971) .	20
3. Age Distribution of Staff of Alternative Schools	24
4. Percentage Distribution of Schools by Per Pupil Expenditure	30
5. Floor Plan for The School	73

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research project is to utilize the field research techniques of participation, observation, and interview to describe the students, staff, and parents of The School, an alternative free school; and to use the data to make suggestions for the improvement of The School.

Background

Public schools only serve the needs of some students. Apparently for those twenty-five percent who leave school before graduation, school does not fulfill their needs. Roughly, there must be, at least, another twenty-five percent who have psychologically dropped out of public schools, too. Of the fifty percent that remain, many of those are just beating the system or playing the game. Simply, for many students, public education is detrimental and psychologically unhealthy; public schools too often hinder growth.

A review of the literature shows the indictment of public education comes from many sources. Charles Silberman:

The public schools are the kind of institutions one cannot really dislike until one gets to know them well. Because adults take the schools so much for granted, they fail to appreciate what grim, joyless places most American schools are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and estetically barren the atmosphere.¹

¹Charles E. Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom, (New York, 1970).

J

Ac

Pp

John Holt:

For children, the central business of school is not learning, whatever this vague word means; it is getting these daily tasks done, or at least out of the way, with a minimum of effort and unpleasantness. Each task is an end in itself. The children don't care how they dispose of it. . .²

Ivan Illich:

The pupil is thereby 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning gradeachievement with education, a diploma with competence and fluency with the ability to say something new.³

Neil Postman and Charles Weingarten:

The American School system is sick. Its methods are based on fear, coercion, and role-memory testing.⁴

Charles Reich:

The process by which man is deprived of his self begins with his institutionalized training in public schools . . . thinking for oneself is acutally penalized, and the student learns the value of repeating what he is told. Public school is 'obedience school'; the student is taught to accept authority simply because of its position. . .⁵

Jerry Farber:

(Schools) exploit and enslave students; they petrify society; they make democracy unlikely. And it's not what you're taught that does the harm but how you're taught. Our schools teach you by pushing you around, by stealing your will and your sense of power by making timid square apathetic slaves out of you--authority addicts.⁶

²John Holt, How Children Fail, (New York, 1964), p. 47.

³Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, (New York, 1970), p. 1.

⁴Neil Postman and Charles Weingarten, Teaching as a Subversive Activity, (New York, 1969).

⁵Charles A. Reich, The Greening of America, (New York, 1971), pp. 141-143.

⁶Jerry Farber, The Student as Nigger, (New York, 1970), p. 14

T

S
P
r
w
c
tl
us
an
lo

It is in response to this sad state of affairs that the free school movement has evolved. The School is one such alternative in that free school movement.

The Problem

People are unique and different. This is healthy. If everyone were alike, it would certainly be a boring and an unexciting world. Realizing that people are unique, schools should stress variety rather than uniformity; yet public schools are notorious for providing no, or at least a very minimal, number of options or alternatives.

This is because most public schools apply a convergent model to learning in which students are expected to learn under one teaching style. It is a rare school that encourages a great variety of teaching styles. If the reader doubts that this is a reality, a day observing in the local high school would most likely support this premise. While on your visit, attempt to record the number of different teaching styles that you observe remembering that each different teaching style probably reflects a somewhat different philosophy of how people learn. Note the number of teachers directing classes, the number of teachers not directing classes; the number of classes where the teacher cannot be found; the number of students directing classes; and just for fun, the number of classes that are not in the building. Of course, any other number of criteria could also be used, like the number of teachers who give assignments and tests and the number that never give assignments or tests. It does not take long to observe the lack of differences that exist in the typical school.

T

c
a
b
to
re
sc
att
tha
the

Somewhere along the way well-intending educators, gaining a monopoly on truth, find the true conditions under which all people learn and begin to force their panacea on students, again losing sight of the fact that teaching styles need to be different since children are different.

It seems obvious that different students do better in different learning environments and that there is no one curriculum suitable all the time for all children. Until public schools can philosophically commit themselves to the providing for and the encouraging of the development of individual differences found in the highly diverse population that schools serve, there will be a need for alternatives outside of public education, namely free schools.

Need for the Study

The development of specific research and evaluation methods to strengthen free schools is in a preliminary stage and much greater strides need to be made. If research in free schools is to be effective, it must attempt not to control people, but rather to give them the power to help them find the specific approaches that are consistent with achieving the goals of free schools. This research attempts not to use standard achievement tests or value inventories, but for the researcher, who is cognizant of the goals of free schools, to work "within" as a participant observer to ensure that the research is compatible with the process and outcome goals of free schools. More directly, those within the free school movement must attempt to analyze and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses so that changes in free schools can be implemented to meet the needs of the individuals involved.

Research Questions

The dissertation is guided by basic exploratory questions that the research has attempted to answer.

1. Why do students choose to attend The School?
2. How do those within The School define their environment?
3. How do students in The School feel about other students and teachers in The School?
4. Should there be any rules in The School?
5. What are some of the negative aspects of The School as perceived by its population?
6. How do students in The School differ from students in traditional schools?
7. What expectations do students in The School have for themselves and The School?
8. What expectations do parents of students in The School have for The School?
9. What expectations do teachers in The School have for The School?
10. Is there a difference between student, parent, and teacher expectations?

Definition of Terms

A common understanding must be developed between the author and the reader; therefore, the following terms are defined.

1

0
A
5
52

The School. "The School" is the name of an alternative, free school presently in operation in East Lansing, Michigan. There are twenty-two students enrolled, eighth grade through twelfth.

Free school. A school that is opposed to the arbitrary restrictions in public schools; and, instead, creates an environment in which the learner chooses the constraints he wishes to place on himself.

Alternative school. For purposes of this dissertation, an alternative school will mean a school that exists as an option outside of public schools and without public school funding. Often in this research project, the terms free school and alternative school are used interchangeably.

Students of The School. Basically, those students who are officially enrolled at The School as of January 1, 1973 were included in the research.

Curriculum. The way in which educational philosophy is put into action.

Free school movement. The momentum and unity that has occurred through the general activities of those people that are trying to create alternatives to public education which give children more freedom than they usually have in public schools.

Qualitative methodology. The research techniques that allow the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge of the empirical social field being studied.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

a
s
p
p
ne
in
nen
for
and
for
latter
had

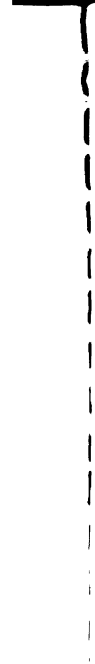
Participant observation. Observation conducted as a researcher participates, to a greater or lesser degree, in the lives of those being studied.

Methodology and Selection of Subjects

The area of free school development has not been sufficiently examined to warrant a typical quantitative type of research design. To be able to develop theory, make concrete hypotheses, and tabulate statistics, is still in the future; possibly typical methods of quantitative research are inconsistent with many values and goals of free schools. Therefore, the author has used qualitative research methods to describe The School.

All of those involved in The School were subjects for this research. This includes students, teachers, volunteers, and parents.

The field research techniques of participant observation and interview were employed. The researcher as a participant-observer attempted to listen, observe, and question subjects in order to understand the perspective of those being studied and to explain how this perspective relates to the larger educational community. After preliminary data was gained by the researcher, it was then necessary to supplement the participant observation technique with interviews. At least one parent of all students, the five paid staff members, and all students were interviewed. Interviewing is both formal and informal. The informal interviews were usually spontaneous and arise in response to situations or events that need to be clarified for the researcher. The formal interviews were conducted in the latter stages of the research to describe and understand the data that had previously been acquired through observation and informal interviewing.



Data Analysis

The findings gained through observation and participation will be presented as they relate to the process and outcome goals of The School. Also, the responses from the formal interviewing will be presented. Not all of these responses will be quoted, but only those that seem to represent a particular position or view point.

The degree of reliability and validity in this type of research depends largely on the researcher's 'modus operandi'. On the concept of reliability it concentrates on the degree of consistency in the observations obtained from the devices he employs. The validity of the study depends on the extent the researcher details the events and also the degree those situations are properly identified and classified. In this way, evidence is assessed as the substantive analysis is presented. If this is done lucidly, the reader will be able to follow the details of the analysis, and to see how and on what basis any conclusion was reached. This would give the reader, as do present modes of statistical presentation, opportunity to make his own judgment as to the validity of the proof and the degree of confidence to be assigned the conclusion. The researcher will 'know' it is valid; it is up to him to communicate this feeling to his readers.⁷

Significance of Results

In the review of the literature, the author found no participant observation research that was done on free schools; and, in fact, very little research of any kind is done on free schools. Certainly, research needs to be done that explains the total philosophy of free schools as seen through the student's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

⁷Richard H. Ayling, "An Exploratory Study of the Formal and Informal Relationships between Black and White Students in a Large Racially Mixed, Urban High School", (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ph. D. Michigan State University, College of Education, 1972), pp. 15-16.

Also, this research may serve of general use for administrators and teachers that are attempting to create options within public schools. Others wishing to start an alternative school may find many helpful suggestions, especially in chapter two, on the review of the literature.

Realistically, the greatest significance from this research will be the impact it will have for the improvement of The School. The findings will be fed back to students, parents, and staff so they can examine, analyze, and evaluate their present situation and begin to make helpful changes in The School.

Limitations of the Study

1. Generalizations made about the students of The School may not represent other free school students or students in public schools.
2. Qualitative methodology does not make use of standardized procedures of investigation, i.e., achievement tests, etc. This is certainly a limitation for those who find it impossible to study a problem unless quantitative empirical data is used.
3. Those responding to the participant observer may say things that they think will please the participant observer which in turn would lead to contamination of the findings.
4. Interviews may come at a bad time to either interviewer or interviewee.
5. The written word may fail to communicate the total interaction process, i.e., gestures, facial expression, intonation, etc.

6. The time element certainly limits this study. It would be impossible to ever fully understand the population of The School. Realistically the study could be a life long process.

c

t

e

p

T

(

of

do

are

two

pro

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature will consist of six parts: limits and scope of the review; definition of a free school; distribution, growth, and life span of free schools; conventional aspects of unconventional schools; philosophy, curriculum, and diversity of free schools; and the future of the free school movement.

Limits and Scope of the Review of Literature

This review of the literature will concentrate on the free school movement from 1960 to the present. There is much literature on the tradition of contempt, indifference, and rebellion against public education and the subsequent institutions that arouse in response to them; but the propose of this dissertation is not to concentrate on the extreme of free schools. If one is interested in the history of progressive education in the United States, Lawrence Cremins, The Transformation of the Schools: Progressivism in American Education (1876-1957), provides a good starting point.

There is no doubt that the ideas and pedagogy that came out of the progressive era of education in the first half of this century do have similarities with the free school movement of today, but there are also significant differences in the progressive schools of the twenties and the free schools of the sixties and seventies. The progressive schools that had their roots in the Deweyan movement were,



. .

1
t
a
g
Ur
co
—
(Ne

for the most part, elementary schools. In the thirties the Eight-Year Study was conducted in an attempt to expand the ideas of progressive education to secondary schools.¹ The progressive schools were not so much of a grass roots movement as are free schools. Many free schools are started by parents and students that wish to establish alternatives to traditional education.

There are significant differences in the goals of progressive schools and free schools. Reform in the progressive era was an attempt to improve specific structural aspects of schools. Today, reform of public schools focuses on complete revision. In other words, educational reform in progressive schools concentrated mainly on curricula and methods; whereas free schools include these two areas and also go far beyond them in that it challenges the purpose that schools serve. The politics of the progressive schools and the free schools also differ significantly. Many of the progressive schools were run by socialists. For example, Margaret Naumberg who founded the children's school was the President of the Socialist Club.² The free schools of today are politically more closely aligned with the new left or counter-culture and not socialism. Some free schools also serve the specific needs of minority students. This was not generally true of the progressive schools.

Tom Hayden in April of 1968, discussing the Columbian University strike, shared some criticisms of education that are consistent with the way many free school reformers feel about public

¹Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of The School, (New York: 1961), pp. 252-254.

²Ibid., p. 211.

v

r

M

i

f

h

g

a

ca

sc

be

De

ou

the

Am

Its

education. "Students are in opposition to the fundamental institutions in society . . . They want a new and individual university standing against the mainstreams of American society, or they want no university at all."³ Many of those within the free school movement want elementary and secondary schools that stand in strong opposition to the philosophy and organization of public schools. In no way did the educational reform and discontent of the past deal with such radical rhetoric as is found in free school literature or in Tom Hayden's comments.

One limitation of the review of the literature on free schools is that so much of the literature is not published and cannot be found in libraries. Much of the literature is in the form of brochures, handouts, newsletters, articles, and letters. There is "much underground literature evolving through the various free school networks and centers."⁴ Because so much of the literature is unpublished and can only be found in various clearinghouses and individual alternative schools, it is extremely difficult to locate all of the material now being written.

Definition of A Free School

A free school is an organized group of people that exist outside of public education and create an environment that allows for the learners to choose, to a greater or lesser degree, the constraints

³John W. Donahue, "'Free Schools' Look to Alternatives", America, (June 10, 1972), p. 607.

⁴John R. Douglas, "Free-Schooling; Alternative Education and Its Documentation", Wilson Library Bulletin, (September, 1972), p. 50.

they wish to place on themselves. Yet, no two free schools are alike; and no exact definition can be given that includes all free schools. Probably the only characteristic that typifies all free schools is their basic distrust and hate of public schools. Many free schools are motivated less by ideology than by despair of public education.⁵

To understand what free schools are like, it is necessary to understand what they are objecting to because this is often the central unifying force that can be found in all types of free schools. Different free schools object to various aspects of public education; but nonetheless, all free schools object to some part of public education.

Discontent today is often against the total educational institution and the presupposition that "learning" must be imposed on kids without their consent. Many students, teachers, parents, and educators have begun to see for themselves the boredom, fear, and lack of learning that often occurs in public schools. This is not only true for the poor and black child but also for the suburban white child as well.⁶ Many kids today vocalize the fact that what goes on in public schools is boring, stupid, restrictive, and pointless. As a result, many students do poorly, give up, fail or drop out (pushed out?). Others may appear to do well--maybe some even do--when in actuality they are merely faking it, playing the game, or beating the system,

⁵"Chaos or Learning: The Free Schools", Time, (April 26, 1971), p. 81.

⁶Bonnie Barrett Stretch, "The Rise of the 'Free School'", Saturday Review, (June 20, 1970), p. 76.

and failing to gain any useful self-education that can be used in later life.⁷

According to Everett Reimer, public education serves four functions: (1) custodial care or baby-sitting, (2) social screening, (3) indoctrination or value-teaching, and (4) cognitive skills. The first three functions are executed necessarily because of the ways schools are organized. Public schools always do the first three; and cognitive learning, which is often claimed to be the primary purpose of schools, occurs only when there are resources left over from the first three built-in functions.⁸

The very fact that the school day runs from 8:30 to 3:30 provides the custodial care function. The social screening evolves through the process of achievement tests, grades, I.Q. tests, national honor, etc. Whoever excels in these areas continues through the maze to college and then on to the "good" jobs. Value teaching or indoctrination is both planned and accidental. Planned value teaching occurs in subjects like United States History, and accidental value training comes in subjects like shop for boys and sewing for girls.

Paul Goodman says, "whatever deliberate intention, schooling today serves mainly for policing and for taking up the slack in youth unemployment."⁹ John Holt also questions what goes on in schools,

⁷New Schools--A National Directory of Alternative Schools, (October, 1971), pp. 7-8.

⁸Everett Reimer, School Is Dead, (New York, 1972), p. 23.

⁹Paul Goodman, "No Processing Whatever", Radical School Reform Ronald and Beatrice Gross (eds.), (New York, 1969), p. 99.

especially those activities that go on and are subsumed under the rubric of learning. "In short, of all the bad things that are done to us in schools the worst is this: that they make us think that this process that goes on in schools, or that schools try to make go on, is learning."¹⁰

Listening to the critics, one would conclude that the American educational system is failing. A closer look, may indicate that to believe that the American educational system is failing is missing the point because, for many people, the schools are just the way they would like them. The public school is turning out a dependable robot that will fit nicely into the mold of the existing social order. The modern liberal is the one who assumes that schools are failing miserably. Many in the free school movement are just beginning to realize that maybe, at least in one sense, the schools are a "success"; for they are accomplishing what they set out to accomplish, i.e., producing and processing people who are compatible with the values of competition, subserviance, and free enterprise.

In essence, free schools are rebelling not only against the boredom, coercion, sterility, fear, and competition in public schools but also against the fact that public schools seem to be placing a value trip on students which is not consistent with a humane unfolding of our planet and which is not relevant to a constantly changing American society.¹¹

¹⁰John Holt, "A Fundamental Reminder", EdCentric, (September, 1972), p. 5.

¹¹Barry Wood, "Free Schools and the Revolution", EdCentric, (November/December, 1972), p. 12.

Dist

asto

Stat

scho

seve

large

not l

numbe

and M

San P

one c

Figur

nativ

schoo

laws

four

as a m

moveme

few ye

Surve
on Sc

Distribution, Growth, and Life-Span of Free Schools

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, there has been an astonishing growth in the number of alternative schools in the United States. The free school movement has grown from a handful of schools in the late 1950's (usually Summerhillian in nature) to over seventy in the San Francisco Bay Area alone. As can be seen by the large numbers of free schools in certain areas, their growth has not been evenly distributed throughout the United States. The greatest number of free schools are found in the states of California, New York, and Massachusetts. Many are found in and around large cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, D. C., and Denver. Usually one can locate a free school in cities that have major universities.¹² Figure 1 shows the thirty-nine states containing at least one alternative school as of 1970.

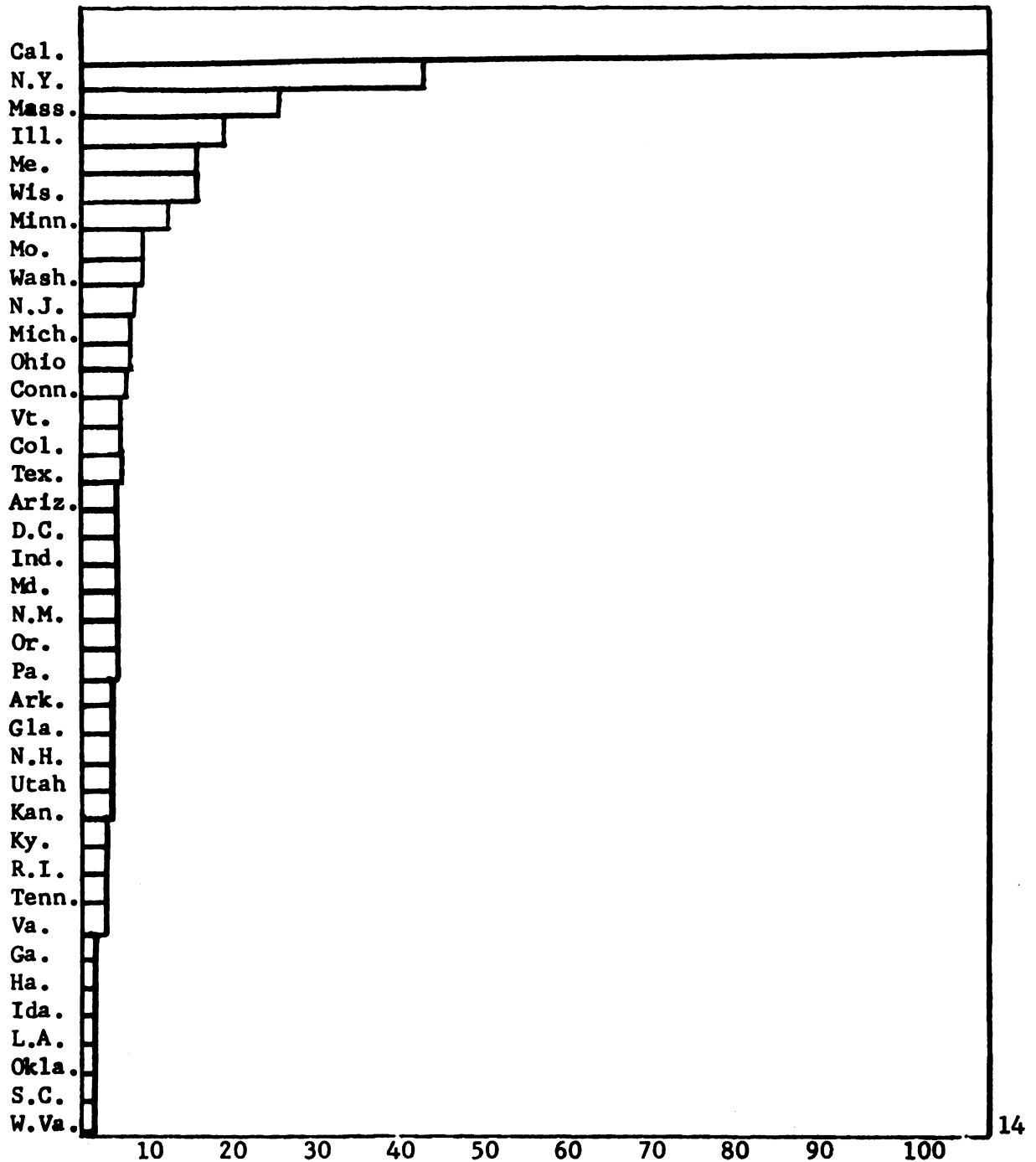
One of the reasons why there are not large number of free schools in states like Michigan is because those states have stricter laws for starting and operating free schools; Michigan is one of the four states that requires that all teachers be certified.¹³

The extremely rapid growth of free schools has been labelled as a movement. Maybe the simplest explanation of what constitutes a movement was given by Harvey Haber in the New Schools Exchange. "A few years ago, a nice man by the name of Herb Snitzer read

¹²Bruce S. Cooper, "Free and Freedom Schools: A National Survey of Alternative Programs, (A report to the President's Commission on School Finance, November, 1971), pp. 21-23.

¹³Ibid., p. 22.

Figure 1
Distribution of Schools by State



¹⁴Allen Graubard, "The Free School Movement", Harvard Educational Review, (August, 1972), p. 35.

S

r

h

S

s

S

T

r

a

r

a

b

s

s

sc

fi

th

an

fi

Fi

da

on

—

—

Gym

Samu

Summerhill, by A. S. Neill. He then went to visit Summerhill school to take pictures of it. Mr. Snitzer liked Summerhill so much that he started his own school, in New York, called the Lewis-Wadhams School. Two of the teachers at Lewis-Wadhams School liked the idea so much that they started their own school, called Collins Brook. Soon teachers from Collins Brook will be starting their own school. This is called a movement."¹⁵

There is no doubt that the free school movement has grown rapidly. In five years (1966-1971) free schools have grown from around twenty-five to perhaps six-hundred; and over two hundred have been formed in 1971, alone.¹⁶ Figure 2 shows the growth of free schools from 1957-1971.

The estimates given for the growth of free schools vary somewhat depending on the source. Michael Rossman gave some projection figures in the New Schools Exchange Newsletter. He stated that there should be 7,000 free schools and 340,000 students by 1973, and 25 to 30,000 schools and 2,000,000 students by 1975. His figures also include "progressive" schools that were not included in Figures 1 and 2.¹⁷ The disparity in the finding of those collecting data on free schools is a great one. Some of those collecting data on free schools tend to treat as real what is at best potential.

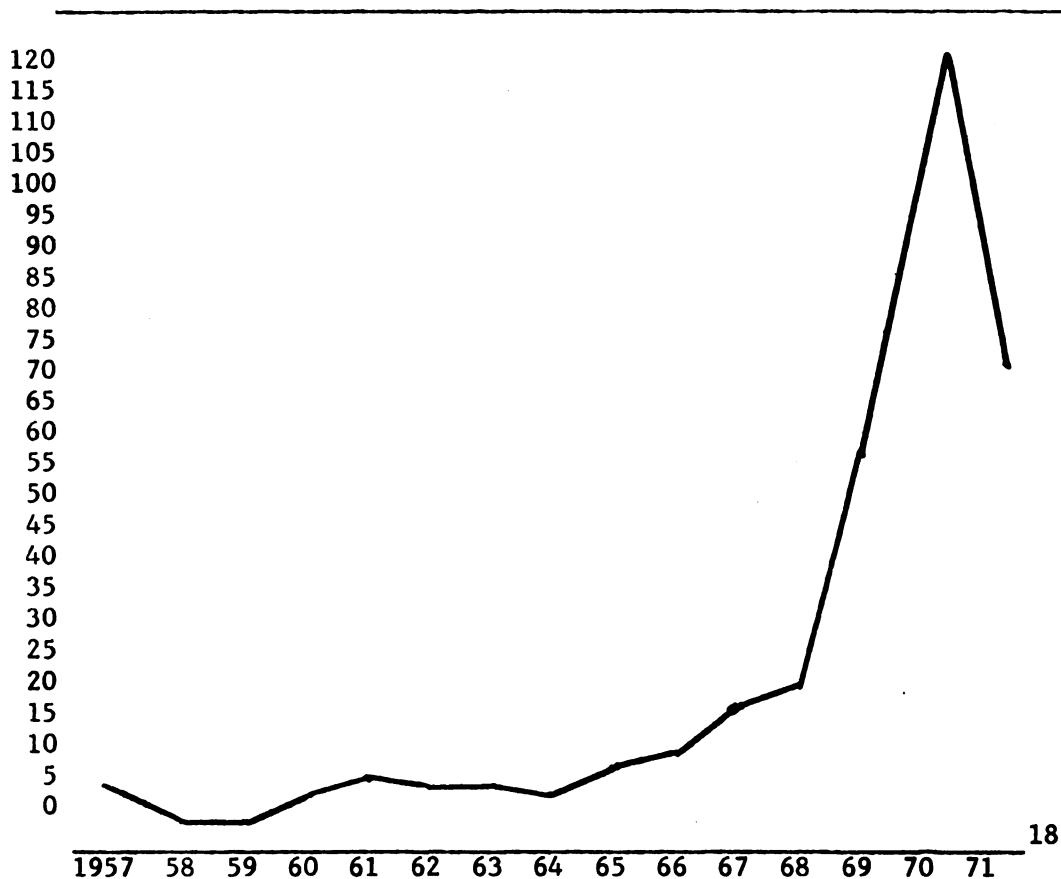
¹⁵Harvey Haber, "New Schools Exchange", cited in The No More Gym Shorts, Build-It-Yourself, Self-Discovery, Free School Talking Blues, Samuel Yanes, (ed.), (New York, 1972), p. 12.

¹⁶Graubard, Free The Children, p. 135.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 283.

Figure 2

Number of New Schools Founded by Year (1957-1971)



Whatever the actual number of free schools (Rossman's estimates may be inflated), there is no doubt that the number of free schools is rising sharply. One must still keep in mind that the number of free schools compared to public schools is very small and the actual numbers of students in free schools as compared to public schools is even smaller. Unquestionably the impact and symbolic significance of free schools far outweighs the number of students, teachers, and parents involved in them.

¹⁸Cooper, op. cit., p. 20.

1

t

t

on

th

re

ex

Thi

sur

inde

(Sep

18 m

Exche

was a

Some say that not only are free schools rising sharply, but also they are closing about as fast as they are starting. In an article, "Why Free Schools Fail", Suzanne Fremon states, "Nine months is the average life of a free school."¹⁹ There was no data given to support this statement. Another figure often quoted gives the life expectancy of free schools at eighteen months.²⁰ Allen Graubard goes on to say, "And in fact, far fewer (free) schools have closed than might have been expected. Since the great majority of free schools are still in their first, second, or third year, it would be hard to calculate a meaningful figure, but considering schools founded two years ago, I think it reasonable to estimate that at the very most one out of five have closed, and probably not more than one out of ten."²¹ Others also disagree that eighteen months is the life-span of the average free school. Bruce S. Cooper in his report to the President's Commission on Finance states, "one might expect the fatality rate among free and freedom schools to be high. This is not the case! Somehow about 88 percent of all schools survive."²²

Using the number of free schools that close is not a good index for judging success or failure of a free school because many

¹⁹Suzanne S. Fremon, "Why Free Schools Fail", Parents Magazine, (September, 1972), p. 50.

²⁰Allen Graubard stated in Free the Children that "the figure (18 months) was given by the founder (Harvey Haber) of the New Schools Exchange Newsletter, but, from my work at the Exchange, I know that this was a guess based on very little data."

²¹Ibid., pp. 175-176.

²²Cooper, op. cit., p. 56.

A

E

P

m

wh

"t

de

ou

pat

have

disa

This

free schools that close merge with other free schools or disband for a period of time and start up at a new location with many of the same parents, teachers, and students.

Conventional Aspects of Unconventional Schools: Personnel, Finances Governance, and Legalities

Students. The students that attend alternative schools are mainly white (80 percent). Blacks make up about 17 percent of alternative school enrollment, but are usually concentrated in a few schools in the large urban areas of our country. Slightly more males (55 percent) are enrolled than females (45 percent).²³

Students who turn to free schools come for a wide variety of reasons. Usually there have been no options within the public school they previously attended. Since not all (any?) students benefit from the lock-step, teacher dominated type of education often provided in public schools, they must find an environment which is more suited to their own particular learning style. Many of those who leave are labelled "failure", "dropouts", "underachievers", "trouble-makers", "radicals", or "problem" kids. A close look may determine that it is the public school that has the problem.

Even though there is a variety of reasons that students seek out alternative environments, they usually go through a similar pattern after they arrive. Especially if it is the first time they have had to deal with an open environment. First, they are confused, disoriented, and sometimes even shocked with their new-found freedom. This is to be expected for if they had had all their decisions made for

²³Ibid., p. 29.

them and must begin to make their own decisions, it can be a trying and puzzling encounter. The time spent in this period of adjustment "is proportionate to the hatred their last school gave them."²⁴ Second, they become frustrated and bored because of their lack of ability to keep themselves occupied and content. Third, they find a way to dispel their boredom and frustration by finding activities they enjoy learning and participating in. Fourth, their concept of how school is defined changes. When they first enter the school, they see school and learning as what takes place within those four walls. This narrow definition of what school is, gradually gives way to defining the school and learning as all the combined activities that take place in the total community. Eventually, they even begin to realize that the narrow definition of school, as that which takes place within the building, limits their education and learning. In reality, it is not quite that simple, but most students to a greater or lesser degree go through these stages. Hopefully, the students gradually begin to assume more and more responsibility and control in deciding their own future.

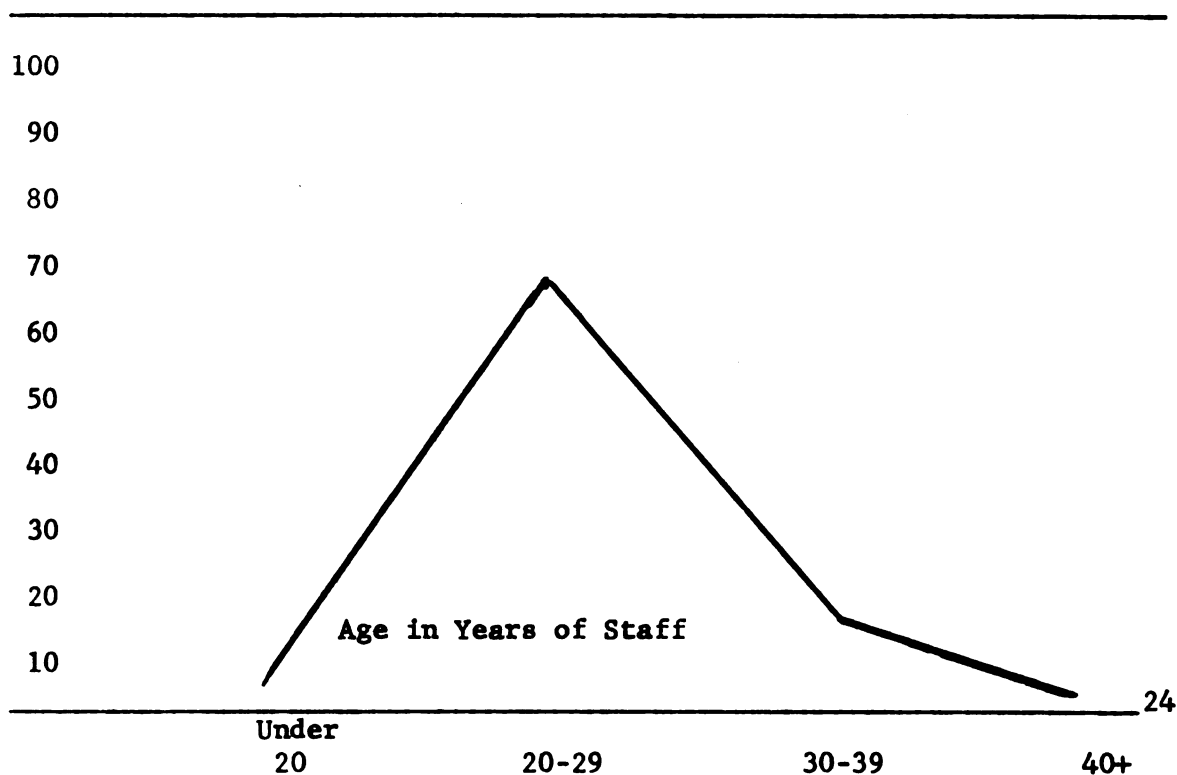
Staff. Just as the free school students develop in a somewhat different way from their public school counterparts, so does the teacher. The "teachers" in a free school may be very different from the teachers in public schools. Teachers in free schools are often called resource people or facilitators, and in many free schools it is difficult to tell the difference between students,

²⁴A. S. Neill, Summerhill: A Radical Approach To Child Rearing, (New York, 1960), p. 5.

full-time teachers, part-time teachers, parents, volunteers, visitors, and those just "helping out". The following figure also confirms the fact the free school teachers are much younger than their public school counterparts.

Figure 3

Age Distribution of Staff at Alternate Schools



As can be seen by Figure 3, two-thirds of all alternative school staff are under thirty. The national mean age for public school teachers is considerably older, thirty-seven.²⁵

The pupil-staff ratio of free schools is often envied by public school people. There is no doubt that free schools emphasize the

²⁴Cooper, op. cit., p. 31.

²⁵Ibid., p. 32.

importance of individual attention and small, intimate groups. In free schools a rough estimate which included all volunteers and part-time staff would be about 1.3; while a figure which involved only full-time staff would be 1.7."²⁶ It is not uncommon for the public school teacher to have over thirty in a class.

The method in which staff and volunteers are selected in free schools varies from school to school. More often than not, especially in free high schools, students play a major part in the selection of staff. Also taking part in hiring may be parents, boards of directors, other staff, and the director or coordinator if there is one.

Formal educational credentials are often ignored except in some states like Michigan where teachers must be certified. The description of a teacher given by a student named Jill in The Raspberry Exercises is often the type of teacher sought out by free schools. Jill says a teacher_s should be "the person who accepts you completely as you are while still being a model of a more skilled, more conscious, more aware, and more loving person . . ."²⁸ Many free school teacher are skilled in a certain area and are active practioners of what they offer to teach. However, just like credentials, being an active practioner does not necessarily guarantee good teaching.

²⁷ Graubard, Free The Children, p. 358.

²⁸Sali Raspberry and Robert Greenway, The Raspberry Exercises, (Albion, California, 1970), p. 18.

Students are on a first name basis with staff, and there is usually much love and friendship between students and staff.

Part-time and full-time staff at free schools work for little or sometimes no salary. Therefore, they view their "work" as much more than a job. Long hours, continuous staff meetings, extended field trips, and the much needed money raising activities become part of the routine of the free school staff members.

There are some positive aspects that attract the free school teacher, too. The rewards that occur through the intimate interaction between students and staff can be most meaningful. As a staff member, autonomy and ingenuity are not limited; or if they are limited, it is by parents and students and not by principals and administrators.

In most free schools the position of the administrator is all but lost except in cases of schools founded and run by an individual. Even in these cases, the administrative duties are usually shared. In other free schools, if there is a need for an administrator or head, one of the staff members will assume that position. Different staff members fill that position for different circumstances.

Another characteristic of the staffs of free schools is that they are very mobile. It is not uncommon for schools to lose and add many different people in the course of a single year. Sometimes, because of the often rapid turnover of staff and volunteers, there is no sense of continuity in the school year or from one year to another. This may be outweighed, though, by the fact that new

teachers and volunteers are constantly bringing in fresh energies and new ideas.

Parents. The literature seems to indicate that parents in the free school movement are usually middle class parents that have done away with many middle class values. Usually parents are expected to take an active part in the free school their child is attending. Parents are called upon to serve many duties. Some are teachers or volunteers; some are custodians, plumbers, electricians, and carpenters; some are fund raisers; most are chauffeurs. Certainly all parents are called upon to do chores and duties that are not customary of public school parents.

At the elementary school level, parents often take the initiative to enroll their child in a free school. Parents of students at the high school age may play a somewhat different role. Perhaps they first hear about the free high school from their son or daughter and may either give encouragement to their child or be reluctant to have him/her enroll. One way almost all parents are involved is financially for most alternative schools charge tuition.

Finances. Eighty-one percent of the free schools charge tuition, all the way from a nominal fee to \$1200. The remaining schools charge no tuition at all. Tuition for boarding schools, of course, is considerably higher. Basically, middle class free schools survive on tuition and small donations; community schools or storefront schools serving blacks or low-income families also qualify for state, federal, and foundation support.²⁹ Both types of schools make money

²⁹Cooper, op. cit., pp. 83-91.

from a great variety of other sources, too. These range from pancake suppers to selling raffle tickets. Probably the most complete set of suggestions for the funding of free schools can be found in Jonathan Kozol's book, Free Schools.³⁰

Many free schools find themselves in the uncomfortable position of charging tuition and at the same time realizing that this practice excludes poor people--a simple example of institutionalized racism. Konama, a typical tuition charging free school, explains the dilemma this way:

The promoters of this school would very much like to see philanthropists provide an endowment to enable the school to admit students from all socio-economic levels. The proponents of this school cannot fully be met until financial independence is achieved, thus allowing an open door policy for all races and socio-economic levels.³¹

A sliding scale, which is based on ability to pay, is generally used. Tuition is based on family size, family income, number of children currently enrolled in the school, medical bills, and any other number of criteria. Many schools just ask parents and/or students what they think they can afford. Seventy-three percent of all free schools charging tuition also provide scholarships or grants-in-aid.³²

The other side of the financial ledger concerns free school expenditures. The budget priorities for alternative schools are staff, physical plant, and materials and equipment.

³⁰Jonathan Kozol, Free Schools, (Boston, 1972), pp. 79-113.

³¹W. M. Fred Stoker, "Konama--A Free School", Educational Forum, (January, 1972), p. 190.

³²Cooper, op. cit., p. 84.

Even though staff salaries are extremely low as compared to public schools, they still make up the largest share of the alternative school's budgets. It is extremely difficult to estimate the average salary of a free school teacher because so little data is available and so many teachers in free schools are paid for part-time work. Also, some staff may work for room and board or may live in the school. It is probably safe to say that any full-time staff members that are making in excess of \$100 a week are doing very well.

The second most expensive expenditure is rent. In an average sized free school (thirty-three) rent may vary from \$200-\$500 a month. Usually they are housed in sympathetic (but poor) churches, old school buildings, large houses, or garages. The larger free schools often make use of an old warehouse or factory. Rural schools may use a large farmhouse or an exotic self-made building like a geodesic dome or adobe hut. It is difficult to find a building that meets the building code requirements and that is large, cheap, accessible and isolated enough so neighbors won't complain.³³

Materials and equipment are the next largest expenditure. Expenses that add up considerably are photography equipment, art supplies, science supplies, books, tools, chairs, carpets, pillows, a television, stereo, stove, refrigerator and vacuum. From this description one might get the impression that free schools are well-equipped, contemporary models for display in Good Housekeeping. On the contrary, most free schools make use of the wierdest assortment

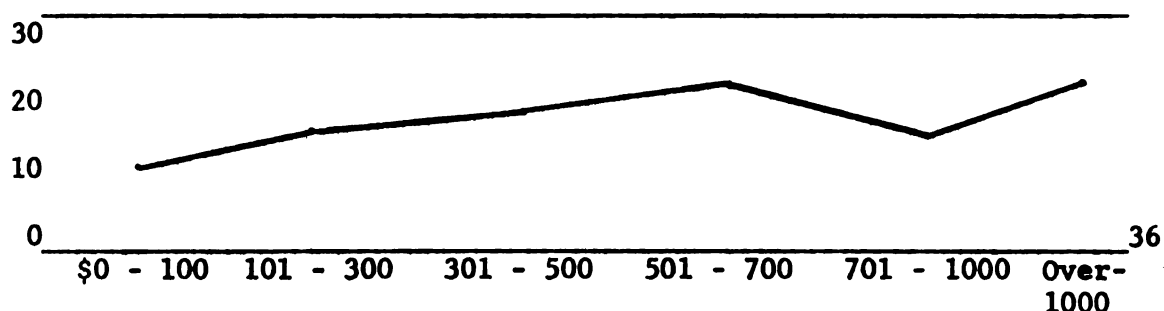
³³Ibid., p. 92.

of orange crates, bricks, tables, chairs, paint, posters, couches, and throw-away items that can be imagined. To use the language of free school people, many free schools are more than slightly "trashed".

The average per pupil expenditure for students enrolled in public schools is slightly less than \$1000 a year, New York being the highest (\$1,466) and Alabama the lowest (\$543).³⁴ The mean and median per pupil expenditure for free school students is slightly less than \$600 per year. Figure 4 shows the percentage of distribu-

Figure 4

Percentage Distribution of Schools by Per Pupil Expenditures



tion is even at all levels. Public school per pupil expenditures would more closely follow the bell shaped curve.³⁵

The difference in per pupil expenditure is even greater than it appears because free schools include rent in their per pupil expenditure and public schools do not include a similar charge.

In terms of record keeping, especially financial records, most free school personnel do not claim to be financial wizards.

³⁴Statistical Abstract of the United States, 93rd edition, (Washington, D. C., 1972), p. 100.

³⁵Graubard, Free The Children, p. 362.

With that in mind, the preceding figures on school finance should be viewed as the best estimate that can be given with the data that is available.

Governance. The formal "power" structure of public education is a fairly familiar one and looks something like this: board of education, superintendent, principal, teacher, student, parents, PTA, student council.

Free school participants usually remember the public school hierarchy quite well and strive for a more personalistic and shared method of making decisions. The following is a brief explanation of the organizational structure of free schools. It should be kept in mind that there is probably more diversity in organization in free schools than public schools.

Usually there is a board of directors which is necessary in order for the free school to become incorporated and to receive grants. Parents, staff, concerned community citizens, and students are represented on the boards. Official student representation on boards may be limited because there are laws that specify age requirements for members of boards of directors. The boards serve a wide variety of functions depending on the particular school. They may make fiscal policy, hire staff, give curriculum input, or not even meet.

Staff may all have equal power or they may have slightly less power than a coordinator or director. Staff may or may not have more

³⁶Ibid., p. 363.

power than parents or students. Parents seem to have more power in elementary free schools than secondary free schools. Sometimes parents set the whole curricular pattern for a school. Sometimes students have the balance of power, especially in free high schools. In the Elizabeth Cleaners Street School, students set the curriculum, hire and fire staff, select the location, and make all other important decisions. All power is with the students at the Elizabeth Cleaners Street School.³⁷

The all school meeting that takes place in many free schools makes most of the important day-to-day decisions of the school.

No matter how decisions are made in alternative schools, they are usually shared, at least much more so than in public schools. The degree that decision-making is shared depends on the make-up of the particular school.

Legalities. All alternative schools will sooner or later run into problems over various legal matters. Those interested in starting an alternative school would do well to familiarize themselves with the following legal areas.

1. State Requirements--Generally an alternative school must meet the state requirements. These may include such things as the number of days in attendance. Alternative schools generally have avoided serious problems in this area by quickly familiarizing themselves with the law.

³⁷Elizabeth Cleaners Street School People, Starting Your Own High School, (New York, 1972), pp. 25-45.

2. Approval--This is the procedure which the state allows schools to become non-profit corporations. With non-profit corporation status, schools are entitled to state and federal governmental surpluses and are exempt from income tax. Donations and grants from individuals and organizations can also be given for tax write-off purposes.
3. Liability Insurance and Medical Release Forms--Liability insurance protects the school in case of legal suits against it stemming from the injury of a student while at school. Alternative schools should also encourage parents to sign release forms which enable staff members to seek emergency medical attention for students in case their parents can't be contacted.³⁸
4. Zoning Regulations and Building Codes--There may be only certain areas of the city that allow school buildings. Special use permits may be required. The building codes often prove to be the most difficult of all "getting started" procedures. Problems may arise from safety, fire, and health inspectors. Sometimes both local and state authorities have jurisdiction. Jonathan Kozol expresses the difficulties with building codes in this way. "The building code, so blatantly and often typically ignored in cases of old, collapsing, rat-infested tenement houses owned by landlords who have friends within the city's

³⁸Cooper, op. cit., pp. 95-100.

legal apparatus, are viciously and selectively enforced to try to keep the free school people out of the business."³⁹

5. Curriculum--Some states require some courses or a set of courses to be taught. However, free schools seem to teach whatever they want to teach and call it whatever the state says schools should teach. Consequently, public schools may teach United States Government and free schools may teach United States Government and call it Imperialism.
6. Teacher Certification--Certification may require a bachelor's degree, student teaching, and a certain number of hours of education courses. "Only six states, Alabama, Nebraska, North Carolina, Michigan, Iowa, and Washington demand certification of non-public school teachers."⁴⁰

Philosophy, Curriculum, and Diversity of Free Schools

Philosophy. The term free school has come to mean different things to different people. There is no one philosophy that correctly describes all free schools because there are as many variations as there are combinations of parents, students, and staff; yet, there are some general concepts that free schools more or less share.

³⁹Kozol, op. cit., p. 28.

⁴⁰Cooper, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

Decision making is usually shared and democratic. Decisions are reached through consensus and/or compromise. Some decisions may be reached because a person has great influence. Motivation is seen as internal, but the transformation of knowledge comes through teacher, group, and/or learner. There are either a number of prescribed options for the child or the options are unlimited. The environment exists to serve the needs of the learner.⁴¹

The role of the teacher varies from planning group activities to counseling to learning to processing. The role of the student becomes active and he/she is involved in determining what is taught, how it is taught, when it is taught, by whom it is taught, for how long it is taught, and how well it was learned.

Facts, data, experiences, and opinions support a great variety of educational positions that give credence to a variety of theories and models from behavior modification to organic learning theory. The very fact that so many educators differ on the merits and potentialities of different models of learning should give us a clue and help us realize that learning is a highly personal, individual activity; and the process of learning varies with a person's background, interests, values, personality, and personal goals. Not only are people different, but schools should represent an attempt to enhance those differences.⁴²

⁴¹Thanks to Frank Blum for much of the information on philosophy. Frank is a doctoral student in education at Michigan State University. He is also the coordinator of the School-Within-A-School at the Kinawa Middle School in Okemos, Michigan.

⁴²"Southeast Alternatives: Experimental Schools Program", (U. S. Office of Education, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minn. OS07A).

Free schools recognize the fact that not all students benefit from one type of school and that different students do better in different environments. To a very large degree the general goals of free schools are process goals as opposed to outcome goals. Process goals involve the day-to-day operation of the school because the school is seen as places that are meaningful and worthwhile, a "now" experience. Outcome goals are long range goals that deal with what one wishes people who have been through an open environment to look like. There are many in the free school movement who would contend that if process goals are achieved, the outcome goals will take care of themselves. Certainly people in the free school movement have more difficulty in agreeing on the merits of outcome goals than of the merits of process goals. The following is a list of some general goals that most free schools could endorse:

1. To encourage independent growth.
2. To help the students process and personalize their experience.
3. To insure that close personal relationships based on trust and understanding exist between students and staff.
4. To encourage decision-making to be shared by students, staff, and parents.
5. To help the students to become self-directed and self-motivated so they can assume a major role in determining the nature and direction of their own learning.
6. To help students perceive school as something more than what takes place within four walls.

7. To provide an environment in which the students can become imaginative, creative, and curious.
8. To help students to better understand their own feelings and the feelings of others.
9. To re-evaluate the goals and philosophy of traditional education.
10. To assist students in acquiring the basic skills of reading, writing, math, and any other skills that seem important to the learners.
11. To develop strategies that will help students acquire a positive self-concept.
12. To lend support to students in risk-taking behaviors.
13. To assist students in self-control, self-evaluation, and responsibility.
14. To help students feel the importance of sisterhood, brotherhood, and community.

There are some underlying philosophical currents which the preceding goals are based. They are that all students are capable of learning and that they want to learn and will learn if they so choose. This is predicated on a basic trust of one another.

Curriculum. From this rather broad and vague philosophical base, the curriculum evolves. Curriculum can be defined as putting philosophy into practice. The following section deals with some ways philosophy is put into action to become curriculum.

1

t

31

ch

on

tea

the

vari

There are varying types of curricula offered at different types of free schools. First, a list of the various names that free schools use to identify themselves will be given; and second, three representative curriculums will be examined in detail.

Free schools can be found in a variety of different places and under a variety of different names: alternative schools, storefront schools, street academies, private schools, new schools, progressive schools, community schools, re-entry programs, schools without walls, drop-in centers, Summerhillian schools, political liberation schools, traveling schools, schools-within-a-school, underground schools, counter-culture schools, and open schools. Not necessarily are all of these free schools, but any of these schools may fit into that category. To attempt to explain the differences in all of these schools would be an impossible task for each school, no matter what name it goes by, operates differently from other schools. Instead of trying to explain the curriculum of all these types, an attempt will be made to explore the curriculum of three different types of schools: the Summerhillian school, the community school, and the counter-culture school. If hard pressed, most of the free schools could be subsumed under one of these three categories.

A school day at Summerhill may look something like this. Breakfast lasts from 8:15 to 9:00. Lessons start at 9:30. The older children may meet for Class I on Monday, Class II on Tuesday, and so on. Another teacher may have a similar timetable but different classes.

The younger children usually meet all morning with their own teacher. Attendance is completely optional for all students. In the afternoon there are no scheduled classes. Tea is at four; at five various activities again get underway. The younger kids love to be

read to; the middle age kids seem to enjoy the art room; and the older kids usually use the metal and woodshop. Monday nights most go to the local moviehouse; and some go again when a new movie comes on Thursday, if they have enough money. Tuesday night the staff members and older kids listen to Neill as he talks on psychology. Wednesday night is record night and dancing. Friday may be reserved for special things like play rehearsal. Saturday night is left for the General School Meeting. Spontaneous play activities, games, and conversation fill most of the remaining time.⁴³

Summerhill is a boarding school, and in that way is different from most free schools in the United States; yet, the philosophy of this school is the basis for many free schools in the United States. A better understanding of the philosophy of Summerhill can be gleaned through the following quotes by A. S. Neill:

1. I started a school where I thought the emotions should come first.
2. Children are innately honest and they expect you to be the same way.
3. Children should find things out for themselves.⁴⁴
4. My view of the child is that he is wise and realistic. If left to himself without adult suggestion of any kind, he will develop as far as he is capable of developing.
5. Self-regulation implies a belief in the goodness of human nature; a belief that there is not, and never was, original sin.

⁴³Neill, op. cit., pp. 13-19.

⁴⁴A. S. Neill, Talking About Summerhill, (London, 1967). pp. 7, 9, 10.

6. The happiness and well-being of children depend on the degree of love and approval we give them.⁴⁵

A schedule for a community school would be very different than the typical Summerhillian school. A schedule for a community school would look like the chart below.

Spring Schedule: The New Community School

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00	Phy. Educ.	First Aid	Phy. Educ.	First Aid	Phy. Educ.
9:00					
9:00-	Ethics and Change	Black Studies	Ethics and Change	Black Studies	African Studies
10:30	African Studies & Comm. Inv.	Drama & Poetry, Soc. Photography	History & Comm. Involvement	Drama, & Poetry, Soc. Photography	Love & Sex
10:30-	Creative Writing	Geometry	Creative Writing	Geometry	Creative Writing
12:00	Modern Lit. World Lit. Black Lit. Comparative Literature	Phil. of Art, Black Lit., Film Making	Creative Writing Modern Lit. World Lit. Algebra	Sociology Black Lit. Comparative Literature	Modern Lit. World Lit. Algebra
12:00-	Political	Staff meet.	Committees	Films	Steering Committee
1:00	Collective School Presentation	Films	Sch. meeting		
1:00-	Languages	Languages	Life Science	Languages	Life Science
3:00	Francais Espanol Deutsch Public Commun. Wrkshp. Nat. Amer. Studies	Gen. Math Nat. Amer. Studies	Arts & Crafts Automotive Maintenance & Repair Public Community Workshop	Gen. Math Nat. Amer. Studies	Arts & Crafts Gen. Math
3:00-	Karate	Karate	Karate	Women's Lib.	
5:00				Phil. of Art	
7:00-					
10:00					

⁴⁵Neill, op. cit., pp. 4, 30, 45.

⁴⁶Graubard, op. cit., p. 107.

Community schools tend not to emphasize, at least to the degree that Summerhill does, the natural unfolding of the child. Community schools often serve black and inner-city people. Blacks don't necessarily attend these schools merely because they believe in the open classroom, freedom, or self-expression; but because they feel that the public schools are teaching a white man's culture and ignoring black kids who are not acquiring the skills necessary for survival. In the black schools there is greater emphasis on basic skills than in Summerhillian or counter-culture schools. Usually the community schools are more political in nature.⁴⁷ Often there is a rigorous college preparatory program which is denied blacks in public education. Innovative approaches to teaching reading, writing, math, and other skills, are employed.

Realistically the community school arises in response to the current educational, social, economic and political problems faced by those in the inner city. Consequently, the purposes that these schools serve are different than the purposes of Summerhillian or counter culture schools. Community schools attempt to prepare students for highly skilled jobs and yet make them politically aware at the same time. Jonathan Kozol speaks to this very issue when he says, "Harlem does not need a new generation of radical basket-weavers. It does need . . . obstetricians, pediatricians, lab technicians, defense attorneys, building code examiners, brain surgeons."⁴⁸

⁴⁷Stretch, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

⁴⁸Kozol, op. cit., p. 45.

Even though there is emphasis in community schools on politics and skills, it should be kept in mind that they often attempt to project these concepts in terms of the open classroom. However, their commitment to open education is not as total in community schools as in the Summerhillian or counter-culture schools.

A schedule for a counter-culture school could typically look like the following schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:00 Surrealism	10:00 Sociology	10:00 Cuba	10:00 Math Logic	10:00 Urban Ecology
12:00 Women's & Men's Lib.	12:00 Macrame	11:00 German Literature	11:30 Creative Writing	11:30 Literature
2:30 Marx & Lenin	1:30 Comparative Religion	1:30 Anaisnin	1:00 Media	1:00 Carpentry and Plumbing
3:30 Figure Drawing	3:00 History of Drugs	5:00 Folk Music	2:30 General Meeting	3:00 Batik & Art
7:00 Community Law		7:00 Law & Morality	4:00 Organic Cooking	
Photography				
8:00 Jeff's House				
10:00 Women's Labor Movement	10:30 American History	10:00 Marxism	10:00 Math	10:00 General Meeting
11:30 Indian Culture	11:30 Improvisation and Theatre	11:30 Guerrilla Theatre	11:30 Psychology	12:00 Gym
1:30 Comparative Religion	1:30 Women's Labor Movement	12:00 People's Class Pablo & Peter	1:30 Medieval Epics	3:00 Clean Up Store- front
			2:30 People's Poetry	

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3:00 Folk Music	3:30 Dance	3:00 General Meeting	3:30 Sociology	
4:00 Work on People's Park		5:00 Poetry	4:30 Work on People's Park	
		6:30 Art		

The counter-culture schools emphasize freedom from the usual constraints of curriculum and teacher directed learning. Also there is often a noted bias toward wilderness survival, organic farming, and ecology, as well as crafts and current social issues.

In summary, there is no doubt the philosophy of child rearing put forth by A.S. Neill has been the underlying, central theme of many new schools. His is an uncompromising view of freedom as it applies to learning. Neill's concept of freedom is not one of politics as in community schools; but it is one of the psychology of the child. The counter-culture school's concept of freedom is a more pedagogical view.

Each type of school is an alternative articulating a profound opposition to methods and results of public school. The former (community school) emphasizes the role of the school in the community's struggle for freedom and equality, while the latter (Summerhillian and counter-culture schools) the individual child's freedom from coercive approaches to learning and social development as expressed by the organization and techniques of public school.⁵⁰

No matter what type of free school, the innovative practices that go on within them do not come without struggle, error, and personal

⁴⁹Stretch, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

⁵⁰Graubard, Free The Children, pp. 351-352.

sacrifice. Herbert Kohl lends a sense of reality to the many problems and difficulties one may find in attempting to implement the concept of open education:

Nothing developed magically, freedom and openness are not formulas for success, and it is very difficult indeed to explore the diverse possibilities of life in schools. To have a free classroom is to present an environment where many people can discover themselves, and there is no simple set of rules to prescribe how this can be created . . . To try to break away from stupid schooling is no easy matter for teacher or student. It is a lonely and long fight to escape from believing that one needs to do what people say one is expected to be.⁵¹

The Future of the Free School Movement

It is so hard to predict the future of the free school movement because there are so many possible directions it could take. Assuming that the situation that presently exists, i.e., that public education does not provide funds for alternative schools and that public education does not attempt to establish different approaches to learning, probably the number of free schools will still continue to grow at a rapid pace. If however, compulsory attendance laws are struck down or voucher plans are implemented, the free school movement is apt to grow unbelievably. If compulsory attendance laws are abolished many students would leave public schools. After these students had been out of school for a while they might decide to return to school. However, they might not return to the same public

⁵¹Herbert R. Kohl, The Open Classroom, (New York, 1969), pp. 115-116.

school that they left, but instead find an alternative school that would better meet their needs. Establishing federal/statewide, or city voucher systems has the possibility of increasing the number of students in the free school movement. If parents are given tax money in the form of a voucher, which could be redeemed at any private or public educational institution, scores of students would enter free schools; and new alternative schools would certainly spring up, too.

Federally funded experimental schools of one sort or another may also create possibilities for more free schools. Maybe even performance contracting, if instituted in areas of the affective domain, would create some possibilities for further growth in the free school movement. If free schools could make in-roads into public school monies that are tied up in aid to parochial schools, the free school movement would also certainly grow. New decisions on shared time could also increase the ranks in the free school movement.

It is likely that the free school movement will continue to grow, but will never reach potential at least in terms of numbers of student enrollment without some public funding.

The real impact and future of the free school movement certainly does not only lie in the number of new free schools being created, but also rests on the impact that current free schools have on public education. Public educators always alert to any threat either to their image or monopoly they possess on public funds, may be forced to develop models of free schools within their own system.

At the very least, the free school movement may compel public educators to re-examine their basic philosophy.

Those close to free schools are also keenly aware of the number of visitors (students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and others) that find their way into the local free schools, with thousands of questions. Sometimes the visitors even outnumber the students.

In conclusion, the free school movement is not just a temporary educational experiment that will soon fade away. The philosophy of free schools will increasingly be absorbed as optional models within public school systems. Free schools will continue to grow in number, and their impact will be felt by public schools, colleges of education, and as a separate entity in itself.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is based on the field research techniques of participant observation and interview. This chapter will be divided into two parts. First, a justification for participant observation research will be presented; and, second, the specific way participant observation is utilized and implemented in this research project.

Justification of Methodology

In attempting to do qualitative research, it is important for the researcher to select the methodology that enables him to understand to greatest degree possible the point of view of those being studied. The method most appropriate for this purpose is participant observation.

Participant observation consists of observation conducted while participating, to a greater or lesser degree, in the lives of those studied. The participant observer follows those he studies through their daily round of life, seeing what they do, when, with whom, and under what circumstances, and querying them about the meanings of their actions. In this way, he builds up a body of field notes and interviews that come nearer than any other social science method to capturing patterns of collective action as they occur in real life.¹

¹Blanche Greer, "First Days in the Field", cited in Sociologist At Work, Phillip E. Hammond (ed.), (New York, 1964), p. 383.

William Filstead has endorsed qualitative methodology by saying:

Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to get close to the data, thereby developing the analytical conceptual and categorical components of explanation from the data itself rather than from the preconceived rigidly structured and highly quantified techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into the operational definitions that the researcher has constructed.²

In the above quote, Filstead also hints that there are some limitations of objective, scientific research. There have always been those who question the methodology of participant observation; yet, there have been those who seriously question the methodology of objective research, too.

The objective approach holds the danger of the observer substituting his view of the field of action for the view held by the actor. It is unnecessary to add that the actor acts toward his world on the basis of how he sees it and not on the basis of how that world appears to the outside observer.³

Charles Hampden-Turner raises a number of well documented shortcomings of objective research and strict methodology in the first chapter of his book, Radical Man.

I have argued that power over things turns to unreflective power over people, that the need to predict and control produces detachment, an unequal relationship and a self-fulfilling prophecy which makes the unequal appear undeserving of equality. I have argued that the

²William I. Filstead, Qualitative Methodology, (Chicago, 1970), p. 139.

³Herbert Blumer, "Sociological Implications of the Thought of George Herbert Mead", American Journal of Sociology, (March, 1966), p. 542.

demand for precision and invariability attracts the investigator to the more trivial and repetitive activities of man, that empiricism focuses on stereotyped externalities, ignores depth of experience and emphasizes the status quo above visions of the future. We have seen that analysis fragments without being able to reintegrate, looks to the past instead of facing forward, regards man in the light of animals and fails to respect his complexity.⁴

Of course, there have been those who question the methodology of participant observation, too. More specifically, they contend that the validity and reliability of participant observation is dubious. Fred Kerlinger says that participation observation comes closest of all the empirical methodologies to assuring the validity of what is being measured. He goes on to say:

. . . the more realistic the situation, the more valid are generalizations to other situations likely to be . . . the realism of field studies is obvious. Of all types of studies, they are closest to real life.⁵

Severyn Bruyn in his book, The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation, speaks to the reliability of participant observation when he says, "In the subject's natural setting, the participant observer is in a unique position to evaluate any rationalizations which the subject may make in response to a questionnaire or formal interview."⁶

⁴Charles Hampden-Turner, Radical Man, (New York, 1971), pp. 15-16.

⁵Fred Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (New York, 1966), p. 389.

⁶Severyn T. Bruyn, The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), p. 180.

Herbert Blumer also supports the reliability of participant observation methodology in the following remarks:

To try to catch the interpreting process by remaining aloof as a so-called 'objective' observer and refusing to take the role of the acting unit is to risk the worst kind of subjectivism--the objective is likely to fill in the process of interpretation with his own surmises in place of catching the process as it occurs in the experience of the acting unit which uses it.⁷

Phillip Cusick in his recent book, Inside High School, explains that both validity and reliability can best be met through the methodology of participant observation.

As one lives close to a situation, his description and explanation of it have a first-person quality which other methodologies lack. As he continues to live close to and moves deeper into that situation his perceptions have a validity that is simply unapproachable by any so-called standardized method. Likewise, as his validity becomes better so his reliability, which is an extension of his validity, becomes better . . .⁸

Homans in his book, The Human Perspective, lists six criteria that insure that the participant observation findings are reliable and valid:

1. Time: the more time an individual spends with a group the more likely it is that he will obtain an accurate perception of the social meaning its members live by.
2. Place: the closer the researcher works geographically to the people he studies, the more accurate should be his interpretations.

⁷Herbert Blumer, "Society as Symbolic Interaction", Human Behavior and Social Sciences, Arnold Ross, (ed.), (Boston, 1962), p. 145.

⁸Phillip A. Cusick, Inside High School, (New York, 1973), p. 232.

3. Social circumstances: the number and variety of social circumstances which the observer encounters within the social structure of the community increases his accuracy.
4. Language: the researcher and his subjects should share a common language.
5. Intimacy: the greater the degree of intimacy the researcher achieves, the greater his accuracy.
6. Consensus: confirmation that the meanings interpreted by the observer are correct.⁹

The time spent on the study was from September 15, 1972 to April 1, 1973. Usually the author spent three to four days a week at The School from nine o'clock until three o'clock in addition to numerous hours in the evenings and on the weekends. This seems like enough time to obtain a reasonably accurate description and analysis of the population being studied.

The geographical setting, proved to be no problem since the researcher lived within four miles of The School and this is probably about the average distance for students, also.

The social circumstances may have been a slight limitation for the researcher for he limited himself in some activities, like experimenting with certain kinds of drugs, because of his previous socialization process. In some situations the researcher became more of an observer than participant.

The language did not seem to provide any handicaps for the researcher. It did not take long to realize that "the bomb, kick-ass,

⁹Homans, The Human Perspective, cited in Herbert Blumer, "Society as Symbolic Interaction", Human Behavior and Social Processes, Arnold Ross, (ed.), (Boston, 1962), p. 145.

killer weed" is marijuana. The intimacy generally proved to come rather quickly with most of the group members because we were a very small group that interacted very frequently with one another.

Consensus and agreement of thought between research and subjects was constantly checked out. The writer would often ask other group members to further explain what they had said so he could better understand what they meant and how they were feeling.

There have been those who have used the proposed advantages of participant-observation to produce noteworthy contributions to social science. The classicist William Whyte explains the events that take place while being a member of a street corner gang in Boston.¹⁰ Erving Goffman in his book, Asylums, tells about the internal interactions of a mental hospital from a patient's point of view.¹¹ Tom Wolfe in his book, The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, relates his perceptions of the experiences he viewed while riding cross country with a group of bikers.¹² Philip Cusick in his book Inside High School, describes his reaction to spending six months as a student inside a public high school.¹³ Of course, all these men

¹⁰William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society, (Chicago, 1967).

¹¹Erving Goffman, Asylums, (New York, 1968).

¹²Tom Wolfe, The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, (New York, 1968).

¹³Cusick, op. cit.

borrowed from the model that anthropologists use while they study cultures as participant observers.

The methodology of participant observation is especially applicable to research on free schools:

We have found that the most fruitful method for research on alternative school development is participant observation and informal interviewing. . . . Rather than a 'value-free' outsider the researcher should be a committed but critical participant in a long-term effort to strengthen alternative schools.¹⁴

William Whyte justified his methodology in the following way:

I am not claiming that there is one best way to do field research. The methods used should depend upon the nature of the field situation and of the research problem. I simply try to fit together the findings of the study and the methods required to arrive at such findings. The methodology must emphasize the importance of observing people in action and get down a detailed report of actual behavior completely divorced from moral judgments. . . . I felt only if I could get to know the people and learn their problems first hand would I be able to gain the understanding I needed.¹⁵

Melville Dalton, in Men Who Manage, explains the role and flexibility of the participant observer in this way:

1. The researcher is not bound by fixed research plans. He can adopt and reformulate the design as he sees fit.
2. The technique enables the researcher to avoid point-less questions.
3. Greater intimacy allows the investigator more correctly to impute motives.

¹⁴"Strengthening Alternative High Schools," Harvard Educational Review, (August, 1972), pp. 344-345.

¹⁵Whyte, op. cit., p. 300.

4. He becomes increasingly able to make better judgments regarding the relevancy of his data, and he can return periodically to check a point of question.
5. The researcher has a great advantage in getting at covert activity.
6. He has time to build superior rapport before he asks disturbing questions.
7. He can select uniquely equipped, 'specialists' in different areas of his problem.
8. The established circulator is able to work his way to files and confidential data the peripheral formalist usually never reaches.¹⁶

There are different roles the participant observer can assume in a study. Three of these are described as follows:

1. The participant as an observer: In this case the researcher already has his group membership before he undertakes a study and therefore his role as observer or researcher would be known to his subjects.
2. The observer as a limited participant: The observer would join a group for the expressed purpose of studying it. The members would probably know of the researcher's interest in joining the group.
3. The observer as a non-participant: The researcher does not have group membership. The presence of the observer may not even be known to the group, and if it were known, he would still be outside the group.¹⁷

The researcher's role in this study combines points one and two. The author was a member of the group at its inception and did express his desire to write a book about The School and its members; yet, the participation of the researcher was often limited to the interaction of the group members that took place at The School.

¹⁶Melville Dalton, Men Who Manage, (New York, 1959), p. 94.

¹⁷Frank Lutz and Clarence Iannacone, Understanding Educational Organization: A Field Approach, (Columbus, 1969), p. 108.

The author's purpose in writing the dissertation is twofold: first, to describe The School which is an alternative, free high school; and second, to make suggestions for the improvement of The School. To accomplish these purposes, the most logical methodology to employ was participant observation and interviewing.

In the following chapter the reader will note the use of the personal pronoun, "I". Normally, formal writing only uses the third person or the writer describes himself by saying "the author thinks" or "the writer says . . .". This was to be the general procedure of this dissertation too, but I found it most awkward in describing events in which I was a participant and observer. The account seemed to lose meaning when the personal pronoun "I" was omitted so it will be used in the following chapters. Also, all names are fictitious to protect the anonymity of the people involved.

I first became involved with The School in the winter of 1971-1972 when I talked to Phil Brown and he said that he was planning to start an alternative high school in East Lansing. At that time the both of us were teaching in the same undergraduate course in teacher-education at Michigan State University. Subsequently, we became good friends.

I told Phil in December of 1971, that I also saw a need for alternatives outside of public education and if there was any way I could be of help to feel free to ask for assistance. Our dialogue continued throughout the winter, and in the early spring of 1972, Phil asked if I would be interested in being a staff member at The School. I said that I really had thought about that possibility but wanted to wait until we knew each other better and were more involved with the actual creation of The School. In March of 1972, I mentioned

to Phil that I thought teaching at a free school would be exciting and that I would like to become a teacher. Phil was happy with my decision. My involvement in The School began to increase from that time on.

Meanwhile Phil had been doing almost all of the groundwork for making sure The School would have students and a building by the fall of 1972.

During the late spring and summer of 1972, I attended seven or eight informal gatherings of perspective students and parents. Also, during this same time period, three more part-time staff members were interviewed and hired. Phil and I both agreed that these were people we thought would make valuable contributions to The School.

On September 11, 1972, the five member staff met for three days to get to know each other better and plan for the upcoming school year. On September 14, The School opened in the basement of the Unitarian Church with 19 students.

I expressed my intent to do a dissertation on The School early in the spring of 1972. Throughout the summer, I was conceptualizing and formulating my ideas for the project. In September I began to collect data; however, it was not until the middle of October, that I decided that for the research to be most effective, it would have to be based on direct interaction with the members of The School. The research method that would best combine my personality and the philosophy of a free school would be participation observation.

My official role in The School was one of a three-quarter time staff member or teacher. I do not perceive teaching in the traditional way for, if I had, it would have been impossible for me

to do a participant observation study of The School. I view my role at The School as one of facilitator or resource person who shares in decision making with students and other staff. In no way, do I believe that a hierarchical ranking of students, staff, and director is necessary or beneficial; there should be no superiors or subordinates. As a resource person, I did assume leadership and teach classes; but there was no mandatory attendance at any of these classes, no grades, or no external forms of coercion to get students and/or other staff to attend these classes. I not only "teach" classes but also participate in classes (activities) taught by students and other staff. For me, there is no staff and students as such but only group members wishing to share some of their experiences with others. Also, I am not aware of ever trying to use my role as a facilitator or resource person to manipulate students. Always my ideas were presented as data to be accepted or rejected by the students as they saw fit. Realistically, because most teachers define their role in a very traditional way, I believe that they would have great difficulty attempting to be a participant observer and teacher for the same population.

Probably there are some other reasons that make it possible for me to be accepted as a group member by the students. I am only ten years older than some of the students and our appearances are similar. We also share many similar interests like music and contempt for public schools. Often we engage in many activities together like concerts, camping, skiing, parties, etc.

I am not trying to suggest that this research is exactly the type of participant observer research conducted by William Whyte, in

Street Corner Society, or by Philip Cusick, in Inside High School; but that the differences are not great enough to justify classifying this research under something other than participant observation.

As is typical of participant observation research, I began to compile notes as soon as I began my research. From October, 1972, to April, 1973, I compiled over three hundred pages of field notes. Often students asked me what I was writing and I explained that I was working on my Ph. D. at Michigan State and one of the requirements that I had to fulfill was to write a dissertation or thesis. If further explanation was asked for, I explained that a dissertation was similar to a book and I was writing a book about The School. There were never any objections to this explanation.

In early December, at an all-school meeting, which includes students and staff, I announced in a formal way exactly what type of study I was conducting. This was also done for parents in early January.

The degree of interaction varied with different students; I am closer to some students than others. I do make a conscious effort to learn about all of the students; but, because of my personality and the limitations of time, it is difficult to spend as much time with those students who did not spend as much time at The School as those who were more involved in school activities.

My time at The School is spent in a variety of ways to try to learn as much about the students as I can. At one time or another, I have visited almost every class offered at The School. This was a burdensome task at times because new activities are offered every month.

I also attempt to be on the scene as much as possible and to observe and mentally record every incident. I have access to much written material on every student and utilized every piece of available information. This included cumulative files on every student. But to be honest, these files often contain more information about the teacher writing the comments than the comments themselves.

As we went for walks, eat lunch, sat in class, I listened, questioned, and talked to students whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Formal interviewing became a big part of this study. A series of questions that kept creeping up in my mind were codified and organized into a general interview guide. The interviewing included every student, staff member, and all but two parents. (Simply we never could get our schedules together.) These interviews ranged in time from about one-half hour to over two hours in length. These interviews were utilized to better quantify the data and to supplement the participant observation technique.

The following are the interview guides that were used for: (1) parents, and (2) students and (3) staff. The reader will note that there are different interview guides for: (1) parents, (2) students, and (3) staff. This is because the author's interaction with parents was not as frequent as with students or staff. Consequently, the questions asked parents were different. An attempt was made to make these questions simple, general, and non-threatening. The questions asked students and staff were very similar and were more closely related to concerns that surfaced in the daily routine of The School.

The following opening comments were made before interviewing all groups. "There are two reasons why I asked if we could get together for a hour to talk: (1) I am writing a dissertation and as a part of that dissertation I am interviewing parents to learn more about their perceptions of The School and their child, and (2) I am trying to write a useful evaluation of The School and its population, that will help The School to be a better environment for everyone. You may respond to the following questions with as little brevity or as much length as you desire. If you have any questions as we talk feel free to ask them."

Interview Guide for Parents

1. What school did your child attend before entering The School?
 - a. Do you think your child was receiving an adequate education at that school?
 - b. Possible probe: Were you satisfied with both the academic, and psychological and social education your child was receiving?
2. How did your child decide to come to The School?--Did you encourage or discourage his/her decision?
3. Has your view of The School changed since September? or is it what you expected it to be?
 - a. Possible probe: How has it changed?
 - b. Possible probe: Has it changed for the better or worse?
4. What should be the main purpose(s) of The School?--Possible probe: job training, skills, happiness, political awareness, etc.?

5. What do you see as the strengths, if any, of The School?
6. What do you see as the weaknesses, if any, of The School?
7. How could we make The School a better environment for your child?
8. Are there any other questions I should be asking you?
9. Are there any questions you wish to ask me?

Interview Guide for Students

1. What school did you attend before entering The School?
 - a. Were you happy with that school?
 - b. If not, why not?
2. Has The School been what you expected it to be?
 - a. Possible probe: How has it been different?
3. If you were going to define The School, how would you define it?
4. What, if anything, do you like most about The School?
5. What, if anything, do you like least about The School?
6. What are some of the activities you have done since September?
7. How do you feel about the rest of the people in The School?

Did you feel the same way about the people at the school you last attended?
8. If you had to use your imagination and fantasize, what changes would you make in The School?
9. What are you learning in The School, as compared to the school you last attended?
10. Do you think seriously about the things you will be doing in a couple of years?
 - a. Is this important to you?

11. What things are important for you to learn as an individual? Are you learning those things? Why or why not?
12. Are there any rules in The School? If so what is the reason for these rules?
13. Are there any questions you wish to ask me?

Interview Guide for Staff

1. If you were going to define The School, how would you define it?
2. How do you perceive your role in The School?
3. What, if anything, do you like most about The School?
4. What, if anything, do you like least about The School?
5. What sorts of activities have you participated in since September?
6. How do you feel about the rest of the people in The School?
7. If you had to use your imagination and fantasize, what changes would you make in The School?
8. What things are important for you to learn as an individual? Are you learning those things? Why or why not?
9. Are there any rules in The School? If so what is the rationale for those rules?
10. Are there any questions you wish to ask me?

CHAPTER IV

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL

Philosophy

In October of 1971, a group of people concerned with starting an alternative school met to share some of their ideas. This same group met once every month for the next few months. After a couple of meetings, it became clear to the Director of The School that he must take leadership in order to ensure that The School would actually get started. He did not resent this for he once said, "I always wanted The School to be my school, and I knew that the way to have it my school was to do most of the work and make most of the decisions."

The School is a place where students would have considerable say in deciding what activities are going to take place as well as considerable say in which activities they would participate in. On the other hand, the final decisions would be with the Director.

The philosophy of The School is basically that of the Director because the idea of creating an alternative school was his brainchild. It is his feeling that the "personality of an organization is a composite of the personalities and expectations of all the people in the organization. However, if there are people in The School for greatly different reasons, the organization doesn't really stand for anything. It is not possible for a small school to survive if a dozen different people are going a dozen different

directions and defining their role in a dozen different ways. A school must have some general purposes". He further states, "If one has an expectation for someone else, unless that is internalized, there must be some coercive mechanism, either reward or punishment or both. I think we need both."

History

In January of 1972, the first brochure was printed. Articles appeared in three newspapers, Town Courier, State Journal, and Joint Issue. These favorable articles proved most useful in spreading the word that a new alternative school would be starting in September, 1972.

In March through June of 1972, there were a series of coffee hours that were scheduled every third week. The purpose of these meetings was to enable perspective students and their parents to meet with the Director, staff, and other interested students and parents.

At about the same time, the Director attempted to obtain some land for The School in a rural setting. This never materialized because the planning commission voted against recommending to the county zoning commission that The School be given a special use permit.

In May a Methodist church gave The School a commitment for use of their parsonage for our school. In the middle of the summer, the neighbors threatened the church with a legal suit on the grounds that the building was to be used specifically by the church in a church related activity. Wishing to avoid any publicity or hard feelings from neighbors, the church explained that the building was no longer available to us. One of the parents located another facility in

the basement of the Unitarian Church and this is where The School is presently housed, 855 Grove Street, East Lansing, Michigan.

Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to allow students considerable choice as to how to spend their day at The School; while, at the same time, insuring that students have the opportunity to continually improve upon their ability to successfully cope with their environment. The curriculum is a general guide that is supposed to be flexible enough to meet the needs of a variety of people.

The curriculum is divided into four areas which contribute to growth: living by developing skills, living by developing community, living by creating, and living by facing today and tomorrow. Each student is expected to be involved in at least one activity in each of the four areas.

Living by developing skills is an important part of The School's program because skills--interpersonal, occupational, and intellectual--are often the mainstays for a happy and successful life. Staff and students together identify rewarding skills that can help them cope successfully with their present and future environments. Some examples of skills are mathematics, driver education, English, auto mechanics, working, and empathy training.

Living by developing community is important so that each person feels an integral part of The School and feels comfortable sharing his or her thoughts and feelings with others. Group cohesiveness and responsibility are aided by community activities that

bring the people in The School closer together. These include field trips, group discussions, informal rap sessions, and an All-School Meeting that is held once a week to discuss common concerns, to plan activities, and to make decisions affecting the entire school.

Living by creating is emphasized so that people can use their imagination and ability to build something new. Creativity in The School is encouraged by providing materials, facilities, and instruction which help people create through painting, photography, poetry, pottery, sculpture, music, writing, etc.

Living by facing today and tomorrow is the fourth area to be emphasized. People have built many cultures, societies, and institutions in order to help them survive and live successfully. At The School, students and staff investigate both urban and rural environments and different cultures both in this country and elsewhere. This broadens our perspective and increases our understanding and tolerance of others. The School also encourages the study of the natural environment, its evolution and future. Such inquiry comes through reading, discussions, guest speakers, experimentation, films, and field trips.

Realistically, though, the curriculum is more than just these four areas. School is not defined as a building, but as the total environment in which one learns. Throughout the school day, the lounge, art room, library, and outdoor activities are available to students and staff. In addition, all are encouraged to use community resources. Also, every effort is made to take excursions outside of the greater Lansing area to investigate, first hand, areas of interest.

Personnel

The School is not for everybody. It is not for those who are simply tired of their present school and who enroll in order to relax until they graduate. In many ways, The School is more difficult than a traditional school because students and staff are expected to make most responsible decisions affecting their own learning. Although students are expected to attend school daily and to attend those activities they agreed to be involved in, there is likely to be much unscheduled time. It is expected that the people at The School will use this unscheduled time to get involved in some activity that is of special interest to them. If someone does not use his or her time constructively and drifts from day to day, The School can become as boring and uninteresting as any other school. Actually no screening of students is done because of the need to obtain enough students to ensure that The School remains open. There are twenty-two students at The School, eighth grade through twelfth. Classes are arranged by interest and not age level. The students are mostly upper middle class.

The staff was chosen in April of 1972. A letter was sent around to all perspective staff members informing them that they couldn't expect much pay and, if they were still interested, they could come to a meeting. About ten people came to that meeting and everyone explained how they perceived their role in The School. All ten were interviewed by the Director and a member of the board. Four were hired on a half-time basis. The Director is full time.

The type of person sought was one who could communicate well with students, who the students would like, and who seemed to be stable and mature.

The staff is made up of five paid teachers and several volunteers. These five teachers are all certified. Three have masters and are working on their doctorate; the other two have B. A. degrees. The oldest is twenty-nine and the youngest is twenty-four. Two are certified in social studies, one in English, one in art, and one in science, math, and driver education.

The volunteers often are not credentialed. Usually three or four work at The School on a part-time basis.

The Director is both a businessman and teacher. The Director performs most of the business details of The School as well as being a teacher. He is more than just a coordinator for he is a very integral part of all decision making.

The board of directors is composed of people who are humanists, people who really care about the growth and learning of others. All of those on the board can embrace a somewhat untraditional philosophy of education while being neither radical nor conservative. This board has the power to make all final decisions affecting The School; but, in reality, they serve more as a group that is supportive of the director's wishes.

The advisory board are people who are viewed as respectable, in the community and who give an added sense of legitimacy to The School. They never meet and have no say in any aspect of The School.

Governance

The decision making and governance of The School follows a very traditional model, a top-down structure. At the top is the Director. Legally the board is at the top, but the Director picked people "who would be supportive of me and who would allow me to be the leader.

No major policy decision should be enacted that is in opposition to the Director. A major policy decision would include what students do while they are at school, how a person graduates, and who is hired for staff, etc."

Theoretically, probably seventy-five percent of all decisions would be made by staff, students, and Director together. Maybe twenty percent of all decisions would be made by the staff working together, and five percent would be made by the Director. However, all decisions are subject to change or revision by the Director.

Finances

The School is funded mainly by tuition. Tuition is set at \$1050 a year. There are also grants in aid that are given to those who cannot afford the full tuition. One member of the board makes all decisions on which people receive grants in aid. At this point, The School has accepted the amounts of money that all have said they could pay.

Other fund raising activities have been used throughout the year to help make ends meet. These include direct solicitation of funds from community leaders, pancake suppers, selling bagels, etc.

Evaluation

The School is ungraded, and no marks are given. Students and staff periodically write evaluations of their progress which are kept on file at The School. These are available to parents, future employers, and colleges with the student's permission. Basically, evaluation is seen as self-evaluation, but staff also give feedback to students.

Parents are encouraged to contact The School for information about their son's or daughter's progress, attendance, or for any other reason. Staff members are always willing to meet with those parents.

A newsletter is periodically published for parents which keeps them informed of development at The School. This newsletter also notifies parents of upcoming meetings, workshops, and activities that may be of interest to them.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

I will describe as vividly as possible the interactions and feelings of the people involved in The School. These detailed descriptions are crucial in order to ensure validity and reliability in qualitative research. These descriptions should enable the reader to vicariously know how I formed my conclusions and generalizations. From that perspective, the reader can agree or disagree as he or she sees fit.

This chapter will be divided into four parts: an introduction, a description of the physical setting of The School, a description of the people in The School, and an account of some of the events that have shaped The School.

It should be mentioned again that the interview questions serve as an aide in helping the researcher to better quantify the data. Therefore, as is customary in participant observation methodology, the direct responses to those questions are not listed as an entity in themselves but are included in the study only as the need arises to cite them.

Again, the names used throughout this dissertation are fictitious in order to protect the anonymity of the persons involved.

Physical Setting of The School

The School is located in the basement of the Unitarian Church at 855 Grove Street, East Lansing, Michigan. The neighborhood is composed of students from Michigan State University and many middle class and upper middle class families. Ironically, The School is located between East Lansing High School and the East Lansing Hannah Middle School, about a block away from each.

The building is a large brick structure which at one time housed a fraternity. The Unitarian Church purchased the building from them. The School rents three rooms in the basement and two small rooms on the second floor for about \$400 a month. This is an extremely large amount to pay for rent, but it is typical for the area.

Most of the activity in The School takes place in the three rooms in the basement. A floor plan of the rooms The School occupies has been provided so that the reader can more easily visualize the physical layout of The School. One room is used primarily for art activities. In the art room there is a potters wheel, a loom and an easel. Most everyone has tried their hand at the potters' wheel. Also in one corner is the student-made dark room. At least ten of the students have taken and developed their own pictures. The students have painted the walls in the art room with bright colors. Pictures, posters, paintings, murals, and grafitti adorn the walls. The following quotation is typical of much of the grafitti that fills the walls:

You gotta give the children the truth,
Can't feed them a whole lot of lies,
Cause one of these days they'll be running things,
So when you give them love you gotta give it right.

The most often used room in The School is the lounge area. This is probably the most comfortable room. It is carpeted with odds and ends and throw rugs. It is filled with old couches and soft chairs. Most of the non-formal rap sessions take place in this room. There is usually acid rock coming from the stereo. There is a television in this room, but I have only seen it on once since September and I turned it on to watch the World Series game between Oakland and Cincinnati. If this room isn't filled with students, there are usually visitors or friends of the students in the room. Anytime there is any need to have all of The School together at one time, they meet in this room.

The all purpose room is not used very often because it is a big, cold looking room with linoleum floors and paneling. However, the piano is in this room and it is used every day by some students. Karate class is held here, too, whenever the karate teacher can get a ride into The School. The most popular activity in this room is bicycle riding. The office is connected to the all purpose room and contains student records and files. It is always in use because of the constantly ringing phone. The kitchen is also connected to the all-purpose room and is used by the cooking class. It would be used more often, but the contract with the church limits the use of this room by The School.

The two small rooms on the second floor are used primarily for classes like calculus, chemistry, history, and sensitivity.

Overall, The School does not look much like a typical school. Many visitors, especially teachers, seem to go through "culture shock" when they enter The School.

Let me relate a story of an elderly woman who was in the building attending some church activity. This story is an example of one of the ways unity has been built in The School. I have heard the same story told on many occasions. Each time it is told somewhat differently. It usually goes something like this: A lady, probably in her late sixties, looked into the lounge area of The School. Someone asked her what she was looking for. Keeping her distance she cautiously said, "Is this a school?" Someone replied that it was. She moved closer into the lounge area and said sharply, "This looks more like a ghetto than a school!" A barrage of questions were directed at her. "What is a ghetto?" "Have you ever been in a ghetto?" "Don't you like our school?" She said, "This place is a mess." Someone replied that we liked our comfortable but untidy school. Still making sure not to get too close to the group, she retorted, "Is this a school for dropouts?" Someone replied, "Oh no, this is a school for gifted children." She seemed very impressed and said, "I am sorry, I really didn't know that you were all gifted children." She came in and sat down with us.

Description of the People in The School

In order to explain in detail the events that occur in The School, it is first necessary to describe the people that comprise The School.

Phil, the Director of The School, wants a school in which his talents and abilities can be used to help others to grow and learn. He states, "I wanted to design, implement, and direct a school whose philosophical base is consistent with my philosophy."

Such a goal requires me to have considerable decision making power. With regard to school policies and major decisions, I believe that the role of students and staff ought to be one of advice and recommendation. The reason is simple. The more people involved in making major decisions, the less likely is my ability to influence those decisions." Basically, many of his views are not shared by the rest of The School population; yet, his honesty and openness with others allows for a reasonable degree of harmony between him and others at The School.

Roy, a staff member, wants The School to be a place where students and staff can meet and learn from one another. He sees himself as a "facilitator who tries to help others and myself grow intellectually and emotionally. As a facilitator, I want to help people with their problems. To help them define an area of interest and get involved in that area."

Kathy, a staff member, views The School as a cooperative community. She perceives her role as a member of that community who has particular skills which she makes available to the other members who would like to learn those skills. She sees some role conflict within herself because of the expectations that the director places on her. For her "it is more important to be a model than to try to force something on another person."

Paula, another staff member, views The School as a free learning environment where students and staff can learn academic subjects as well as how to relate to one another. She views her role as a staff member in The School as "a position where my

influence and opinions can be shared with students in a non-authoritarian way."

For purposes of presenting the data in this dissertation, a description of only ten students will be given at this point because these students seem to represent a cross-section of the views of the other students in The School. The reader will note that other students are mentioned later in this chapter. This is because the author felt that meaning would be lost if these students were not included at that particular point.

Hueristic research does not demand that subjects be randomly selected.

The researcher who generates theory need not combine random sampling with theoretical sampling when setting forth relationships among categories and properties.¹

Mary, the only eighth grader in The School, posted on the blackboard an explanation of the way she views The School.

"The School is:

1. A place to rap to your friends.
2. A place to ask questions.
3. A place to grow.
4. A place to experience new things.
5. A place to create.
6. A place to get your head straight.
7. A place to listen.
8. A place to try and understand people.
9. A place to cry and not be afraid.

¹Arnold S. Tannebaum, Social Psychology of the Work Organization, (Belmont, California, 1966), p. 29.

10. A place to paint, to pot, to draw, to ride bicycles (sic.), to do calculus, to learn.

11. The School is _____."

Obviously, Mary knows what The School means to her. She spends much of her time doing art work and helping the "male chauvanist pigs" understand how they make her feel.

Carl and Mary are usually inseparable and relate as openly and as honestly with one another as I have ever seen two people relate. Carl relates well to people of all ages and is always liked by the visitors who come to The School. Carl constantly cautions those free school critics who believe that people in free schools just don't do anything. "For me free school is harder than public school because in public school someone is always telling you what to do. In a free school there is no one telling you what to do. So if you want to get things done you have to do it all by yourself. It's really hard to get yourself together to do that."

Kurt sees The School in a much broader perspective than many of the other students. He did an independent study project that enabled him to hitch-hike from Michigan to New Mexico. On this trip he visited free schools in Colorado and New Mexico. His experiences at The School and in his travels have led him to be more critical of The School than many of his fellow students. He thinks the people at The School are a pretty close group of people and relates well to them and is well liked. However, he wishes that The School would be more like a resource center without a paid staff. He raises some fundamental questions about The School that have gone unanswered. These questions include: Can students assume the function of a paid

1

staff?, Should the students decide how tuition money is to be spent?, Should The School have a board of directors that determine policy?, Does the high tuition discourage poor kids from coming to The School?

Sally has found a place that she likes. She once said, "At The School, I'm able to be myself and people still like me." Another time she said "that learning is no longer a nasty thing. Learning can be a good experience, instead of a big hassle about trying to stay awake." She is one of the two graduating "seniors" and plans to join some friends in Maine on a commune to help them finish the house they have just started to build.

Ron is probably one of the most vocal of all students. He is one of the few students that concentrates his learning in two specific areas: interpersonal skills and music. He spends approximately three hours a day playing the fiddle, guitar, or piano. He has made great progress in relating to other people at The School. He also has noticed the difference in himself. "I think I understand other people's feelings better and the ways in which people are different from me and, consequently, why they feel different."

Ben has been involved in many different activities. "I've participated in wilderness survival, sensitivity, message, and yoga. I've learned a lot about music, a lot about people in general, a lot about the city of East Lansing, and a lot that can't be learned inside a classroom and is hard to describe." He is well liked and is extremely easy going.

Bob has done very little academic learning so far this year. He views The School almost totally as a social environment. He is an extremely high energy person who is constantly on the move while at The School. He often gets support from the rest of the members of The School because of his antics and clever wit.

Janet is very active in all aspects of The School. She participates in almost all activities and is very influential in the direction in which The School moves. She always makes well known her support of women's liberation. She views The School a place "where you learn what you want to learn in a humane environment. You must set your own goals and pursue them at a rate that you think is good for you."

Dan is one of two students who has attended a free school before enrolling in The School. His involvement in The School is sporadic partly because he oversleeps, partly because he lives twenty-five miles away, and partly because he has a part-time job. He pushes the boundaries of group accepted behavior because he often appears not to be particularly interested in The School. He feels that The School is "progressing the way it should. Everyone is trying to make The School the way they want it. It just isn't made yet." At times he seems extremely perceptive about events at The School, but he usually does not freely share his feelings with others.

Liza sees The School as a place she wants to attend. She once told me she never made it any farther than the parking lot of the public school she attended. Liza reads a great deal and usually attends many of the academic classes at The School. However,

she says that it is "not too important to learn academic skills. The important thing is to get along with other people."

An Account of Some of the Events that Have Shaped The School

As was mentioned in the review of the literature, free schools are often motivated less by ideology than by despair of public education. This is especially true for The School. The students as a group had no idea of what The School would actually be like when they committed themselves to their new environment. Sally once said that she did "not have any real expectations for The School. I knew it would be different from East Lansing High School and that was all I wanted." This is very characteristic of the students at The School. The following series of quotes will support the fact that the students show a great dislike for public education:

Mary: "The teachers there didn't like me. I wasn't interested in anything going on there. I just tried to fuck up the system."

Carl: "I wanted to learn, but public schools weren't set up for me. They didn't teach me the things I wanted to know."

Matt: "I didn't like teachers telling me I better work hard to get good grades so I could go to college, I didn't even know if I wanted to go to college."

Sally: "We had just moved to this area. People in public schools weren't friendly at all and the teachers were fucked. I always had to be in school and I had to look like I was awake."

Matt: "The public schools are a drag. I wasn't learning anything and I was just wasting my time there."

Ben: "The public school I went to had hall pigs. Everything there was insane. People competing against one another; everybody trying to get on the honor roll. I made it twice. Then I just didn't go to classes anymore."

Liza: "I disliked the administration in public schools. They didn't care about the kids. The principal ran around with a camera trying to take pictures of kids in the parking lot."

Joyce: "There were some strange rules at our high school. Can you imagine I once got suspended for three days for skipping. That really makes a lot of sense! Also, I was going out with my drama teacher and I had to call him Mr."

The students, as a whole, were not concentrating on building a new environment nearly as much as they were trying to remove themselves from the environment they detested. On the other hand, the staff had already set up objectives and strategies for building a new learning environment. Phil, especially, had spent much time trying to plan the direction others should take. The four areas of the curriculum were constructed without student or staff input. Consequently, the four areas are often seen as Phil's areas. Many of the early decisions were made in this way; and they, too, were not completely internalized by others at The School.

When students started attending The School in September, they were somewhat overwhelmed and confused with their new found freedom. This is understandable for two reasons: they had had all of their decisions made for them in public schools and there was no structure set up to help them anticipate the new freedom they were about to experience. At the same time that students were attempting to cope

with their new freedom, the staff was concerned about drug use and abuse. After a week or so discussing drugs, a somewhat tenuous policy was worked out between students and staff. It was decided that no drugs would be used in The School or on school property. If people wanted to come to school high, they would not be forced out on the streets. It was felt that they would be safer and under better care at The School than roaming around the city. No consensus could be reached about drug use on school related activities like field trips and camping. The staff as a group expressed that they did not approve of using any drugs during school related activities. Kathy was not as apprehensive or as demanding as the rest of the staff. She said, "We all do dope, why are we so worried about them doing dope." The students, for the most part, couldn't understand how they would be able to take an extended field trip and not use dope (marijuana). The honest sharing of feelings by both students and staff set the precedent for the way conflict would be dealt with at later times. Generally, the drug policy that was formed the first week of school, is obeyed by almost all of the students all of the time. Usually very little drug use occurs during any school related activity either.

The length of time that it takes different students to adjust to the freedom varies with each student. Mary, Carl, Sally, and Janet seemed to be able to keep themselves busy after only a few days of confusion. Others like Bob, Dan, Joyce, and Mitch are still attempting to find the activities that they are willing to commit large blocks of time to. Realistically learning how to make the decisions that prove best for oneself is not a skill to be

mastered in a few days or a school year, but is a process that one can improve on for a life-time.

The four areas of the curriculum exist as an aid to help students find certain activities that are of interest to them. Every month at an All-School Meeting, a schedule is made up for the upcoming month. Students and staff together make up a schedule that everyone is comfortable with. If three or more people want a class, somehow it usually gets put on the schedule. If less than three want a class they can either get together informally of study the subject independently. Most classes are taught by staff or volunteers; yet there are usually two or more classes taught each month by students. Students may take as many classes as they wish. They are expected to take at least one class in each of the four basic areas of the curriculum; living by developing skills, living by developing community, living by creating, and living by facing today and tomorrow. Typical schedules for a month would look like this:

SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
9:00	Current Events	Cities and Their Problems	Current Events	Cities and Their Problems	Large Group Activity
10:00	Math & White Racism	SENSITIVITY	Back to the Land	Science	White Racism
11:00	Driver's Education & Cooking		Driver's Education & First Aid	Comparative Cultures & Science	Back to the Land & Cooking
	L	U	N	C	H

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
1:00	All School	Comparative Cultures	Field Trips		Women's Group & Men's Group
2:00	Meeting	Science	Photography	Driver's Education	

SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
9:15	Music Appreciation	SENSITIVITY	I-Ching & Music with Al	Yoga	Music
10:10	Math & Driver's Education		Legal	Message	Legal Rights
11:05	Cooking & Auto Mechanics		Rights	Writing Workshop	Cooking & History
		L U N C H			
1:15	All School	Art Meeting	Field Trip Planning		Women's Group
2:10	Meeting & Ceramics	Education & Readings		Ceramics	Driver's Education
3:00			Chemistry		

SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
9:15	Education & The School-Math	SENSITIVITY	Survival & Math	Human Sexuality	Survival
10:10	Advertising and the Media & Driver's Education		Education & the School & Driver's Education	Literature	Field Trip Planning & Drug Education

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11:05	I-Ching & The Future & Beyond	Writing Workshop & English Skills	The Future & Beyond & Photography & Calculus	Writing Workshop & English Skills	Black Music & Calculus
		L U	N C H		
1:15	All School Meeting	Women's Group	Art Meeting	Field Trip & Sports	Women's Group
2:10	Advisor Group	Sports	Photography	Field Trip & Sports	Women's Group

These schedules are only part of the formal structure at The School for each student. Any time there is a field trip planned, it supercedes the scheduled activities. On the average, at least one field trip is taken every week. These may be to places like a courtroom, a jail, a farm, a commune, or another free school. The School has taken trips for a more extended period of time for activities like camping, wilderness survival, the President's inauguration, mountain climbing, and visiting the Smithsonian Institute. Students also spend as much as two days a week in activities like teaching, working at a mental retardation center, working at a greenhouse, working at a health food store, working at the Michigan State University Veterinary Clinic, or working as an apprentice glass blower.

Even though students are expected to be involved in at least one activity in each of the four areas of the curriculum, there is no penalty if someone is not involved in all four areas. Because these four areas are so general, almost everyone automatically is involved in at least one activity in each of the four areas.

Attendance for all classes, field trips, and work study is optional. No daily attendance at The School is required either. Usually daily attendance is no problem for almost every person comes every day.

A typical student at The School may take an average of three scheduled classes a day. This leaves considerably unscheduled time for the student. The students spend this unscheduled time in a variety of ways. Mary usually does art work, Ron usually plays the piano, Liza usually reads, some work on photography, many listen to music, and others rap in the lounge.

The "formal" structure of The School has been described so far. Even though I believe it is accurate, it is still misleading because The School does not exist solely or even primarily because a wide variety of skills are offered. When asking the students why they like The School, one does hear responses like "I enjoy making pots, painting, and working on crafts."; "I really am getting into writing poetry"; and "I think we should go on more field trips to jails, courts, and city council meetings". People do get involved in and enjoy doing cognitive types of learning activities. However, more often than not, if a visitor asks a student what they like most about The School, they will hear something like this:

Sally: "I'm a lot happier here because I get along with the people. I don't feel uncomfortable with anybody here at all. To me that's the really big thing--to get along with a lot of people."

Mitch: "I've gotten to know the people in this school a lot better than the people in public school."

Joyce: "I like the people in The School. That by far is the biggest part."

Dan: "The people in this school are just the way I would want them to be."

Mary: "I really have good feelings about most of the people here. I didn't have any really close friends in public school. In public school teachers thought they were better than me; here they are my friends."

Charlie: "I like the people here. I didn't even know most of the kids in public school. I never talked to any of the teachers in public schools. Here I can talk to the teachers."

Not only do the students like one another at The School, they believe that getting to know yourself and others better should be one of the primary purposes of The School. It often takes precedence over all other activities. Women's group, human sexuality, and sensitivity attempt to formally deal with this concern of students; but the constant interaction and unscheduled rap sessions do far more to help students meet their needs for understanding themselves and others.

There is certainly a sense of togetherness and community among the students. If one student has food it is always shared with everyone else. If there are twenty people at the All-School Meeting and someone has a bagel, it is passed around and everyone takes a bite out of it. A student with any quantity of food, no matter how small, always offers part of it to those around him or her. Maybe this extreme form of sharing comes from the ceremony of passing around a joint with everyone that is present.

The School is a way of life for many of the students. Many would rather be in The School than at home or on the streets. Let me relate four incidents that indicate student's desire to be at The School. Karen Farmer, the mother of Bob, said that her son said to her over the weekend: "Weekends are such a bore. There is nothing fun to do. What a drag. I wish we had school on weekends, too."

It was one of those snowy, blowy, windy February mornings. The temperature was six below zero. The telephone at The School rang and it was Brian. "Can you come get me. My mother's car wouldn't start so she got a ride to work with someone else. I wanted to come to school so I started to ride my bicycle but I only got to the corner of Pennsylvania and Cavanaugh." When I went to the gas station to pick Brian up, the woman attendant said that tears had frozen in his eyes and he was extremely cold. She had suggested that he call. Brian lives fifteen miles away from The School.

The following story was shared with me by Gloria's mother. "When Gloria was in public school she was always ill to her stomach. She hated public school. She was hyper and had to take nerve medicine to calm her down. Can you believe she actually wants to go to school, now?"

All the public schools had been closed because of heavy snowfall. Absolutely no schools remained open in the Greater Lansing Area. When I returned home Sunday evening there were two notes for me. "There is no school tomorrow because of the snow.--Phil." "Some young lady called and said that Phil was wrong. The kids

want school so they're having' it. You can go if you want to be there."

As was mentioned earlier, The School is exceedingly important for most of the students. When asked how they think The School could be improved, the students have some far reaching suggestions.

Kurt: "The School should be more of a resource center. It should be open seven days a week so that you could go there at any time."

Mitch: "It would be nice to live out in the country and build some domes. We could all live together there in a commune."

Mary: "It would be nice to have more space. Perhaps it would be good to have a boarding school."

Janet: "School should be open all the time."

Ben: "I would like to see the people live together at some time or other."

Carl: "A building that we could live in if we wanted to."

Probably, at least half of the students would like to see The School evolve into some type of intentional living community. The staff and parents for the most part have never expressed a similar concern.

Often times the students perceive The School differently than it was originally meant to be. The School was set up not to be a free school. A limited structure, including the four areas of the curriculum, was constructed prior to the enrollment of students. Therefore, the total structure did not organically flow from the total population of The School; it was conceived by the director and several others that met in the fall of 1971. Phil has said, "I didn't

perceive The School as people because the concept of The School was in my mind long before the people were. The structure was completed long before the people came on the scene."

Bob's father said that the students perceived The School differently. "By describing the way The School was going to be it was assumed that it would be that way. The kids were coming from someplace else. They said if I have a voice in what I am going to be doing, I have a voice in what I'm going to be doing."

Phil describes himself as an elitist. "I am not a democrat." He goes on to say, "I do not see my role as a coordinator or chairman who let's policies and decisions to be made democratically or by consensus. Although, I am sure there are a lot of decisions that need to be made in that way." The students and staff feel that decision making must be shared. Dan has said, "I think this school should be run democratically. Simply, each person should have one vote in group decisions." Kathy, a staff member shared that she dislikes "the imposed power structure. I think a school can be run more cooperatively than this school is run. I don't like the way some important decisions are made even though they are not binding. These decisions come down from the top and that does not make for a healthy learning environment."

Phil feels that it is "the job of others to design challenges with the growth of students in mind. Such challenges may include placing others in a new situation, giving them a problem to solve, or insisting on some form of accomplishment. For instance, I think we should insist on students' successfully completing a number of activities, though the specific activities would be up to each

individual. I am in favor of basing graduation on the completion of a certain number of activities." Within this basic structure "students ought to have considerable say in deciding what activities The School sponsors as well as considerable say in deciding in which activities they will become involved." This philosophy of helping others to grow appears to be a difficult philosophy to implement because the students were constantly fighting this type of philosophy in the public school they separated from. Brian's mother cautioned, "Anytime you say, 'you must'; they say, 'I'm not'." Presently things are at a stalemate.

Each position realizes that The School cannot continue with the present conflict within for a very long period of time. Something must be resolved. Hopefully, it can. All of those at The School will be meeting for a few days with two process people who are going to attempt to help resolve the conflict. Most likely some workable solution will be found because of the small number of people in The School and the fact that everyone is relatively close to one another.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Summary

Public schools only meet the needs of some students. It seems obvious that different students do better in different learning environments. The School was created in order to provide one of those different learning environments.

The School is an alternative free school with twenty-two students and is presently in operation in East Lansing, Michigan. It is an environment where students have considerable say in deciding what activities are going to take place as well as considerable say in which activities they are to participate in.

The author worked as a participant-observer in order for him to understand to the greatest degree possible the point of view of those being studied. Both students and staff view The School as a place where each can learn from the other. Kathy says, "The people here feel they are involved in a free school and feel free to have some say in what goes on with their lives." The School started out with students working within a limited structure that had been created for them, but it has evolved to a more open environment or free school. From talking to students, it is apparent that they do not want to have structure imposed on them because that was the type of situation they were so opposed to in public schools.

This has led to conflict for the Director feels that more progress and growth cannot be made without more structure. Some students are not content with their own growth either. If the dissatisfaction of students and the Director can be constructively channeled, it seems logical that a more reasonable structure can be created to help meet the needs of all of those concerned.

Conclusions

The responses to the following questions are based on the author's interpretation and analysis of the data. It is impossible for the author to determine the generalizability of these responses. Also, that is not the author's purpose. The reader, having followed the dialogue so far, must use that data and extrapolate from the following responses to determine how to apply and utilize the information in a way that is meaningful.

1. Why do students choose to attend The School?

There are a variety of reasons why students attend The School. As was mentioned in the review of the literature, many students in free schools are motivated less by ideology than by despair of public education. The students at The School are no exception. Most of them did not come to The School because they have formed strong beliefs about learning or the open classroom. On the contrary, they choose to attend The School because they wanted out of public education. The reasons why they left public schools were because they found the traditional school impersonal, rigid, coercive, oppressive, and unbearable. More specific reasons might be that they hated the teachers and principals in traditional schools which provided a constant source of irritation. Students who left their public

7

school and had a rather strong inclination of what The School should be like were able to "adjust" to the open environment with greater ease. Beyond the similarity of disposition to escape the "public school atmosphere", individual reasons are spread among a vast continuum. Examples of extreme positions should provide the reader with insight into the vastness of the continuum.

One student told me that he choose to come to The School because his parents would have to pay the full tuition and this would be a way of "getting at them". Another said he choose to attend The School because his parents told him he had two options: he could either attend The School or he would have to go to the state juvenile mental hospital.

More generally there are no options within the public schools that these students attended that would parallel The School; consequently, they were forced to seek an alternative outside of public schools.

2. How do those within The School define their environment?

The students see The School as a place that is unstructured. This is actually not the case. The school has as much structure as any other school, but the structure is one which has been built by all who are involved in The School. What the students are actually saying when they say there is no structure at The School is that there is little structure that is imposed on them.

Students in The School are given a great deal of freedom to structure their lives in ways they see as meaningful. This causes both self-satisfaction and frustration. When a student can structure his life in a meaningful way he is self-satisfied because he has

successfully found ways to control his own destiny. When students cannot find the ways to structure their lives in meaningful ways, but are aware of the freedom and expectation to do so, they are frustrated.

One student described The School as a place where you can't do what you want; a place where there are no rules." Another said, "I don't want people to get the wrong idea about free schools because a lot of people in public schools think you don't have to do anything at a free school. . . . If you want to get things done you have got to do it all by yourself and it is really hard to get yourself together to do that." What this person is really saying is that when he had the choice to do nothing, he chose to do something. This has generally been the case for the rest of the students, too. If given the choice to do nothing, they will eventually do something. Surprisingly the something is often more skill-oriented than when they were told to perform specific skills.

3. How do students in The School feel about the other students and teachers in The School?

Because The School is so small, it is possible for everyone to interact often with each other. Everyone is encouraged rather than forbidden to talk to others. The high degree of interaction has made it possible for everyone to get to know the others. A sense of loyalty, sharing, and community exists among the people. Most students also spend time together after school, too. Only one student tends not to spend any time with students or staff after school. This is because he has a group of friends at the local high school to whom he is very close.

Because a sense of community has developed in The School, it is possible to do many things that would be difficult to do in other educational settings. For example, students and staff have planned and taken trips to the county jail, the county court, a state park (300 miles away), a boy's training school, a skill center, a mental retardation center, a commune, a cooperative restaurant, a food cooperative, a wildlife park, the Smithsonian Institute, a farm (600 miles away), the Alternative Learning Festival in St. Louis, Missouri, and countless other places. As a result of these trips there are people working in a people's cooperative restaurant and store, in a veterinary clinic, in the mental health center, etc. Never could these things have happened in an environment that was not based on cooperation and trust.

Teachers in The School are perceived as actual people who make mistakes, who want to learn, and who care about others. "Teachers" and "students" are friends.

4. Should there be any rules in The School?

If one were to ask any of the students if there should be any rules in The School, they would answer "no". The word "rules" simply "freaks them out". The students have had practically no positive experiences with rules. Rules are always something that have worked against them. Rules in school wouldn't let them go to the bathroom when they wanted, or talk when they wanted, or go outside when they wanted. Rules in society do not let them move about freely (can't hitch-hike and can't leave home until seventeen), do not let them smoke marijuana, and do not let them serve on the board of directors of The School. Rules cannotate everything that is

bad. They also are inconsistent with the idea of individualism and "do your own thing". Consequently, almost any rule that is imposed on students in The School is completely rejected and/or ignored. This is true even if the rule appears to be just and sane.

At the other extreme, if left completely to themselves, the students tend not to make any rules--or at least a very minimal number. This is understandable because of their mindset for rules. Maybe rules would actually emerge over a longer period of time if students were left on their own. This is impossible to tell because The School has only been in existence for seven months at the time of this study.

The best way to develop guidelines seems to be to make compromises when conflict arises. At this point, most everyone is at least ready to attempt to share their views and reduce the tension. As a result, rules that emerge seem to last because they have a built-in flexibility for change.

5. What are some of the negative aspects of The School as perceived by its population?

Sometimes "there just isn't anything to do". It is difficult for students and teachers alike to find the learning activities that are really helpful and exciting. It is extremely difficult to make the decisions that shape one's own life. If things in public schools are not going well, the students can blame the teacher, the principal, or the school. After all, it is not their school. If things in The School are not going well, there is no one to blame except themselves. This has the peculiar characteristic of being voiced as a negative aspect and yet it clearly facilitates self-directiveness.

Another negative aspect of The School according to some students is that poor and minority students are not proportionately represented at The School. The tuition scares off many people. Coupled with the fact that The School is located in a white middle class suburb almost ensures that there will be no minorities or poor in The School. Simply, it is a pure example of institutionalized racism.

The amount of tension and the attempt to resolve that tension are seen as negative forces working against harmony. "Why do we always have to hassle with one another?" Because students want to see The School work, they are forced to confront the problems that occur. This can be painful for they are used to avoiding this type of problem.

A couple of students have expressed a fear that they might not be accepted by colleges, employers, and the society in general.

Teachers are forced to create a new and better environment instead of reacting to an environment they knew was wrong. It is a whole different process to build a new environment for oneself and others than to react to the established environment.

6. How do students in The School differ from students in traditional schools?

Students in The School question and often challenge authority. They then attempt to build something new and more suitable to their needs. Students in traditional schools basically accept imposed authority. Occasionally there is a "problem" child or "trouble maker" that defies that authority. Unfortunately, there is no room to build within traditional education. Students in traditional

schools fit into someone else's plan of what is meaningful and feasible.

Students in The School respect others because of what they can do and how they act. Students in traditional schools "respect" others because of position and power.

Students in The School want a social order that fits their needs. Students in traditional schools want to fit into the existing social order.

Students in The School are accountable to themselves. Students in traditional schools are accountable to others.

Students in The School see motivation as internal and learning as something you do. Students in traditional schools see motivation as external and learning as something that someone else does to you.

Students in The School attempt to meet conflict head on and resolve it. Students in traditional schools avoid conflict.

Students in The School see their school as themselves and their friends. Students in traditional schools see their school as others and the enemy.

Students in The School see schooling as something they choose to do. Students in traditional schools see school as something they have to do.

Students in The School see school as part of the real world. Students in traditional schools see school as something that is different from real life. Students in traditional schools lead a schizophrenic existence--one life from nine to three and another life from three until school begins the next day.

Students in The School see school as fun. Students in traditional schools see school as a drag.

(Forgive me if I've overgeneralized a bit in this question)

7. What expectations do students in The School have for themselves and The School?

It seems as though there are as many expectations as there are people. The following is a list of careers that different students have said they wanted to pursue: carpentry, automobile bump man, veterinarian, musician, artist, teacher, truck driver, lawyer, accountant, head shop owner, and farmer. It is safe to say that students in The School do have some expectation that they will learn a skill that will ensure that they will financially survive.

Most students also have the naive expectation that The School would be made up of people that would never "hassle" one another because they are all "brothers and sisters." They thought The School would be a place void of problems, tensions, disagreements, and conflict.

They also see The School as an environment in which they can "do their own thing". For example, they assume that there are no other members in The School that would turn them in to the police if they had a joint of marijuana in there pocket. They also assume that they would not have to stay after school if they were late for a class. They hoped that others in The School would accept and tolerate their values and beliefs. For the most part, they have not been disappointed.

The students also want The School to be built on trust, sharing, and cooperation; a place that will help them feel good about themselves

and others. They also want to be able to take an active part in shaping that cooperative environment, too. A few see The School as a sort of social club where they can come to have a good time, meet their friends, and avoid doing traditional school subjects.

8. What expectations do parents of students in The School have for The School?

Over half of the parents wanted The School to be an environment that would insure that their child would be happy. The way they arrived at happiness was different, however. Some felt that in order for their child to be happy, he or she would have to determine what is good for himself or herself. One parent said that in order for her child to be happy, the staff would have to be very tolerant and accepting. Other parents said that their child must master some of the basic skills like reading and math in order to be happy.

Some parents were less specific about what they expected but knew what they didn't want. "I don't want the principal calling me every day to tell me that my son has skipped." Many parents said that many of the family problems were linked to the problems their child was having in school. Simply, they wished The School would not be a cause of any more family problems.

9. What expectation do teachers in The School have for their school?

The teachers in The School probably have the most elaborately defined expectations for The School. One staff member defines The School this way:

The School is a place that has staff, equipment, and facilities in which people can come to learn and grow.

I would define growth in this way: feeling better about yourself, relating better to others, having better insight into one's own motivation, becoming more in touch with the world around us, developing some skill competencies, and coming to terms with the society we live in. I don't perceive The School as people and that is probably because The School was in my mind long before the people were. I started working on the structure long before the people came on the scene.

Another staff member has defined The School this way:

The School is a common place where students as well as staff can come to meet and where each learn from each other. In addition, The School is not defined by four walls. The School is the whole community.

A third staff member has defined The School as follows:

The School is a group of people who have gotten together in an artificial environment and have been allowed to form what that group situation would be to the point where it has become a community. The people here feel they are involved in a free school and feel they have some say in what goes on with their lives.

It is helpful and probably even necessary for teachers to define their environment. These staff members have a vested interest and want to make sure the environment that exists parallels their expectations. If one is working in an open environment like The School, it is helpful for staff members to have an expectation that somehow deals with what they can do when an expectation they possess is not held by the majority.

10. Is there a difference between student, staff, and parent expectations?

Surprisingly, the expectations of all those concerned are not as contradictory as one might expect. All three groups want The School to be a place where skills can be learned. No group wants these skills to be forced on students.

The students in The School have a greater need to control the circumstances and events that surround them than the staff and parents realize. Staff may have some hidden causes that they are committed to, such as the spreading of counter-culture values, ridding the society of racism, or building a community spirit among the people at The School.

Two central themes seem to emerge from the preceding questions and responses: a diversity of expectations and motivations and a sense of ambivalence or the coexistence of contrary tendencies and feelings. These two central themes seem to bring some continuity and cohesion to the questions and responses as well as providing a method for systematizing the random data.

Diversity surfaces whether one looks at the reasons students choose to attend The School, what expectation they have for The School, or what they are actually learning in The School. Clearly understanding and appreciating these differences makes one realize that even within a small educational community like The School there has to be a wide variety of options and alternatives available to meet the diverse needs of all concerned.

Ambiguity surfaces in many ways. The rejecting of authority takes away a structure that people normally comply with, defy, or attempt to change. After rejecting authority there is no structure to react to. In a sense this forces people to build a new structure. This building of a new structure and the time and work it takes to make a new structure work were not anticipated by the students in The School. To be more specific, the students wanted to reject a traditional structure, but they did not anticipate or even want to build a new structure.

Building a sense of community, sisterhood, and brotherhood among all members of The School was an expectation held to some degree by most of the members. This sense of community forces one to respect others even if they are somewhat different from yourself. Again, the students in The School wanted everybody to be close, but they did not anticipate the amount of time and energy it would take to accept people for their differences as well as similarities.

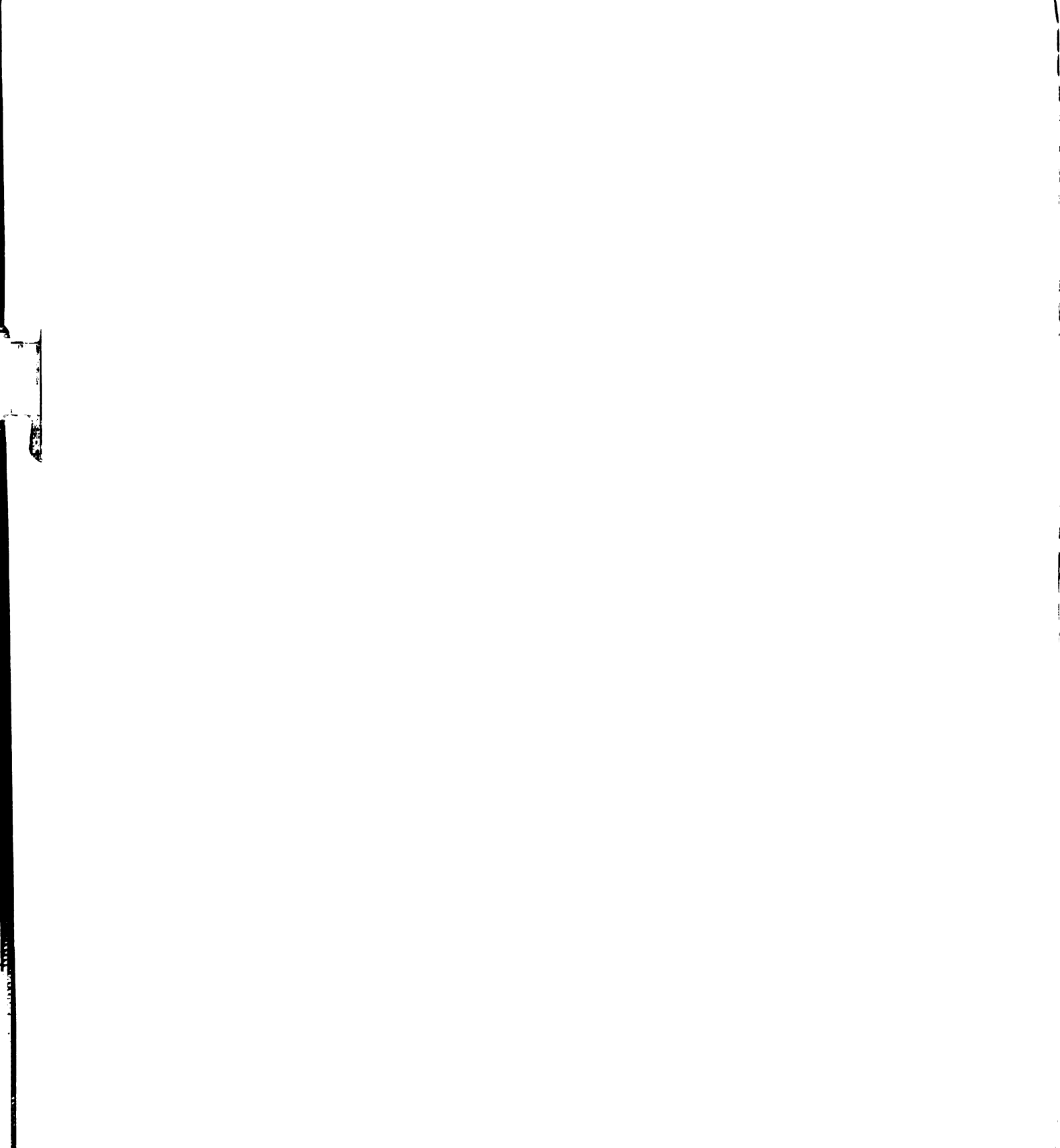
The encouraging of individual differences and the acceptance of those differences causes conflict and tension. The students were able to accept others that were different from them, but it was a much different task to work out those differences in terms of the whole group.

The students were willing to make a commitment to The School, but this also meant that they had to resolve the tension and conflict that arose. This was somewhat difficult because they wanted to avoid any "hassling".

Everyone concerned with The School wanted freedom; yet, with freedom there always seemed to be responsibility. At least this is the case with The School.

Recommendations

One of the purposes of this dissertation is to use the data to make suggestions for the improvement of The School. Having the opportunity to converse privately with all students, staff, and parents in itself provided for a learning experience for the author. I am certain it was helpful for some of the students, staff, and parents as well. Instead of making specific recommendations for the improvement of The School, the author would rather present some



questions that have emerged from his daily interaction at The School. It is the responsibility for all of those involved at The School to attempt to answer those questions as he or she sees fit.

1. Should there be some strategy to help students that are accustomed to a traditional educational environment acclimate themselves to an open environment?
2. Is adequate feedback being provided to students and parents?
3. Is there any practice or policy that should be forced on students against their will?
4. How should decisions be made at The School? Should anyone have more power simply because of the position they hold?
5. How do you help those students who appear not to be getting enough out of The School?
6. Are there any limits of behavior for people at The School? Is there a point where someone is more of a detriment than asset to The School?
7. Can anyone receive an adequate education in the United States today in a school where there are not any minorities represented?
8. How should conflict at The School be resolved?
9. Is it possible to create a minimal structure and then give people options within that prescribed structure?
10. Are students in a free school escaping from something or are they "escaping into" something?

Implications

The organizational structure of The School could be used as a model for other free schools. Other free schools may certainly profit

from examining The School. At worst it would at least give them something to react to. They, of course, would have to make judgments as to what part of The School's philosophy and curriculum would be helpful for them.

Considering the number of teachers and administrators that have visited The School, it is obvious that studying The School may be of help in the two areas of teacher and administrator preparation programs and in-service programs for practicing teachers and administrators.

Because there is a minimal prescribed structure in The School, it may also serve as a useful model for alternative school programs within public education. It could be implemented in public schools that reflect an appreciation for understanding and accepting human differences and potentials.

The School possibly could have more general uses in the field of child psychology. Much time is spent in attempting to help students at The School determine what activities will be beneficial for their growth. Staff and students help those to process the experiences they are having at The School. Many empathy and interpersonal skill strategies are used to help students feel good about themselves and others.

Author's Reflections

It was not the intent to present either the virtues or shortcomings of the students, parents, or staff of The School. If this is what happened, I can only say that I attempted to be objective in observing and describing the interactions and events that took place.

This study has led to considerable personal growth for me. Many times I forced myself to observe The School community and to others find the answers to their problems. I learned to be more patient, to have more faith in those around me, and to enjoy the sense of community that developed between us.

A good deal of the credit for this dissertation goes to students, staff, and parents who were so kind and gave me their time, encouragement, love, and understanding when I needed it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Major Sources

- Blumer, Herbert. "Society as Symbolic Interaction", in Human Behavior and Social Sciences. Edited by Arnold Ross, Boston, 1962.
- Bruyn, Severyn T. The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966.
- Cremin, Lawrence A. The Transformation of The School. New York, 1961.
- Cusick, Phillip A. Inside High School. New York, 1973.
- Dalton, Melville. Men Who Manage. New York, 1959.
- Elizabeth Cleaners Street School People. Starting Your Own High School. New York, 1972.
- Farber, Jerry. The Student as Nigger. New York, 1970.
- Filstead, William I. Qualitative Methodology. Chicago, 1970.
- Goffman, Irving. Asylums. New York, 1968.
- Goodman, Paul. "No Processing Whatever", in Radical School Reform. Edited by Ronald and Beatrice Gross. New York, 1969.
- Graubard, Allen. Free the Children. New York, 1972.
- Greer, Blanche. "First Days in the Field", cited in Sociologist at Work. Edited by Phillip E. Hammond. New York, 1964.
- Haber, Harvey. The No More Gym Shorts, Build-It-Yourself, Self-Discovery, Free School Talkin' Blues. Edited by Samuel Yanes. New York, 1972.
- Hampden-Turner, Charles. Radical Man. New York, 1971.
- Holt, John. How Children Fail. New York, 1964.
- Homans, P. "The Human Perspective" cited in Herbert Blumer's Human Behavior and Social Processes. Edited by Arnold Ross. Boston, 1962.
- Illich, Ivan. Deschooling Society, New York, 1970.
- Kerlinger, Fred. Foundations of Behavioral Research. New York, 1966.
- Kohl, Herbert R. The Open Classroom. New York, 1969.

- Kozol, Jonathan. Free Schools. Boston, 1972.
- Lutz, Frank and Iannacone, Clarence. Understanding Education Organization: A Field Approach. Columbus, Ohio, 1969.
- Neill, A. S. Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing. New York, 1960.
- _____. Talking About Summerhill. London, 1967.
- Postman, Neil and Weingarten, Charles. Teaching as a Subversive Activity. New York, 1969.
- Rasberry, Sali and Greenway, Robert. The Raspberry Exercises. Albion, California, 1970.
- Reich, Charles A. The Greening of America. New York, 1971.
- Reimer, Everett. School Is Dead. New York, 1972.
- Silberman, Charles A. Crisis in the Classroom. New York, 1970.
- Tannebaum, Arnold S. Social Psychology of the Work Organization. Belmont, California, 1966.
- Whyte, William F. Street Corner Society. Chicago, 1967.
- Wolfe, Tom. The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test. New York, 1968.

Other Sources

- Cooper, Bruce S. "Free and Freedom Schools: A National Survey of Alternative Programs." A report to the President's Commission on School Finance. November, 1971.
- "New Schools--A National Directory of Alternative Schools", October, 1971.

Periodicals

- Blumer, Herbert. "Sociological Implications of the Thought of George Herbert Mead", American Journal of Sociology, March, 1965.
- "Chaos or Learning: The Free Schools", Time. April 26, 1971.
- Donohue, John W. "'Free Schools' Look to Alternatives", America. June 10, 1972.
- Douglas, John R. "Free-Schooling; Alternative Education and Its Documentation", Wilson Library Bulletin. September, 1972.

Fremon, Suzanne S. "Why Free Schools Fail", Parents Magazine.
September, 1972.

Graubard, Allen. "The Free School Movement", Harvard Educational Review. August, 1972.

Holt, John. "A Fundamental Reminder", EdCentric. September, 1972.

Stoker, W. M. Fred. "Konama--A Free School", Educational Forum.
January, 1972.

"Strengthening Alternative High Schools", Harvard Educational Review.
August, 1972.

Stretch, Bonnie Barret. "The Rise of the 'Free School'", Saturday Review. June 20, 1970.

Wood, Barry. "Free Schools and the Revolution", EdCentric.
November/December, 1972.

Unpublished Works

Ayling, Richard H. "An Exploratory Study of the Formal and Informal Relationships Between Black and White Students in a Large Racially Mixed, Urban High School". Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1972.

U. S. Government Documents

"Southeast Alternatives: Experimental Schools Program". U. S. Office of Education, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, Minneapolis, Minnesota OS07A.

"Statistical Abstract of the United States". 93rd edition. Washington, D. C., 1972.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293102117516