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dissertation entitled

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF
AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FOR FIRST OFFENDER SHOPLIFTERS

presented by

Patricia Oldt

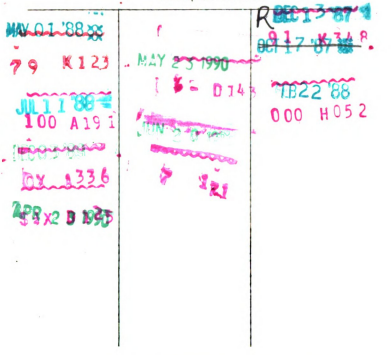
has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

PhD. degree in Education

Major professor

Date November 14, 1986

0-12771



AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR FIRST OFFENDER SHOPLIFTERS

By

Patricia Oldt

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

1986

ABSTRACT

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF
AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FOR FIRST OFFENDER SHOPLIFTERS

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The phenomenon of alternative education programs for special adult populations is evident in educational systems throughout this country. The problem is that not enough is known about these programs and the information that is available is often lacking in scope, validity, and reliability. The researcher used ethnography as the method of research for discovering what was happening in the classroom setting of an alternative education program for adult offenders from the participants' perspectives. Four data collection strategies were used in this ethnographic study: participant observation, interviews, documents, and surveys. The researcher observed fifty nine adult offenders, primarily first offender shoplifters with no prior offenses, who were assigned by district courts to participate in this alternative education program. In addition, the researcher observed two teachers who were involved in the program. Three of the fifty nine offenders served as key informants for the study.

The researcher discovered the classroom in this study was a social structure organized around interactive events.

In order to participate in these events, the offenders/students had to learn appropriate behavior for these contexts. The person who appeared to be in charge of establishing what constituted appropriate behavior was the teacher. Over a period of time most of the students gained interactional competence under the tutelage of the teacher.

A goal of this alternative education program was to motivate the students to engage in more conforming behaviors. The findings indicate that in all probability this did occur. The program served as a social placement for the offenders in their provisional role as deviants. However, the program also provided a final ceremony for cancelling out the stigmas of the deviant role and restoring the individual's license to resume a normal life in the community. By participating in the program, the offenders were able to cope directly with their act of shoplifting by examining their discrepancy in a supportive atmosphere and through self-awareness work toward engaging in more consistent, conforming behaviors. Without this ceremony of cancellation and restoration the individuals were left to wonder if they had graduated from the deviant role.

To my son, John Knox,

Who appreciates the importance of learning

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the many who made it possible for me to complete this study.

I want to thank the members of my committee--Dr. Howard Hickey, my committee chairperson; Dr. Richard Navarro; Dr. Sam Moore; and Dr. Richard Gardner--who each provided encouragement and wisdom. I am especially grateful to Dr. Richard Navarro, my dissertation chairperson, who helped me to expand my thinking beyond the obvious.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my colleagues, Dr. Anne Mulder, Dr. Kay Dodge, and Dr. Patricia Pulliam, who went before me and showed me the way when I was lost.

To all my friends who provided support during a period of my life when I had little to give in return, I say, "Thank you." A special thanks is extended to my friends, Linda Lindsay and Carolyn Gray, who listened, and listened, and listened.

Richard Calkins, Dr. Ray Boozer, and Dr. Cornelius Eringaard allowed me the flexibility that enabled me to function as both employee and student. The competency and the generosity of the Continuing Education Office staff made my role as employee much easier.

This study would not have been possible without the acceptance, trust, and cooperation of the subjects involved.

I especially appreciated the time and the insight provided by the Program Director, the other teacher in the program, and the key informants.

Finally, I am most grateful for the understanding, the love, and the encouragement given by my family. Without their support I would not have been successful in completing this dissertation.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Research Topic

During the past three decades community colleges have risen dramatically in their degree of prominence in American higher education (Vaughn, 1984). Today public community colleges comprise forty percent of the higher educational institutions and serve over half of the higher education student population (Luskin, 1982). As a community based institution, the community college has as its mission to serve the needs of the community of which it is a part. President Reagan highlighted this responsibility in his response to defining the role of the community college, "If I could define the American two-year college with one word, it probably would be 'service.' By being near home and responsive to community needs, the local community college makes a wonderful contribution to higher education and is a priceless asset for any community" (Parnell, 1984, p. 18).

Through Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965 the federal government encouraged community colleges to assume a role in social action by providing financial support for programs aimed at linking the resources of the colleges to solving community problems. In 1975 the funding priority for Title I funds was programs that addressed the community

problem of crime. Knox Community College (pseudonym), a public institution, working in consortium with Park College (pseudonym), a private institution, received a portion of these Title I funds to implement community based educational programs that addressed the problems of the local criminal justice system. Of the eight community based programs implemented in 1975 under the Title I funds, Project Intercept, an alternative education program for a special adult population, is the only program still in existence today.

Project Intercept was designed as an alternative education program for misdemeanant offenders, particularly shoplifters, who were either pending sentence or on probation. The offenders, referred to the Project Intercept Program by the district courts, were to attend Knox Community College's special classes once a week for a ten week period. If these offenders successfully completed the classes, they could earn time off probation or in some cases have charges dismissed.

The phenomenon of alternative education programs for special adult populations is evident in educational systems throughout this country. However, the organizational history of many of these programs can be traced through the following cycle: (1) funding becomes available, (2) needs are identified, (3) programs are created and implemented, (4) funding disappears, (5) the programs disappear. Because of this short-lived existence, as well as other reasons, the

available data about alternative education programs for special adult populations are limited. There is a need to enrich and expand this knowledge base in order to better understand this alternative education approach for special adult populations. The study of Project Intercept, an alternative education program that has been in existence for over ten years, provides an opportunity to contribute to this knowledge base.

Purpose of the Study

The researcher's purpose in undertaking this study of an alternative education program for offenders is to present a descriptive account of what is happening in this setting from the students'/offenders' perspectives in order to better understand this special learning environment. The researcher was interested in learning from the students' perceptions of what is happening in this setting, what these happenings mean to those involved in them, what a person has to know in order to function in this setting, how a person learns this behavior, and how the happenings in this setting relate to those happenings in a wider social context (Erickson, Florio, Bushman, 1980). Spradley (1980, p. 3) states that ethnography is "learning from the people." This researcher was interested in learning from the people--the students--in this particular setting.

The ethnographic research methodology seemed particularly appropriate for addressing this study. Since

the focus of the study is examining what is happening in the setting from the students' perspectives, the time spent in the natural setting was of critical importance as a direct source of data. According to Spradley (1980), the ethnographer is constantly making cultural inferences from what people say, from the way they act, and from the artifacts they use. Initially each cultural inference is only a hypothesis about what people know, but after repetitive testing of the hypotheses the ethnographer becomes relatively certain that people share a particular system of cultural meanings. By translating what is learned into social science description the researcher is able to ground his or her theory in reality and thus present a more accurate description and analysis of what is occurring in the setting (Erickson, 1973).

Statement of the Problem

The problem is that not enough is known about alternative education programs for special adult populations. These programs that are designed for special populations have a history with continuing education agencies throughout this country. Usually these alternative programs are developed for a specific constituency in order to meet certain identified needs of that population. These programs are distinguished by purpose and by focus. For example, one purpose of alternative programs for special adult populations is to achieve change through educational intervention. The

focus of this change can be the improvement of life situations through life skills training. The available data concerning this type of program are lacking in quantity and content. There is a need to expand and enrich this body of knowledge.

One of the reasons information is lacking in this area is many of these alternative programs have a short organizational history. Often the programs originate with the recognition of a need and the availability of funds. Too often, however, the alternative programs do not survive, not because the need no longer exists, but because the availability of funds no longer exists. Therefore, the short duration of the program prohibits the accumulation of significant data that can further understanding of this special educational environment.

Another difficulty is the information that is available may be lacking in scope, validity, and reliability. For example, in some instances the data were not systematically collected; in other instances the data have been collected for evaluative rather than research purposes (Sjogren, 1979); and in some instances the data are related to outcomes, leaving a void of information relating to function and process. According to Fischer and Evanson (1979), the latter type of valuable data is needed to represent the essence of these programs. Thus, in order to better understand this educational setting, there is a need to enrich and expand this knowledge base.

Need for Study

There is a need to better understand what is happening in alternative education settings for special adult populations. This study of Project Intercept, an alternative education program for offenders, is particularly appropriate in furthering understanding of this type of educational setting for three reasons.

First, the inquiry strategies used in this study involve a rigorous and systematic collection and analysis of data. According to Bolster (1983), these data should consist of a thick, critical description of what is occurring naturally in the setting among teachers and students. The emphasis of this description is on function and process, that is, how the participants' behaviors are being used to make the classroom operate as a unit. Interrelationships among place, roles, and activities are key factors in explaining the meaning of behavior. This rigorous description is important because the educational process can be very subtle and unrecognizable by those involved. Over time, practices in the classroom are so habitual that they become invisible in a sense. These "invisible" factors often result in being the most significant. Only carefully documented evidence can begin to make persons aware of what is happening. Through the descriptive and critical aspects of this study the data can identify and provide meaning without being judgmental. This nonjudgmental aspect creates a more conducive atmosphere for affecting change.

A second reason this particular study is needed is because it provides a rich descriptive picture of what is happening in the educational setting from the participants' perspectives. These perspectives of the participants are important in giving another layer of meaning to what is occurring in this setting. Given the complexity of change and behavior in the educational environment, this other layer of meaning is essential in providing understanding of what is happening in the setting.

A third reason the study is needed is because it constitutes an "inquiry process guided by a point of view" (Erickson, 1973, p. 10). Erickson contends this inquiry process begins with two assumptions. The first is even though much of what goes on in the educational setting appears to be commonplace, it is nonetheless extraordinary. The second assumption states, "The full significance of many events inside school can only be seen in the context of events throughout the whole school, of influences on the school from outside it, and of influences on the school on the larger society" (Erickson, 1973, p. 16). Erickson feels that an ethnographic study, because of its holism and its cross cultural perspective, provides an inquiry process by which we ask open-ended questions, resulting in new insights about education. These insights can provide the basis for theoretical and practical objectives.

Significance of the Study

Any research study should make a contribution to the knowledge base of a particular field. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the worth of this contribution is the degree to which it generates description, understanding, and theory. The data collected in this study should provide rich description and a more accurate definition of what is happening in this particular setting. The interpretation of these data may afford new insights in the phenomenon of alternative education programs for special populations; the collection, analysis, and understanding of the data may also increase awareness about the impact of short term alternative education programs; and the conclusions may provide "new vantage points for reflection" (Erickson, 1973, p. 18).

Summary

The phenomenon of alternative education programs for special adult populations is evident in educational systems throughout this country. There is a need to better understand this alternative education approach. The study of Project Intercept, an alternative education program for adult offenders that has been in existence for over ten years, provides an opportunity to contribute to this knowledge base.

The researcher's purpose in undertaking the study of Project Intercept is to present a descriptive account of what is happening in this setting from the students'/offenders' perspectives in order to better understand this special

a rich description and a more accurate definition of what is happening in this particular setting; the interpretation of these data may afford new insights in the phenomenon of alternative programs for special populations; the collection, analysis, and understanding of the data may also increase awareness about the impact of short term alternative education programs; and the conclusions may provide "new vantage points for reflection" (Erickson, 1973, p. 18).

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

The researcher used ethnography, also known as qualitative research, field research, and naturalistic research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982) as the method of research for addressing this study. According to Erickson (1973, p. 10), ethnography literally means "writing about the nations." Any social network forming a corporate entity in which social relations are regulated by custom can be considered the "nation" or unit of analysis for the ethnographer. Erickson further stated that ethnography should be considered an inquiry process guided by a point of view. This inquiry process is particularly useful for learning about the underlying structure of a social system and the patterns of behavior that make up that system. According to Wolcott (1978), the purpose of any ethnographic account is to provide description and analysis regarding human social behavior. The emphasis is on social rather than psychological or physiological aspects of behavior. The test of ethnography is whether it enables one to anticipate and interpret what goes on in a society or social group as appropriately as one of its members.

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Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stated there are five characteristics of ethnography. First, the natural setting is the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument in this study. The researcher must spend time in the natural setting under study because he or she is concerned with context. The researcher collects, analyzes, and understands the data with the researcher's insight being the key instrument for this process. Second, ethnographic research is descriptive. The data collected are in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Third, ethnographers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or problems. How do people negotiate meaning? How are definitions formed? What determines labels? Fourth, ethnographers tend to analyze their data inductively. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) liken the collection of data in an ethnographic study to a funnel. At first, data are widely collected to get a broad understanding of the parameters of the setting, subjects, and issues. Soon a research focus based on what is feasible and what is of interest is developed; this focus then narrows the scope of data collecting. The researcher develops hypotheses from the data, tests these hypotheses, and translates the conclusions into concepts which in turn reorder the structure of the study. Theory is developed from the bottom up from collected data that are interconnected. This type of theory is called grounded theory. Fifth, "meaning" is of essential concern to the ethnographic approach. The participant perspectives are

most important because it is through the perspectives of the participants that the researcher will learn the ways different people make sense out of their lives.

Erickson (1973) contended that theory entailed in a description of a connected sequence of events across time is in essence a theory of its social organization. This description, in order to be valid, must represent the participants' points of view. The ethnographer can become relatively certain that people share a particular system of cultural meanings. This can lead to an adequate cultural description of what is occurring in the setting. Considering the researcher's purpose in undertaking this study is to present a descriptive account of what is happening in this setting in order to better understand this special learning environment and considering the characteristics of ethnography, it seemed particularly appropriate to use ethnography as the research method for addressing this study.

Data Collection

Methods of Data Collection

Most research problems call for data collected by several different methods. The type of data needed usually determines the data collection method use. The researcher finds or constructs his or her method as required by the peculiarities of his or her specific inquiry and the conditions of the research field (Shatzman and Strauss, 1973). Trow (1957) elaborated further, "different kinds of

information about man and society are gathered most fully and economically in different ways;...the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation" (McCall-Simmons, 1969, p. 332). This researcher used four data collection strategies in this ethnographic study: participant observation, interviews, documents, and surveys.

Participant Observation.

One of the most commonly used data collection strategies in field research is participant observation. Becker and Geer (1957) defined participant observation as that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people over some length of time. They believe that participant observation gives the researcher the most complete information about social events, in that the fieldworker can see an event occur, can see the events preceding and following it and can talk to various participants about it. In gathering data through participant observation, this researcher used fieldnotes to record what she heard, saw, experienced, and thought in the process of collecting and analyzing data. These fieldnotes consisted of two kinds of material--descriptive, which focused on describing what was happening in the setting, and reflective, which focused on what was happening in the researcher's mind (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). The fieldnotes, if collected and analyzed in a rigorous and systematic manner, should lead to

thick, rich description and a more accurate definition of the multiple realities that exist in a particular setting.

This researcher spent three months, January through March, 1984, as a participant observer in two Project Intercept classes as part of a preliminary study and four months, June through September, 1985, as a participant observer in three Project Intercept classes as part of the main study. Two teachers, one teaching two of the five classes observed and the other teaching three of the classes, were observed by the researcher. In addition, the researcher observed one female first offender shoplifter over a three month period plus two other first offender female shoplifters over a six month period as they progressed through the criminal justice system, through the educational system as participants in the Project Intercept Program, and after completion of the Project Intercept Program.

In this role as participant observer, the researcher fulfilled the following six functions as set forth by Spradley (1980):

1. maintained a dual purpose of (a) engaging in activities appropriate to the situation and (b) observing the activities, people and physical aspects of the situation;
2. was explicitly aware of what others took for granted;
3. took mental pictures with a wide angle lens;
4. experienced the feelings of being both an insider and outsider simultaneously;
5. engaged in introspection to more fully understand the experiences, and
6. kept a record of what was seen and experienced.

As suggested by Spradley (1980), the researcher, as participant observer, has a dual role--the role of

participant and the role of observer. This researcher had to learn to manage these two roles within the setting of this study.

Observer Role

In examining the researcher's role as observer in the classroom, the researcher entered each class setting to observe the events that were occurring. Through face to face interaction the researcher was in a better position to be open to the discovery of meanings and patterns of behavior occurring in this particular site. The researcher was able to return to the setting over an extended period of time, allowing patterns to emerge.

In using observation as a method of data gathering this researcher attempted to see the particular setting under study not only through her own lenses but also through the lenses of the research subjects. To paraphrase Mehan and Wood (1975), without both perspectives the researcher imposes his or her reality on the other, thus distorting the reality studied. The researcher began her observations and recording of data from an etic viewpoint, that is from outside the particular system. Through this etic lens the fieldworker viewed the setting in terms of a universal perspective. The emic viewpoint, on the other hand, resulted from studying behavior as from inside the system, that is in terms of a perspective oriented to the participants' meanings of events (Pike, 1967).

The researcher used the natural setting as a primary source for collecting data, developing hypotheses about emic structure based on observable patterns, testing these hypotheses with participants, and translating conclusions into concepts, which in turn reordered the etic description of the structure (Erickson, 1971). By translating what was learned from participant observation of both the etic and the emic into social science description, the researcher was able to ground her theory in reality and thus present a more accurate description and analysis of what was occurring in the setting. Developing theory from the bottom up, from collected data that are interconnected, is called grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1973). Bogdan and Biklen (1982) liken this process to a puzzle that takes shape as the parts are collected and examined.

Participant Role

In examining the participant role, Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested that how the researcher participates depends on who he or she is, his or her values, and his or her personality as well as the research goal. In assessing the degree of participation, Spradley (1980) delineated five types of involvement for the participant observer, ranging from nonparticipation to complete participation. In reference to this continuum, the moderate participation category best describes this researcher's initial intent of involvement in the classroom setting. It was felt this moderate participation would enable her to feel comfortable

and to maintain a balance between participant and observer and insider and outsider. However, because most of the teacher-student interaction in the classroom was confrontive and concerned the students' offenses, their making choices and changes, learning about control, and acknowledging consequences, the researcher reconciled to limited participation in the classroom setting with more active participation outside this setting. The act of participating helped to minimize differences, to promote acceptance of the researcher's presence over time, to encourage natural behavior by normalizing the situation, and to provide the researcher a better understanding of how participation "feels" from the students' point of view.

Through participation the researcher was able to become "a part of" the setting and present what Lutz (1981) labeled a representational model, that is, a model representing the native's or insider's interpretation and meaning of events. Because the participation was limited, the researcher was also able to experience classroom intervals of being "apart from" the setting and to present what Lutz labeled an operational model, that is, a model representing the researcher's or outsider's view of the events. According to Lutz, the representational model interfaced with the operational model produces a final explanatory model of what is occurring in the setting.

In the informal settings outside the classroom the researcher's participation with the students changed to a

more active involvement. For example, during breaks and before and after class, the researcher's interaction with the students included such activities as discussion of jobs, families, goals, education, as well as the class itself. Some attempts by the researcher were more successful than others. For example, one woman told the researcher she was pleased the researcher was in the class; whereas, another woman refused to tell the researcher where she worked, possibly indicating a lack of trust.

According to McCall-Simmons (1969) the objective of participant observation is to obtain an analytic description of the dynamics of social organization or situations. In order to accomplish this objective, it was important for the researcher to be responsive toward the situations, to be willing to see what was there, and to be reluctant to hastily superimpose a preconceived framework.

Interviews.

Both formal and informal interviews were used on a continuous basis as a data collection method to clarify and/or to reinforce the data gathered by observation. The formal interviews were taped and the tapes were transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews. Three student informants were identified and interviewed in depth after each class session. In addition, other students, acting as validating informants to avoid what has been labeled the tyranny of the single case, were interviewed as well as the two instructors and court personnel. Trow (1957) felt that

information the interviewee provides about his or her past experiences often helps the researcher to better understand the person's behaviors in the "here and now" (McCall-Simmons, 1969). In order to gather this layer of information, the researcher collected oral histories of the subjects' development of self identities and how these identities have changed over time.

According to Gorden (1980), interviewing is most valuable when we are interested in knowing people's beliefs, attitudes, values, knowledge, or any other subjective orientations or mental content. He perceived the main function of an interview as an exchange of information which means there is a two-way flow of information. This two-way flow involves the interviewer being concerned with communicating to the interviewee the type of information he or she needs and the interviewee responding with the relevant information sought by the researcher.

The interview proved to be a valuable data collection strategy for gathering information about personal feelings, perceptions, motives, habits, intentions, assumptions, and how these assumptions make sense. Cross referencing this information with the information collected by participant observation (also known as triangulation) served as a means of verifying validity of data.

Personal Documents and Surveys.

Additional information for the study was collected from personal documents and surveys. For example, the students in

the Project Intercept classes were assigned written homework. These written assignments and the instructors' comments written on these assignments provided valuable information for the researcher. Participant surveys were administered during the study; information from these surveys added to the data collected by the researcher.

Most research problems call for data collected by several different methods. The type of data needed usually determines the data collection method used. The researcher used those methods deemed appropriate for acquiring the type of information needed.

Cautions

According to Gorden (1980), the central aim of any data gathering methodology is to improve both the reliability and the validity of the information obtained. The researcher exercised certain cautions for the purposes of improving validity and reliability of both the participant observation and the interview as data collection strategies.

The researcher was aware of the possibility of contamination of data or to use McCall-Simmons (1969) terminology the "threats to interpretability of data." According to McCall-Simmons, these threats to data collected by the participant observation method include reactive effects of the observer, distortions in observation and limitations on what the observer can witness. It is inevitable that the researcher as participant observer will

have an influence on the people he or she is trying to study. According to Bogden and Biklen (1980), almost all research is confounded by this problem of "observer effect." The researcher entered the setting and tried to interact with the participants in a natural, nonthreatening manner so that the activities that occurred in the setting were minimally affected by the researcher's presence. The researcher was aware of problems Swartz and Swartz (1955) found to be inherent in using the human instrument in gathering and interpreting data. These problems include the operation of unconscious factors in observation, the influence of anxiety on how and what is seen and the effect of the observer's personal interests, values, and orientation. "One of the tasks of the social scientist is to continue to refine and sensitize the human instrument to insure greater validity of the data gathered" (McCall-Simmons, 1969, p. 104).

McCall-Simmons (1969) felt the data collected by the interviewing method are threatened by the reactive effects of the interview situation on the received information, distortions in the information, and the inability of the interviewee to adequately report what she or he knows. The researcher was aware of these threats as well as the possible influence of questions the interviewer asked, the comments made, the setting of the interview, and the researcher's status. The researcher tried to have a clear understanding of the purpose of the interview, to clearly communicate specific questions, and to distinguish relevant information.

In addition, the interviewer attempted to maintain good interpersonal relations with the respondent by minimizing the inhibitors and maximizing the facilitators of communication.

The Researcher's Struggles

Researcher's Role as Ethnographer

> The person who cannot abide feeling awkward or out of place, who feels crushed whenever he makes a mistake--embarrassing or otherwise--who is psychologically unable to endure being, and being treated like a fool, not only for a day or week but for months on end, ought to think twice before he decides to become a participant observer (Wax, 1971, in Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, p. 125).

These words express feelings the researcher experienced in her effort to become an ethnographer. As an administrator in a community college, the researcher had become very task oriented and most of her writing consisted of letters or memos that were brief, concise, to the point. It had taken her time to perfect this brevity, this efficiency, and this directness. Now as an ethnographer, the researcher was being asked to allow a process to evolve, to relinquish her need to control, and to become "unusually thorough and reflective in noticing, describing, and interpreting the significance of everyday events in a field setting" (Erickson, Florio, Bushman, 1980). As an administrator, the researcher had trained herself to look at the rose garden; now, as an ethnographer, she had to train herself to look at the roses in the garden, to unfold the petals, to expose all the layers, and to even examine the dirt in which the flowers grew.

Approximately ten years ago the researcher implemented an alternative education program for offenders at the college where she is employed. The program had been declared a success by the college and the courts and had received national recognition, but few people were cognizant of what actually was occurring in this educational environment for this special adult population. Even though the researcher was aware of the problems created by selecting a familiar site, she decided to undertake a study of this program. She was confident she would be able to make the familiar strange.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), selecting a site with which the researcher is familiar can create problems, such as the researcher may have difficulty distancing herself from personal concerns and common-sense understandings of what is going on, others in the setting may have difficulty relating to the researcher as a neutral observer, and the researcher may have difficulty in making a transition from her prescribed role to the role of researcher. As the founder of the program chosen to study, the researcher recognized these potential problems and accordingly made two decisions which she hoped would help in overcoming possible ethnographic pitfalls. First, since her involvement with the program had been as originator and instructor, but never as a student, she decided to focus her study of the program on the students' perspectives of what is happening in the setting. By choosing to focus on the students, who were aware of her involvement only as a researcher, she hoped role confusion

would be avoided. In addition, she hoped this focus on the students would allow enough distance from her other roles so that she could be more effective in making the familiar strange.

This distancing from other roles proved to be more of a struggle than initially anticipated. There were times the researcher's personal assumptions and values interfered. For example, the researcher entered the setting assuming the classroom activities would be similar to the ones in which she had engaged as a teacher in the program several years prior. This assumption was not valid. The observed instructors engaged in an interactive communication process that focused on one student at a time. The remaining students who were not involved in this interaction were to sit quietly and listen. Students began to refer to this activity as "taking a turn on the hot seat" (Fieldnotes, 2-22-84). Knowing the original intent of the program was to provide an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance of the students, the researcher became uncomfortable with what she sometimes considered the instructors' imposition of their values and judgments on the students. At times the classroom setting seemed more like a courtroom and the proceedings resembled a trial in which the teacher, as judge, proclaimed the students guilty or not guilty. When questioned about this classroom method of operation, one of the instructors responded she was engaging in a "tough love" dialogue with the students, she knew what she was doing, and her method

produced results. An interview with a probation officer employed by one of the courts making referrals to the program supported the instructor's claim of getting results.

Probation Officer: I request that most of my referrals be placed in Sue Jeckal's (pseudonym) classes.
Researcher: Why is that?
Probation Officer: Because she gets results.
Researcher: What kind of results?
Probation Officer: I see positive behavioral changes in the people after they finish a class with Sue (Interview, 2-15-84).

Continued reflection on the researcher's part led to the realization that she was guilty of imposing her values and judgments on the instructors, the very thing she uncomfortably perceived the instructors were sometimes doing to the students. This awareness assisted the researcher in overcoming her preoccupation with the instructors' manner of conducting classroom activities, thus freeing her to return to a more objective collection of data for the study.

According to McCall-Simmons (1969), the role which the researcher claims--or to which he or she is assigned by the subjects--is perhaps the single most important determinant of what he or she will be able to learn. The researcher's second decision involved defining what her role was not before negotiating what her role would be. The following items were discussed with the two instructors for everyone's clarification:

1. the researcher is not involved in this research project as an evaluator and
2. the researcher is not involved in the project as an authority figure.

Negotiations with the instructors and the students as to what the researcher's role would be led to the following agreements:

1. the researcher is in the classroom as a participant observer, particularly interested in learning what is going on in the classes from the students' perspectives;
2. in this role the researcher will collect data that will be used to describe and provide meaning to the classroom experiences without being judgmental;
3. pseudonyms will be used in any writing so that identities will be protected, and
4. confidentiality will be observed.

In spite of these negotiations the researcher found it necessary to further focus on her relationships with the students.

Establishing Relationships with the Students.

Establishing relationships with the students was crucial for the researcher to have access to the information she needed. The first step the researcher took in establishing these relationships was to acknowledge some of the differences between the students and herself. Many of the students were between seventeen and twenty five years of age; the researcher was older. Many students dressed in blue jeans and shirts; the researcher dressed in suits and dresses. The students were required by the court to attend class because they had committed an offense; the researcher was in the class by choice. Vocabulary and speech patterns as well as value systems differed. The researcher attempted to minimize these differences by being a good listener, being a good observer, being sincere and responding in a

nonjudgmental way. As Whyte learned in his study of a slum district, "People did not expect me to be just like them; in fact, they were interested and pleased to find me different, just so long as I took a friendly interest in them" (Whyte, 1955, p. 304).

Another factor in establishing relationships with the students was the importance of the researcher observing what Malinowski (1961) calls the rights and obligations for the participants. The students were required to attend class, be on time, exhibit a positive attitude, and participate. The researcher observed the same requirements of attending class, being on time, exhibiting a positive attitude, and participating as appropriate. This observation of the same ground rules was important for the researcher being accepted by the students.

Students in this setting experienced a degree of vulnerability because the purpose of the classes is to increase self awareness; therefore, self exposure is necessary. The researcher found it important to risk self disclosure and make herself vulnerable too. For example, in one of the sessions each of the students had to tell about his or her offense and the impact of this experience. When the researcher's turn came, she did not have an offense of her own to relate, but she did disclose information about a family situation that involved a courtroom experience. This revelation on the researcher's part seemed to further promote acceptance of her among the students.

Negotiation of the researcher's role is of primary importance once the researcher has entered the setting. However, of equal importance is the researcher's negotiations for gaining entry into the setting.

Entry

Negotiating entry to a field research site is a crucial initial task of the fieldwork process. Those research sites that have multiple leadership and jurisdictions necessitate that the researcher negotiate entry at each level. Successful negotiation at one level of this hierarchy does not automatically lead to successful negotiation at the next level. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggested that entry is a continuous process of establishing and developing relationships in the context of reciprocity. Continued negotiation, even after "permission" to enter has been granted, is essential because initially established relationships and requirements change over time. Maintaining good human relations in field research requires considerable attention and intellectual regulation, particularly in assuring reciprocity and freedom of action and integrity of position for all involved parties. How the researcher negotiates and maintains entry to the research site will shape, if not determine, the results of his or her research endeavors (Shatzman and Strauss, 1973).

The selected research site for this study was Knox Community College and the specific program was Project

Intercept. Because the Project Intercept Program is under the auspices of this college's Continuing Education Division and the offenders, or students of the program, are referred to the classes by district court personnel, the researcher concluded the project necessitated negotiating entry with the following: The Dean of Continuing Education, the Program Coordinator, the court referring personnel, the program instructors, the students in the classes, and the individual students selected for key informants. The Dean of Continuing Education's response to the researcher's proposal of conducting a study of this program was one of support, encouragement, and commitment. The program was considered a "success," but the Dean felt any research information would add to the program's credibility, thus benefitting everyone involved. Entry with the Program Coordinator, the court personnel, and the instructors presented no problems.

The researcher worked closely with the instructors in strategizing how to negotiate entry with the students. It was agreed the instructors would explain the researcher's purpose for being in the classroom and if the students had questions, the researcher would respond. This low key explanation seemed to be effective, as the students did not verbally object to the researcher's presence.

The researcher and the Program Coordinator developed a plan for identifying and negotiating entry with the three key informants. The researcher wanted to establish contact with these key informants prior to the beginning of the first

class. However, she did not have access to the names of the offenders whom the court personnel had referred to the Project Intercept Program. Therefore, it was decided that the Program Coordinator would contact the court personnel to identify possible candidates. Criteria used for this selection included the following:

a. female;
b. articulate, and
c. representative of the past demographic history of program participants.

Five names emerged as possible key informants. The Program Coordinator contacted the first person on the list but she declined. Three of the remaining four selections contacted by the Program Coordinator agreed to the proposed arrangement of serving as key informants for the researcher. The researcher then followed up with a telephone call to each of the three.

A problem arose when one of the candidates didn't report for the first class session. The researcher anxiously spent that class session assessing the students who were present and at the end of this session identified a viable substitute. This problem was solved when the identified substitute agreed to participate as a key informant. This completed the initial task of negotiating entry at the identified levels involved with the study.

The researcher entered the setting gathering data based on research questions which served as basic guidelines for the study.

Research Questions

> Research in general is a question/answer activity. Initially, field notes are answers looking for questions (Lecture notes, Dr. Campbell, 1-30-84).

According to Spradley (1980), ethnographic fieldwork begins when the researcher starts asking ethnographic questions. These questions as well as the answers must be discovered in the social situation being studied. Black and Metzger (1964) elaborated on this point of view "...it could be said of ethnography that until you know the question that someone in the culture is responding to, you can't know many things about the responses. Yet the ethnographer is greeted in the field with an array of responses. He needs to know what questions people are answering in their every act. He needs to know which questions are being taken for granted because they are what everybody knows without thinking..." (p. 144). Thus, the task of the ethnographer is to discover questions that seek relationships among entities that are conceptually meaningful to the people under investigation.

The ethnographer's task of discovering questions is continuous in that questions are discovered from the analysis of the data, these questions then guide further data collection, analysis of these data leads to new ethnographic questions and the cycle is repeated. Through this process the researcher moves from the broad to the specific. The researcher began the study with the following questions which served as basic guidelines for data collection:

Questions

1. What is the student's perception of the alternative education program for offenders prior to participation in the setting?
   A. What are the students' perceptions of themselves?
   B. How do they perceive their role prior to entry?

2. What happens in the classroom activities of this alternative education program?
   A. How are these activities organized?
   B. What is the content of these activities?
   C. Who participates in these activities?
   D. How do they participate?
   E. How is the participation structured?
   F. Where do the activities take place--the setting?
   G. What are the physical arrangements of the classroom for the activities?
   H. Where do the students sit during the activities?
   I. What other postures do the students assume during the activities?
   J. If activities occur outside the classroom, how are they organized?
   K. How do these outside activities relate to the activities inside the classroom?

3. How do the students define and interpret their role in these activities?
   A. What are the factors that influence the student's definition and interpretation of his or her role?
   B. How does this definition affect his or her participation in class?
   C. How does this definition affect the student's interaction with the teacher? with other students?
   D. How does the student perceive his or her role in the educational system as compared with his or her role in the criminal justice system?
      (1) What are the similarities?
      (2) What are the differences?
      (3) What factors influence the student's perception of his or her role in the criminal justice system?
      (4) How does this influence the student's behavior when she or he is involved with the criminal justice system?
      (5) How does this perception change over time?
   E. How does the teacher define his or her role in the classroom and also vis a vis individual students?
      (1) What factors influence this definition?
      (2) How does this definition affect the teacher's interaction with the students?
      (3) How does this role change?

F. What does the teacher perceive as the role of the students in this particular classroom?
   (1) What factors influence this definition?
   (2) How does this definition affect the teacher's interaction with the students?

4. What is the predominant nature of communication between the students and the teacher?
   A. With whom does the teacher communicate?
   B. With whom do the students communicate?
   C. How does the communication pattern affect the behavior of the students? of the teacher?
   D. Does the nature of communication between the students and the teacher change over time?
   E. If so, how does it change?
   F. Is there a particular vocabulary that is used in this class setting?
   G. If yes, what is this vocabulary?
   H. Who uses this vocabulary?
   I. When is this vocabulary used?
   J. Do students continue using the vocabulary after completing the program and leaving the classroom setting?

5. From the students' perspectives what are some of the consequences of involvement in the program? (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, define perspective as an angle of observation, recognizing that all observation takes on a biased hue.)
   A. How do the students feel about these consequences?
   B. How do these consequences affect the students' attitudes?
   C. Do the students perceive these same consequences of involvement after completing the program and leaving the classroom setting?

6. Upon completion of the program what are students' perceptions of the teacher?
   A. What factors influence the students' perceptions of the teacher?
   B. What, if any, is the difference between the students' perceptions at the beginning of the program and upon completion of the program?
   C. If there is a difference, how is this difference explained?
   D. After the students complete the program and leave the classroom setting, do the perceptions of the teacher change?

Several working hypotheses or "hunches" emerged from the initial collection of data.

1. The student will be anxious about his or her involvement in the alternative education program for offenders and will not have a clear perspective on what will occur in the setting.
2. The student will have a different perspective on what is happening in the setting after participation in the setting.
3. The student will perceive he or she has more internal control after extended participation in the setting.
4. The instructor will be a major influence in the student's definition and interpretation of his or her role in the setting.

Continued collection and analysis of data led to the following revised hypotheses:

1. the offenders/students will have a negative perception of their involvement with the criminal justice system;
2. initially the student will perceive he or she is different from the other participants;
3. the teacher will be a major influence in the student's definition and interpretation of his or her role in the setting;
4. students will learn appropriate behavior for this context and
5. students will perceive they benefit from their involvement in the program.

Product and Ethics

No research should be undertaken without consideration of the ethical principles involved. The researcher took precautions to protect the subjects' identities so that the collected information does not embarrass or in any other way harm them. For purposes of the dissertation the subjects as well as the site are anonymous. Subjects were treated with respect and their cooperation in the research was sought. The researcher attempted to make clear what the terms of the agreement pertaining to the study were and intends to abide by that contract. Finally, the researcher made every effort

to be truthful in conducting the study, writing about, and reporting the findings.

Summary

The researcher used ethnography as the method of research for addressing this study. This inquiry process is particularly useful for learning about the underlying structure of a social system and the patterns of behavior that make up that system. Considering the researcher's purpose in undertaking this study is to present a descriptive account of what is happening in this setting in order to better understand this special learning environment and considering the characteristics of ethnography, it seemed particularly appropriate to use this method of research.

Four data collection strategies were used in this ethnographic study: participant observation, interviews, documents, and surveys. Participant observation, one of the most commonly used data collection strategies in field research, is defined as that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people over some length of time. The researcher spent three months, January through March, 1984, as a participant observer in two Project Intercept classes as part of a preliminary study and four months, June through September, 1985, as a participant observer in three Project Intercept classes as part of the main study. Two teachers

and three first offender female shoplifters were also observed, the latter as they progressed through the criminal justice system, through the educational system as participants in the Project Intercept Program, and after completion of the Project Intercept Program.

As a participant observer, the researcher had a dual role--the role of participant and the role of observer. As an observer, the researcher used the natural setting as a primary source for collecting data, developing hypotheses based on observable patterns, testing these hypotheses with participants, and translating conclusions into concepts. Thus, the researcher was able to ground her theory in reality and present a more accurate description and analysis of what was occurring in the setting.

In examining the participant role, the researcher's degree of participation in the classroom was limited because of the type of teacher-student interaction, but she engaged in more active participation outside the classroom. The act of participating helped to minimize differences, to promote acceptance of the researcher's presence, to encourage natural behavior, and to provide the researcher a better understanding of how participation "feels" from the students' point of view.

Both formal and informal interviews were used on a continuous basis to clarify and/or to reinforce the data gathered by observation. The interview proved to be a valuable data collection strategy for gathering information

about personal feelings, perceptions, motives, habits, intentions, assumptions, and how these assumptions made sense.

Additional information for the study was collected from personal documents and surveys. Most research problems call for data collected by several different methods. The type of data needed usually determines the data collection method used. The researcher used those methods deemed appropriate for acquiring the type of information needed.

The researcher exercised certain cautions for the purposes of improving validity and reliability of both the participant observation and the interview as data collection strategies. First, the researcher entered the setting and tried to interact with the participants in a natural, nonthreatening manner so that the activities that occurred in the setting were minimally affected by the researcher's presence. Second, the researcher tried to have a clear understanding of the purpose of the interview, to clearly communicate specific questions, and to distinguish relevant information. In addition, the interviewer attempted to maintain good interpersonal relations with the respondents by minimizing the inhibitors and maximizing the facilitators of communication.

The researcher experienced several struggles in her effort to become an ethnographer. One of these struggles involved a change in style of operation from administrator in a community college to an ethnographic researcher. Another

involved the problems encountered in choosing a research site with which the researcher was familiar. A third involved negotiating the researcher's role with the instructors and the students. It was particularly important for the researcher to establish good relationships with the students so that she could have access to the information she needed.

The selected research site for this study was Knox Community College and the specific program was Project Intercept. The researcher found it necessary to negotiate entry at several different levels. Negotiating and maintaining entry were important factors affecting the results of the researcher's endeavors.

The researcher entered the setting gathering data based on research questions which served as basic guidelines for the study. Working hypotheses or "hunches" emerged from the initial collection of data. Continued collection and analysis of data led to revisions of these hypotheses.

CHAPTER THREE

Review of the Literature

In building a theoretical framework for this study a review of the literature in the following three areas seemed appropriate:

1. shoplifting, a community problem;
2. skills training programs, an alternative education approach, and
3. role.

Shoplifting, a Community Problem

Shoplifting is the largest monetary crime in the entire country, amounting to eight billion dollars annually. In Michigan alone the dollar losses due to shoplifting exceed $762 million (National Coalition to Prevent Shoplifting, 1981). Considering the magnitude of the crime, it was surprising that a search of the literature in the Criminal Justice Periodical Index and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service databases revealed a limited amount of research on the topic. In reviewing the available literature this researcher was interested in knowing who shoplifts as well as causes and deterrents of shoplifting.

To quote Tolstoy, "The seeds of every crime are in each of us" (Nettler, 1978). Studies indicate the seeds of shoplifting are indeed in each of us. Cameron (1964) found the vast majority of shoplifters were mostly amateur thieves

and reflected little or no experience in crime or with criminal processing. Most had no knowledge about arrest procedures, readily admitted their guilt, confessed prior thefts, and consistently offered to pay for stolen merchandise, failing to understand that they had been arrested and faced criminal processing (Inciardi, 1978).

Statistics indicate approximately ten percent of all shoplifting is done by professionals, one percent by kleptomaniacs, and the rest by "...everybody--but 'everybody' ..." (Jabin, 1976, p. 170). A study conducted by Business Week in an attempt to determine how widespread shoplifting had become found that of five hundred shoppers picked at random and followed from the moment they entered a New York store to the time they left, one out of every twelve was observed to have shoplifted (Business Week, 1970). Similar experiments in Boston found one out of twenty and in Philadelphia one out of ten with juveniles being the biggest single group (Hiew, 1981). El-Dirghami (1974) found that fifty percent of high school students and 39.6 percent of college students admitted shoplifting. Klemke (1982) in his study of nonmetropolitan high school youth discovered that sixty three percent of the high school students surveyed reported they had shoplifted sometime in their life. Both Cameron (1964) and Klemke (1982) found that males may be more active shoplifters in the earlier phases of the life-cycle while females become more active in the later adolescent phases. Kraut (1976), focusing his study on college

students, reported that sixty one percent of his random sample had shoplifted at least once. Given the Business Week study identifying approximately 42 out of 500 shoppers as shoplifters, El-Dirghami's findings that 50% of the high school students and 39.6% of the college students and Klemke's and Kraut's findings that 63% of the high school students and 61% of the college students surveyed admitted they had shoplifted, it seems appropriate to say shoplifting is a widespread community problem.

Most studies indicate that adult women shoplift more frequently than adult men. This difference may be related in part to women having more opportunity to shoplift based on the fact it is the women who do most of the shopping (Jabin, 1976).

Committing criminal activities has been blamed on everything from evil demons to genetic factors. According to Kraut (1976), shoplifting is not an exotic deviance with a complex motivation underlying it; the motivation is the same as for regular shopping: the acquisition of goods at minimum cost. Dr. Abe Fenster, who was chairman of the Psychology Department at New York's John Jay College of Criminal Justice in 1976, stated this getting something for nothing corresponds to infantile love. Dr. Fenster felt those who shoplift are usually unconsciously linking the activity with a familiar basic of human existence: love, anger, guilt, or sex (Jabin, 1976).

Klemke (1982) in searching for relationships that add to the understanding of why high school youth shoplift discovered that youthful shoplifters, when asked the main reason why someone would take items from a store without paying for them, most frequently selected two clusters of motivational patterns, (a) economic motivations [need something but can't afford to pay, want item but don't want to pay, and a small percentage selected to get items to sell] and (b) sporting motivations [see if can get away with it and for fun and excitement]. However, Klemke found that education, labeling, and socialization variables were more strongly related to shoplifting than the family and economic variables (Klemke, 1982).

Kraut (1976), in his study of college students and their involvement with shoplifting, found that apprehension shifted a shoplifter's explanation for his or her behavior. Initially the shoplifter explained behavior in terms that were intrinsic to it: wanting an item without paying for it and ability to take it. However, after apprehension the shoplifter increasingly attributed behavior to extrinsic factors, like revenge, excitement, and social pressure. "Apprehension forces shoplifters to justify their behavior" (Kraut, 1976, p. 366).

In looking at deterrents of shoplifting, Cameron (1964) concluded that apprehension nearly always results in a termination of shoplifting. On the other hand, Klemke (1982) suggested that the apprehension as a labeling experience

produced more deviance amplification effects than deterrent effects. For example, Klemke found youth who had been apprehended for shoplifting by store personnel and had the police called in reported more subsequent shoplifting than those apprehended youth for whom the police were not called in. Kraut concluded, "Getting caught shakes up the shoplifter's belief system...apprehension increased the risks a shoplifter saw associated with shoplifting;...apprehension shifted a shoplifter's explanations for behavior... Shoplifters changed the meaning of the action, making it less reprehensible and themselves less responsible" (Kraut, 1976, pp. 365 and 366). Apprehended shoplifters were more likely to believe that they would be caught again and that they would experience more severe sanctions if caught.

H.L. Mencken once wrote, "There's always an easy solution to every human problem--neat, plausible, and wrong" (Larson, 1984). In seeking a solution to the shoplifting problem, Kraut (1976) felt social-psychological variables are related to shoplifting and any future work should try to manipulate these variables and measure the effects on behavior. Hiew (1981) in studying the prevention of shoplifting theorized that an "effective solution" to the shoplifting problem should increase the awareness and should appeal to the responsibility of individuals, groups, and institutions. He stated that any intervention strategy should be consistent with the theoretical bases. From an ethnographic perspective these theoretical bases from which

the program is designed should be well grounded in the practical realities of what actually occurs from the perspective of the participants.

Skills Training, an Alternative Education Approach

"Give a man a fish, he has one meal; teach him to fish, he can eat for the rest of his life" (Larson, 1984). This Chinese proverb captures the essence of the skills training movement as it has evolved over the past two decades. The purpose of this skills training movement is to address psychological problems. According to Kanfer and Goldstein (1975), psychological problems, in general terms, are difficulties in a person's relations with others, in the person's perception of the world about him or her, or in the person's attitudes toward self. The major characteristics of a psychological problem may include: "(1) The client suffers subjective discomfort, worry, or fears that are not easily removable by some action that he can perform without assistance; (2) The client shows a behavioral deficiency or excessively engages in some behavior that interferes with functioning described as adequate either by himself or by others; (3) The client engages in activities which are objectionable to those around him and which lead to negative consequences either for himself or for others; and (4) The client shows behavioral deviations that result in severe social sanctions by those in his immediate environment" (Kanfer and Goldstein, 1975, p. 7). The goal of skills

training is to convert psychological principles into teachable skills and disseminate these skills by means of systematic methods and programs (Larson, 1984). These teachable skills include basic human relations skills, such as how to recognize feelings and express them in socially acceptable ways, how to solve problems, how to identify and use resources, and how to plan, organize, and conduct both leisure and work activities. The object of this skills training is change. Kanfer and Goldstein (1975) identified five focus areas for this change: (1) change of a particular problem area, such as poor interpersonal skills; (2) insight or a clear rational and emotional understanding of one's problems; (3) change in a person's subjective emotional comfort, including changes in anxiety or tension; (4) change in one's self-perceptions, including goals, self-confidence and sense of adequacy; and (5) change in the person's life style.

Psychological skills training programs draw on an educational model that incorporates concepts derived from learning theory but at the same time is different from the traditional educational model. For example, a major difference between the skills training educational model and the traditional educational model is the expected learning outcomes. Whereas, the teacher in the traditional educational model is primarily interested in intellectual enrichment for the students, the teacher in this model is interested in teaching new attitudes and behaviors which the

individual can apply to solve present and future problems. According to Guerney, Stollack, and Guerney (1971), the teacher in the skills training educational model is not concerned with "intellectual growth per se, but rather with the teaching of personal and interpersonal attitudes and skills" (p. 277).

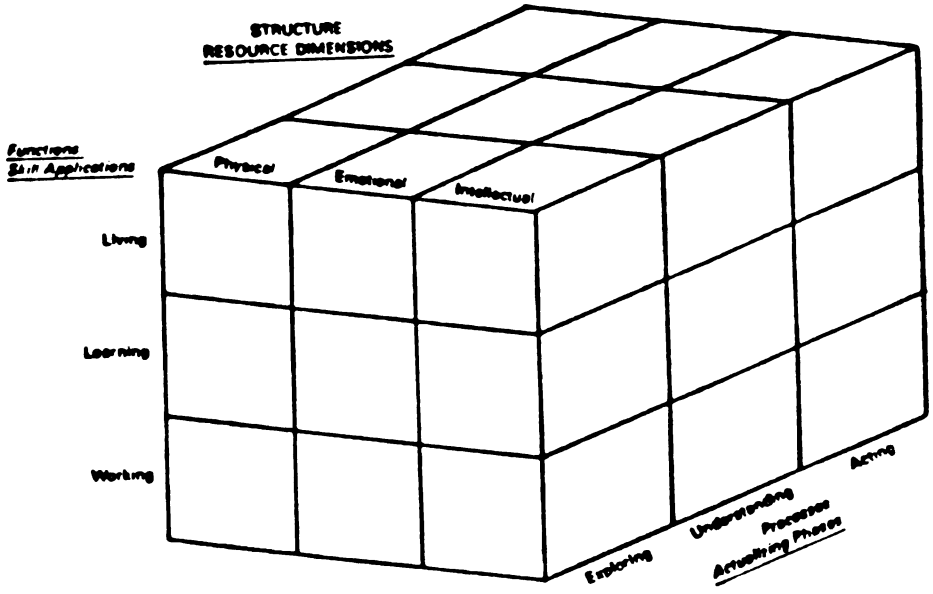
The skills training educational model is based on three assumptions: (1) the helper, i.e. counselor, psychologist, therapist, or lay person is viewed as a teacher; (2) the students' problems are thought of as learning deficits; and (3) students are capable of directing their own learning (Larson, 1984). The helper as a teacher has a body of knowledge, a theory, or a system of skills which the student does not have. "The teacher's object is to motivate the student to acquire such knowledge and to provide him with the know-how to pursue this interest further in the future" (Guerney, Stollack, and Guerney, 1971, p. 281). If a student has been traumatized, such as being arrested for shoplifting as is true of the participants in this study, Guerney, Stollack, and Guerney (1971) felt the atmosphere of the class should be such that the student can discuss the traumatizing event and be provided with whatever cathartic or desensitization is necessary. Egan (1982) proposed if similar problems are held in common by large numbers of people, then similar resources are likely to be needed, and it is practical and economically feasible to create common programs for the common problems of particular target groups.

The alternative education program for first offender shoplifters of this study is an example of such a program.

The Human Resources Development model, an example of a skills training educational model, is the most similar paradigm to the program that this researcher studied. This model is purported to work based on the following principles:

(1) learning begins with the learner's frame of reference;
(2) learning culminates in a skills objective, and
(3) learning is transferable to real life (Carkhuff and Berenson, 1976).

Figure 1, Human Resources Development Model, presents an overview of the model.



(Carkhuff, 1981, p. 154)

Figure 1

Human Resources Development Model

An explanation of the model is presented based on the way the model is supposed to work.

Learning Process

Through developmentally sequenced sessions, learning modules, designed to teach defined skills supposedly based on the developmental level and the needs of the learners, are presented. This guided learning structure in a group setting should provide systematic procedures to ensure appropriate practice and demonstration of the skills being sequentially presented (Larson, 1984). Theoretically, the students engage in a three stage learning process:

(1) exploration--in exploring the learning experience, the students should analyze the learning tasks and diagnose their own abilities in terms of the tasks;
(2) understanding--in understanding the learning goals, the students should set learning objectives in relation to their levels of skills and knowledge diagnosed in the exploration, and
(3) action--in acting to achieve the learning goals, the students should implement step-by-step learning programs calculated to develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve the learning goals (Carkhuff, 1981).

Learning Products

The learning products in this model are supposed to be physical, emotional, and intellectual resource development (Carkhuff and Berenson, 1976). The physical dimension involves fitness skills development and application, the emotional dimension involves interpersonal skills development and application, and the intellectual dimension involves conceptual skills development and application (Carkhuff, 1981).

Learning Skills Application

The Human Resource Development model emphasizes the importance of skill application in daily life experiences. These daily life experiences are represented by living situations in the home and community, learning situations at school, and working situations on the job. Thus, the physical, emotional, and intellectual skills developed in the learning process should be transferred to real life experiences represented by living, learning, and working situations (Carkhuff, 1981).

A review of the literature on the effectiveness of skills training programs produced quantitative studies that incorporated primarily pre and posttests, treatment and control groups, and instruments to measure criterion variables as approaches to assessment. Because of the diversity of this literature, evaluation of the skills training programs is difficult. Gambrill (1984) felt research, specifically the research about social skill training, indicates skills training is effective in increasing "competent behavior." In support of Gambrill's assertion, several studies indicated skills training is effective in improving "interpersonal functioning" which includes "responding with accurate empathetic understanding," "showing respect for others," "being genuine," "demonstrating concreteness," and "engaging in self exploration" (Pierce and Schauble, 1970; Bennett, 1981; Berenson, Carkhuff and Myrus, 1966; Dowling and Frantz, 1974; Carkhuff and Truax, 1965;

Butler and Hansen, 1973). Skills training programs for adolescent youth were effective in reducing the frequency of "observed negative behavior" (Thompson and Hudson, 1982) and in "modifying impulsive behavior" (Bowman and Auerbach, 1982). More information is needed, though, on how to encourage generalization and maintenance of this increase in competency (Gambrill, 1984). For example, there are contradictory results from follow-up studies on the retention of these skills. Pierce and Schauble (1971) found that the "interpersonal functioning levels" of trainees tend to remain the same for a nine month period, another study showed the same after four weeks (Butler and Hansen, 1973), but another study showed a loss after five months (Collingwood, 1969). Cheek and Mendelson (1973) reported a skills training program for institutionalized substance abusers effectively reduced anxiety, improved self-image, encouraged more appropriate assertiveness, and increased inner control. In a six month follow-up study Cheek and Mendelson found the program group receiving the training made a better community adjustment than another group that did not receive training.

The literature indicated a most important factor in the skills training program is the "interpersonal functioning" of the teacher. The studies implied that those students who are exposed to teachers with high levels of "empathic understanding," "respect for others," "genuineness," and "concreteness in problem solving" tend to adopt behaviors similar to those of the teacher (Carkhuff, 1969; Carkhuff and

Berenson, 1976; Pierce and Schauble, 1970; Dowling and Frantz, 1974). Dowling and Frantz (1974) suggested a close relationship between self-theory and social learning with regard to the role of the teacher. "Basic to self-theory is the belief that if the counselor offers certain facilitative conditions in a relationship with a client, the client will become more self-directing, more open and flexible, more accepting of himself and others, more congruent--in short more fully functioning. At the same time, counselors who offer high levels of the facilitative conditions function as social models. As a result, changes in the client's behavior may to some extent, result from a process of imitative learning on the part of the client. Thus, the counselor who is communicating high levels of the facilitative conditions is, in terms of social learning theory, an effective social model" (p. 263).

A survey of the literature by this researcher revealed no qualitative studies of the skills training educational programs. As mentioned previously, the studies cited in this section are quantitative studies, using pre and posttests, treatment and control groups and instruments to measure criterion variables as approaches to assessment. Carkhuff (1971) referred to these quantitative studies as outcome research directed at visible and measurable changes on the part of the student. Acknowledging the importance of this outcome research, this researcher feels, given the complexity of change and behavior, qualitative research, such as this

ethnographic study, is essential in contributing to this knowledge base. The qualitative studies can complement the quantitative information, particularly in the understanding and interpretation of what is happening in the setting. Spradley (1980) advocated that ethnographic research takes place in a social situation identifiable by three primary elements: a place, actors, and activities. Through the understanding and interpretation of what is happening in this social situation, particularly from the perspective of the actors who are participating in the activities in a particular setting, theory is generated that may be applicable in understanding the changes that occur as measured by the quantitative research. In addition, hypotheses that serve to guide further research are generated. Thus, both the quantitative, outcome research and the descriptive, ethnographic research can contribute to the enrichment and expansion of this particular knowledge base.

Role

According to Goffman (1961), there are few concepts in sociology more commonly used than "role," few accorded more importance, and few that waver so much when examined closely. He defined role, which he considered the basic unit of socialization, as the typical response of individuals in a particular position, the response the position allows and obliges. The difference between typical role and actual role performance is dependent on how a particular individual in a

given position perceives and defines that situation.

The Getzels-Guba model further illustrates this difference between typical role and actual role performance. Roles are externally defined and serve as norms to guide the behavior of role incumbents (Getzels, Lipham, and Campbell, 1968). These externally defined roles, however, are often modified by the personality of the individual within the role. The Getzels-Guba model defines a given act of behavior by the general equation B equals f (R x P). This equation translates into observed behavior is a function of a given institutional role defined by the expectations attached to it interacting with the personality of the individual in the role defined by his or her need-dispositions. According to the model, role and personality are maximized or minimized as the situation requires. Figure 2, Getzels-Guba Model, illustrates this concept.

B equals F (R x P)

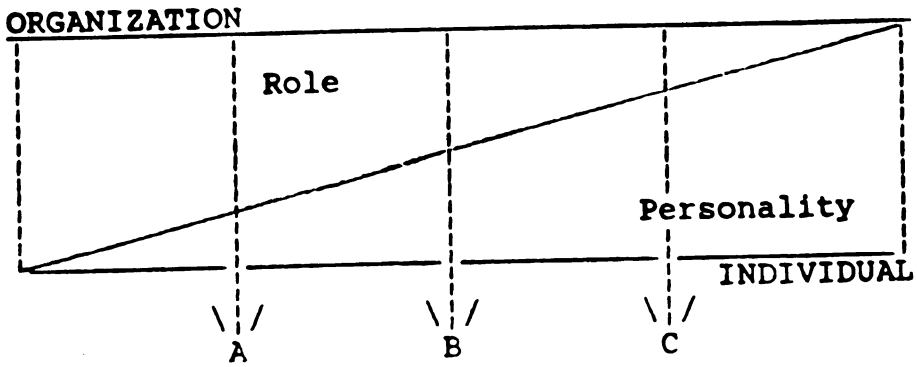


Figure 2

Getzels-Guba Model

The behavior illustrated by Arrow A indicates a primary emphasis on role-relevant performance; thus, role is maximized and personality is minimized. The reverse is true with the behavior represented by Arrow B. Primary emphasis is on personality-relevant performance so personality is maximized and role is minimized. The behavior illustrated by Arrow C indicates a balance between role-relevant performance and personality-relevant performance. Role and personality are maximized or minimized as the situation requires.

According to Weber, behavior "will be called human behavior only in so far as the person or persons involved engage in some subjectively meaningful action. Such behavior may be mental or external; it may consist in action or omission to act. The term 'social behavior' will be reserved for activities whose intent is related by the individuals involved to the conduct of others and is oriented accordingly" (Freund, 1968, p. 102). Weber, in his definition, introduced a third factor that influences a person's behavior in a particular role--the meaningful relatedness of the behavior to the conduct of others. Thus, roles are complementary and interlocking, deriving meaning from one another (Goffman, 1961). Weber labeled this interrelatedness as social relationship which involves the individual adjusting his or her behavior based on expectations that others will behave in a certain way, enabling the individual to estimate his or her chances of success in some undertaking. This element of probability, as

Weber called it, means "men will orient their conduct to a meaningful precept, which may take the form of a law, a custom, a value, or a belief, and which will furnish each of them with reasons for so orienting their behavior. Only where such probability continues to exist will the social structure be stable and lasting " (Freund, 1969, p. 118).

Goffman distinguished between a person playing a role and playing at a role. To play a role means to embrace it, to fully accept the terms of the role's image. Playing at a role infers a lack of attachment to the image. When a person affects the embracing of a role, she or he will at some point demonstrate actions which effectively convey some disdainful detachment from the role she or he is performing. Goffman labeled these actions as role distance.

Mitchell discussed role calculation which he defined as the conscious and deliberate conformity to the demands of power in order to evade penalties or to maximize individual interests. Role calculation is often a response to an anomic social structure, such as prison or a power holder/gate keeper, i.e. teacher. In prison the inmate's socialization centers around the learning of the techniques of accommodation to the system of proximate power. One of these techniques of accommodation is role calculation (Biddle and Thomas, eds., 1966).

Dodge (1982) in her study of the interaction that occurs between teachers and students in a college laboratory setting developed an interactive model, as shown in Figure 3, which

illustrates the importance of role calculation in the educational setting.

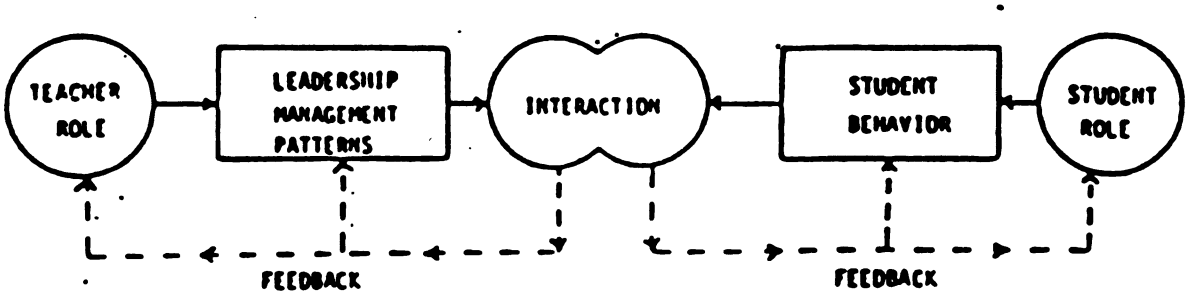


Figure 3

Teacher/Student Interactive Model

According to this model, the teacher's perception of role shapes the leadership style and management patterns which influence the interactive process. The student establishes his or her role by learning (calculating) how to behave and interact in this setting. The teacher, as leader and manager of the environment, helps clarify roles, rules, and expectations for the student (Dodge, 1982). One of the problems with this model is that it doesn't take into consideration context, i.e. power, economies, wants and needs of the actors.

Understanding "role" is particularly important in presenting a descriptive account of what is happening in the setting from the students'/offenders' perspectives as is true in this study. Park (1950) summarized this importance,

"...everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously playing a role...It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves" (Park, 1950, p.249).

Summary

To summarize the review of the literature, the literature supports the assertion shoplifting is a widespread community problem. Hiew (1981) theorized an "effective solution" to the shoplifting problem should increase the awareness and should appeal to the responsibility of individuals, groups, and institutions. He stated that any intervention strategy should be consistent with the theoretical bases. From an ethnographic perspective these theoretical bases from which the program is designed should be well grounded in the practical realities of what actually occurs from the perspective of the participants. Egan (1982) proposed if similar problems are held in common by large numbers of people, then similar resources are likely to be needed and it is practical and economically feasible to create common programs for the common problems of particular target groups. If one accepts Kraut's feelings that social-psychological variables are related to shoplifting and any future work should try to manipulate these variables, then skills training programs aimed at addressing these variables are a viable alternative for confronting the community problem of shoplifting. The literature indicated

that in the skills training programs the role of the teacher is a significant factor in determining the role of the student. In reviewing the literature, the researcher found only quantitative studies of the effectiveness of the skills training programs. Given the complexity of change and behavior, it seems essential that this quantitative, outcome research be complemented with descriptive, ethnographic research. Ethnographic studies can enrich and expand the knowledge base, particularly in understanding and interpreting what is happening in the setting.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Study

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the study which includes information about the data; the setting; the subjects, particularly the key informants; the program; and the specifics of the research site.

The Data

This study includes data collected during a preliminary study conducted by the researcher from January through March, 1984, and data collected during the main study conducted May through October, 1985, as well as follow-up interviews conducted in June, 1986. The researcher observed 59 students enrolled in five classes and two instructors, one of the instructors teaching three of the classes and the other instructor teaching two of the classes. The researcher spent 92 hours observing in the classroom setting, 9 hours observing in the court setting, and 49 hours in interviewing. Because the focus of the study was examining what was happening in the classroom setting from the students' perspectives, the time spent in the natural setting was of critical importance as a direct source of data.

The Setting

The Project Intercept Program is affiliated with and located at Knox Community College. Initially, it was assumed the college setting would be more likely than the court setting to engender a positive attitude in the offenders. This assumption has been supported by student comments, such as "At the college I feel like a student; at the court I feel like a criminal," "At the college learning is important," and "This is the first time I ever really wanted to go to school" (Written comments from students in the Project Intercept Program). In addition, it was hypothesized that offenders exposed to a positive educational experience, as Project Intercept was intended, would continue with other educational endeavors. The current Program Director estimates that 30% of those who complete the program do in fact continue with their education as a result of their participation in this program.

The College

Knox Community College is a two year institution located in the center of Knoxville, a large metropolitan area. Its urban campus is comprised of seven large buildings; in addition, satellite centers are located at two area high schools, at an occupational tech center, and at numerous business and industrial sites.

The student population consists of approximately 5,000 full-time students and 5,300 part-time students. More than 14,000 other individuals are served in Community Service

programs, such as Project Intercept. Knox Community College was founded in 1914 as a two year transfer program for a major four year educational institution. Today the mission of the college is to offer quality educational programs, services, and other activities to meet the needs of the community. The college mission specifically states, "The College has a strong commitment to serve those with special needs, whether majority or minority, advantaged or disadvantaged, man or woman, handicapped or not" (Knox Community College Catalog, 1986-87). This statement is the basis for the existence of Project Intercept, a program designed to serve the needs of a disadvantaged population.

The Courts

The court personnel from six district courts identify adult offenders whom they feel will benefit from the Project Intercept educational experience. These six district courts have jurisdiction over misdemeanant offenses, such as shoplifting, welfare fraud, disorderly conduct, and substance abuse/misuse.

The probation officer caseload in these referring courts is usually between 200 and 300 probationers. The State recommends that a probation officer's caseload be no more than 55 probationers in order to be manageable. With the discrepancy between the actual and the recommended it is understandable why probation officers use community resources, such as Project Intercept, as a means of managing the large number of probationers assigned to them.

The Subjects

Most of the 59 offender/student subjects of this study were adult first offender shoplifters with no prior offenses who were assigned by the district courts to participate in the Project Intercept Program. In addition, the researcher observed two Project Intercept teachers. With the assistance of the Program Director and two probation officers the researcher identified three adult shoplifters who served as key informants for the study. Age, sex, and the ability to express thoughts and feelings were the criteria used in the selection of these key informants.

Sex was chosen as a criterion because in the review of the literature the researcher found most studies indicate that adult women shoplift more frequently than adult men. According to Jabin (1976), this difference may be related in part to women having more opportunity to shoplift because it is the women who do most of the shopping. This frequency of shoplifting among women was a major reason the researcher decided to use females as key informants for the study.

Age was selected as a criterion because of the broad range of ages of the program participants and also because research indicates age is a factor in how an individual views a situation. One of the key informants was twenty four years old, white, married, and the mother of one child. Another key informant was thirty five years old, black, married, and the mother of four children. The third key informant was forty eight years old, white, married, the mother of one

child, and the step-mother of two children.

The third selection criterion was that the females have the ability to conceptualize, recognize, and express their thoughts and feelings. This was particularly important for validating and expanding the researcher's observations of what was occurring in the classroom.

The researcher began observation of the three key informants as soon as possible after their apprehension, following them through the criminal justice system, through the educational system for the Project Intercept Program, and continuing with them for a period of time after completion of the program. The key informants were interviewed after the class sessions in order to clarify and/or reinforce the data gathered by the researcher's observation.

While observing the three female case studies in the Project Intercept Program, the researcher also observed the other program participants assigned to the classes. In addition two Project Intercept teachers, one of whom is the Program Director and the other a woman who has been teaching in the program for about eight years, were observed. These two teachers were observed teaching the classes to which the key informants were assigned as well as being observed teaching two other classes for a total observation of five Project Intercept classes. Fifty nine offenders/students were studied using various qualitative and quantitative measures, including participant observation, interviews, surveys, and personal documents.

The Key Informants

Introduction.

In order to have a better understanding of the individuals who participate in the Project Intercept Program the following data describe the background and the offenses of Katie, Marilyn, and Jane (pseudonyms), the three key informants who are representative of the program participants.

Katie.

Background

"Katie is a young white woman with a small frame. She has medium length brownish-blond hair and freckles sprinkled across her upturned nose. She looks like she could be all of 16 years old, but in reality she is 24 years of age. She needs to have dental work done on her two front teeth, but in spite of that she is an attractive young woman" (Fieldnotes, 6-10-85).

Katie, one of eight children, grew up in a very small rural community in northern Michigan. Her childhood was one of pleasure and pain, of sufficiency and scarcity, of love and rejection. When asked about her parents, she described her father as follows:

"He's kind of like a floater, I guess. He'd come there and be there awhile, he'd get bored with us kids, he'd get bored with my mom, and he'd move on and he'd come back. He was like a yo-yo. He was here and then he was gone. The first time I remember my dad, I was in the third or fourth grade. It was wintertime, my mom was outside, she had no shoes on, no coat on, and she kept crying and she kept telling this guy, 'Why did you come here? We don't need you here! Why are you here?' And I went in to my older sister and I asked, 'Who is this guy? Why is Mom standing outside in the wintertime? Why is he here? Who is he?' She told me it was my dad. I didn't care to meet him. I didn't want him there. If it caused my mom that much pain, we didn't need him there. After that my mom had calmed down. They stayed together for probably two years. They bought the

house out in the country and my mom was gonna give it another try. And she did. But it didn't work out, just like all the other times that she gave it another try....My dad used to drink quart bottles of beer. He drank as long as I can remember. My mom and dad are divorced and that was one of the reasons my mother divorced my dad because she stayed with him so long and she couldn't handle his drinking anymore....My dad used to tell me that if you drink beer, you're not an alcoholic. Bullshit! You are an alcoholic. You can be an alcoholic if you drink beer. The ones that stand there and deny that and are doing it are probably the ones who are the biggest ones. ...For the longest time, I would not even drink beer because I seen what beer did to him and I didn't want it to do that to me" (Interview 6-17-86).

When asked about her mother, Katie gave the following description:

"My mom is a very strong woman. I don't know if I could have took 8 kids and left like that. My mom didn't have an education. As far as what she did all her life, she got pregnant for the first time when she was sixteen and she had several babies after that...When she took us, she took a nurse's aid job and worked her way, by taking the nurse's aid job, through schooling and now she works for the state as an LPN. She's done something for herself" (Interview 6-17-85).

The interviewer asked Katie what living with both her mother and father was like. Katie responded as follows:

"My dad chose to buy a house that was out of town because he thought it was a way of keeping us away from trouble. You know, by having us out so far, there was nothing to do to get you in trouble. If you went to town, you went to town with Mom or you went to town with Dad. If you got in trouble, then you were really in big trouble. I hated riding the school bus...I hated it because my Dad, his yard is a mess. I mean my dad is a junkman and he works on cars and that's how he makes his living. I used to be embarrassed. I'd have to get on the bus and people would see where I actually lived. They would see how my dad's yard looked and that would reflect on me...With my dad, sometimes you never knew what to expect from him. And I used to not want to bring people by because sometimes he'd be a great guy, but sometimes he'd really be an asshole. I didn't want people to see that side of him...I didn't have a lot of new things, but I always had plenty of things. I come from a big family. There's 8 of us and either I had hand-me-downs or garage sale stuff. But my mom always made sure that everybody had something. I used to get mad at my dad because my dad was never one who believed in an allowance. I used to tell him if he didn't give me an allowance to buy things then

that only left me to take them. He never understood that...My dad used to give me $2. That's what it cost for a lunch ticket for the whole week. I would sell my lunch ticket. He would write out a check for me for $2 and I would go and give the people the check and they would give me the ticket, but I wouldn't write my name on the ticket. Then I'd wait in line until someone came along with cash and I'd say, 'Buy my ticket; I need the $2.'...One time I sold my lunch tickets for a long time because my dad wouldn't give me money for a school yearbook and I wanted one and they were like $7. I had to sell my lunch tickets for 4 weeks before I could get $8. But I did save the money and I did get the yearbook. And that's important because I go back and I can look at the yearbook" (Interview 6-17-85).

Katie expressed her feelings about her parents' divorce:

"When my mom decided to divorce my dad, she said she had taken all she could take and that she was moving out. She didn't want none of the furniture, didn't want any of our clothes, she just wanted her 8 kids and to be out. When we left, we had the clothes we had on, we went to my Aunt Mary's (pseudonym) house, stayed with her, and used her kids' clothing. And so my mom went to garage sales and got us clothes and bought furniture for our house. Got on her feet so to speak...The years when they were together were good years. Dad shared with us kids, he took us places, we did things together as a family. That's why when my mom decided she was going to divorce my dad, it was like I was real shocked. They had been together for two years and things looked good to me. I didn't expect it to come; I just expected him to be gone again" (Interview 6-17-85).

Katie described what her life was like after her mom left her dad:

"After Mom left I lived with my mom and then I lived with my dad for awhile. I used to play head games with them. If my mom got too strict, I'd move with my dad. If my dad got too strict, I'd move back with my mom. Then my dad said, 'Whoa, you're not going to keep doing this. You're going to live with only one of us.' And I went to live with my dad. The reason I did that was because in a lot of ways I felt my dad was more strict and I felt that if I lived with my mom, my mom was so busy supporting us that she didn't have time to really watch us. I could have gotten into a lot of trouble that way by not having the supervision that I needed. So when I went to live with my dad, I knew that I would not get in trouble...My dad would know where I was all the time and that would keep me out of trouble...I lived with my dad until I was 17. When I turned 17, I told him that he drank too much and I said, 'I don't want to live with you anymore.' So we fought, we argued, it was all over drinking...I didn't want

to live there no more; I wasn't happy there. I didn't want to live with my mother. I just felt like now's the time. I'm 17 and I can make it on my own. So I moved in with some friends. Soon as I moved out my dad told me I would never graduate from high school; he knew it; he was sure of it. That was the first thing that I did--to graduate from high school. I wanted to take the little diploma back and say, 'This isn't for me; this is for you because you said I couldn't do it.' Before I moved out, I asked my dad if I could go on the birth control pill and he freaked out. He told me, 'No!' He called me dirty names and said no daughter of his was going to be on the birth control pill. When I moved out, I come to get my stuff, he had all my stuff packed and sitting in the garage, and on top of the pile was a bottle of birth control pills. That made me so mad because it was like why didn't he do that before. I come to him so that I don't get in a situation where I would be pregnant. I was asking for help and he was denying it. Now he was shoving it down my throat. It didn't make sense to me...He tried to be hard-nosed about everything in a lot of ways. Somebody had to be the mean one; somebody had to be the nice one. My mother was the nice one so my dad had to be the mean one. Now I'm able to go up and say, 'I love you' to him. That was something I could never do when I lived with him. I didn't love him then or I didn't know if I did. He was my father, sure, but it was just different...Today I feel closer to my father, but I get my strength from my mother because I know what kind of strength she has" (Interview 6-17-85).

In response to a description of her present life Katie stated that she is married and the mother of a 14 month old daughter. She supplements her husband's income by babysitting other people's children. She described her relationship with her husband as being good.

"I would describe it as it gets better through the years. You know, it was good when we got married; it's much better now; it's much stronger now. We communicated when we first got married but the things that we communicate about now are deeper subjects, you know. They're more meaningful than what we used to talk about...My husband's not always a good talker...My dad says that the reason my husband doesn't talk a lot is because I always am talking and he never has a chance to talk which might be the truth...Even as a kid my dad used to call me 'chatterbox' (Interview 6-24-85).

When asked the person she enjoys talking to the most, Katie, without hesitation, responded:

"God...When we was growing up, we really didn't go to church every Sunday...I kind of grew up thinking that you didn't have to sit inside a church to be religious and I don't go to church now. But, I do read the Bible and I do talk to God. So, I enjoy that because it's closeness...My mother was Catholic; my dad was Lutheran. My dad agreed to bring us all up Catholic, but he never did...I have a lot of Catholic friends. I used to envy them because it was so routine with the way that they did things and I felt that my dad cheated me out of that by saying that he would bring his kids up Catholic and never did...When I wanted to get married, I hadn't known Sam (pseudonym) very long and my mother said not to marry him because we didn't know enough about him. She said that I hadn't known him very long and maybe he's a rapist from who knows where. We just didn't know nothing about him and we didn't know enough about his family. My father was kind of shocked that I wanted to get married...Sam and I only dated for about three months before we got married which was not a long time, but we just knew that that was what we wanted to do and that's what we did" (Interview 6-24-85).

Katie described herself as a wife and as a mother:

"As a wife, I'm kind of nagging because I get busy and I feel like everything has to be done before I go to bed. I feel like when I come home from my job, I still have another shift to put in and sometimes if there's a lot to be done, I feel like when Sam comes home, he shouldn't just sit back and watch TV; he should put in his second shift too...He does help with things; it's just that even if he helps with things, I feel like there's still so many things that still need to be done...As a mother, I think that I have a lot of patience with my daughter. Sometimes I feel like I should go to the bathroom and lock myself in and scream at myself and come out and I'll have the patience that I need. But, I'd rather do that than holler in front of her and scare her. I don't want her to grow up in a home where she has a mom that hollers at her all the time" (Interview 6-24-85).

Katie and Sam are under tremendous financial pressure. They are behind in their car payments with a threat of repossession and they owe the IRS $5,000 in back taxes that according to Katie are really owed by Sam's father. It seems that Sam's father earned commissions as a salesman under Sam's Social Security number. No taxes were paid on the commissions and now seven years later the IRS wants Sam to

pay those back taxes plus the accumulated penalty and interest. When asked why Sam allowed his father to use his Social Security number, Katie responded, "Sam's father had a Social Security number but he couldn't use it because he was receiving some kind of check for disability. He was getting his disability check and he still was not really so disabled where he was unable to work so he was working on the side using Sam's Social Security number." Katie then expressed her anger about the situation, "Oh, I'm angry. Yea. I mean with Sam for first being dishonest enough to let somebody use his number. I'm angry with his father for taking advantage of his kindness. I'm angry with his father because he led us to believe that we would be getting his Wagoneer in exchange for the money he owed us and he let us go in debt as far as our van went by getting behind in the payments because we thought we would pay it off completely. And it didn't work out that way" (Interview 7-22-85).

Offense

When asked to discuss her offense, Katie responded:

"When I went into the store, I didn't have any intentions of going into the store and taking stuff. I really didn't. I didn't know I would do it. I had done it before but I didn't know I was going to do it that day. I didn't clean out my purse so I would have lots of room. I think that when I got in there, I kind of knew what the cupboards looked like. I knew that the money coming into our house had to go for bills that were late already. I just didn't have the money. Once they were in my purse I kind of felt like it was all right to do it. I thought that somehow I would pay them back...I took a package of hamburger and a package of pork so it was just meat. I had other things in the house, but I just didn't have the meat in the house...I had money but I didn't have enough money to cover the stuff that I had in my purse...I needed food for my father-in-law, my husband, my daughter, and me. My father-in-law had been

with us probably for almost three months...He's not a healthy man so he does require a lot of medication. We talked to somebody at the Department of Social Services about getting Medicaid for him so that we didn't have to fork out the money for his medication. They weren't willing to help us. We talked to them about giving us food stamps. They told us that because of our previous income, we were unable to qualify for food stamps. So I didn't know what else to do" (Interview 6-17-85).

Marilyn.

Background

"Marilyn is a very attractive older white woman with grey hair, a medium sized build, and a ready smile. I later learned that Marilyn is forty-eight years old, her father died only two days ago, and she is in a lot of pain as a result of losing him. He was a very important figure in her life. In spite of her grief she said she had no choice but to attend class because she must fulfill her obligation to the Court" (Fieldnotes, 7-25-85).

Marilyn grew up in a small Michigan community that is well known for its conservative, religious atmosphere. She described her father as a prominent figure in this community, a man who worked hard and made a name for himself.

"My father always believed in achievement. His younger brother was given the money to go to school. Dad wasn't. His brother became Vice-President of a large corporation and had a big job, a big desk, a big important position. Dad always looked up to his younger brother simply because he had attained and achieved what my father felt he didn't. My dad had his own business and was a very wealthy man; he dressed my mom very well. But it was just too hard working two jobs and my mother working one job just to survive for us kids and the last few years it was terribly hard to get him to enjoy some of that. He was always wrapped up in doing for others. He volunteered his time not only in this community but in other communities, volunteering his time because he felt so needed when he was doing that. The people that came to the memorial service talked about the way he had helped them. He was not wrapped up in how big a man he was; he was always doing for others" (Interview 8-15-85).

Marilyn talked about the difficulty she experienced in going through a divorce several years ago:

"It was my first marriage that was in error; we did not have a good relationship, and things had to change. I had to get out, away from it to grow, and it didn't matter how hard either of us tried, we weren't good for each other. I can see where having stayed in it for whatever reasons we thought at the time--the church doesn't sanction divorce, the parents can't live through it, and all the other excuses that you give for not taking a positive action--doesn't help your growth...I finally realized that we were going nowhere. The verbal abuse, the struggling, the fighting, the nowhere existence. There was no growth personally or as a couple. You waste so much energy...We'd gone through two years of counseling, trying to learn to live with each other in the situation and grow together. It didn't work. But there's no way someone else can tell you...You have to make up your mind yourself... I had to give up quite a bit. You start out striving together so you obtain a house, furniture, and material things, but if the relationship is going nowhere and the tension and stress begin to build, you finally decide it's not worth it. I had tremendous migraine headaches. I could not stand the tension and stress and it wasn't physical, beating type thing that I experienced--maybe that would have been easier...My son came along a year and a half after we were married. My ex-husband was terribly threatened by my aggressive, achieving nature. He couldn't hold a job and was terribly frightened by my outgoing, gregarious nature. He wanted nothing more than to go sit in a room by himself with a book. How we ever got together I don't know. We were just tremendously different, opposite people. I was really interested, enamored by his brain and his intellect. But he could literally be a monster at times. He couldn't even handle having people come over for coffee after church...I was putting him through school...When he finally did get his Master's in teaching, he didn't stay teaching. They wouldn't allow him to stay teaching where he was teaching because of his method of teaching. He used different techniques, we'll say, like scare tactics and he was fired. As a matter of fact he had seven or eight jobs in five years and now, finally, he seems to have found a nitch...It was so hard because divorce just wasn't heard of in my family...The church doesn't let you out, you know. They just don't recognize that you have a problem...The church doesn't recognize it as a mistake...My parents were very supportive but then dad and mom have always been very, very supportive. They didn't like that I was divorced, but they were more concerned about now she's got a son. How is she going to take care of him? How is she going to see after his welfare and his well-being. After you go through awhile of having to make your own way and you see that you can make it, make it through the bills and everything else by paying this one this month and waiting on this one until next month, you realize you do grow stronger and you see where you've been and other things become easier...Some of my neighbors said I had done wrong as is usually the case. The women in

the church can be very protective of their own husbands and wouldn't invite me to their homes except for two couples that just really made me feel at home. They'll always be there for me" (Interview 8-15-85).

Marilyn is currently involved in a second marriage. Because of her offense, Marilyn lost a very good job with a major corporation. She talked about the effect the loss of a second income has had on her marriage:

"My husband is talking about retirement in three years and certainly it's easier on two incomes. I was making more than he was and it's hard not to have my income. However, this whole thing has seemed to make my marriage stronger simply because now he is the bread winner, and even though he seems to be responding well most of the time, he still has his days when he is concerned about money. I would like very much to find something that we could go into together" (Interview 8-15-85).

At a later interview Marilyn expressed additional concern about the effect the loss of her income was having on her husband:

"Tom's (pseudonym) a very complicated person as we all are, but he has his days where he's really excited and interested in the new me, but on the other hand, his job is kind of threatened... He's not all that secure in his job. So he has to worry about money and if I don't go back to work, if I don't find some kind of employment, you know...I see the life style we have--the tennis clubs, the golf clubs, the going on trips that we're able to do because of the type salary we had. I don't see him giving that up easily but there's no choice right now and he's not really sure of what I'm going to do with my life...I'm hoping that at least right now he will take time to assimilate the changes and then say that we do have common interests and things will work out. He's not sure if there will be enough there, enough common ground and enough common interests that we can share" (Interview 8-29-85).

Because of a company policy that any employee who is caught stealing in any situation must be released, Marilyn lost an administrative position with a large corporation. She discussed her feelings about this:

"Basically, I first felt mistreated. I kept thinking, 'This can't be happening to me.' I've done a good job with that company. Everyone there has said I've done a great job. I'm an achiever. 'There's nothing wrong, you know, so why don't you back me up? Why can't you see that this is a malfunction, a fluke, it isn't me!' I felt misused, mistreated...You get used to saying, 'Well, it's corporate policy.' The company can't do too much more than what they did do if you look at it from that angle. I don't want the job back...I think I could be in worse trouble if I went back to the job" (Interview 8-15-85).

Offense

As the tears filled Marilyn's eyes, it was obvious she had difficulty talking about her offense:

"Well, it's difficult for me because I feel that in my own instance, I didn't realize what I was doing. I was caught for shoplifting a bottle of vitamins and a small packet of shampoo. I do not remember taking those things. I was in a terrible hurry that Saturday morning. I was as surprised to see them in my purse as the shop owner who knows me, who has known me for the nine years that I have been shopping at that store. The mortification of having to have the police come in, I felt about that time that there had to be a cog that slipped. I have been under a lot of stress and have been getting forgetful, but this has never happened to me and I have never had--I still have trouble seeing myself in that position, so I guess I'm trying to relate that from the standpoint of--this is terribly difficult to talk about...I really have to wonder if I need psychiatric help...I have trouble understanding how this happened. I don't know...I know I went down that aisle first thing. I had to pick up eight items and whether I put them in my purse with my keys...Like I said to the police officer, 'Maybe that's what I did cause I was picking up things.' I didn't have a cart and was just going through and...all I know is the meat man said he saw me put them in my purse. I didn't believe him. I did not believe him and I told him, I said, 'I would never do that.'...I had $45 in my purse...This is the difficult part of it, and I can see where it's going to be a lot harder. I'm either crazy or I'm a thief. It's not a very good choice between the two...There have been times when I have taken not enough money or they've given me back too much, and I told them that and 'cause I know the fellow, I said, 'Charles (pseudonym), one time when your clerk gave me too much money back, I gave it to you. If I were a thief, would I do that?' He said, 'You have them in your purse.' And that's all he said. And then the policeman came and said to me, 'Well, did,'...something to the effect, 'Do you realize that women going through their change have times like this?'...And I was just sitting there and I...(crying)...

Well, maybe I am crazy. Maybe there is something wrong with me...I'm drawing such a blank. It's just as though it never happened. I just have trouble believing that it happened...Once I got to the checkout I was talking to the shop owner because I've always talked to him and then he tapped me on the shoulder as I'm leaving the store and he said, 'You've got something in your purse.' He said, 'I can't believe it.' He said, 'We've been missing a lot of things, but I didn't know it was you.' And I said, 'Charles, I don't know what you're talking about.' He said, 'The meat man saw you put something in your purse.' He opened up my purse and there were the vitamins and the small packet of shampoo. I had them on my list, but I don't remember putting them in my purse. He said, 'We're going to call the police,' and he marched me back to the office. When the police got there, he asked me if I had money for the things. I said, 'Yes, I had money for them. I didn't know that I had taken them.' He said, 'Women go through their change and have problems.' I said, 'I'm not going through my change; as far as I know I'm healthy and strong. I don't have a problem with that. I was in too much of a hurry'" (Interview, 8-2-85).

Jane.

Background

"Jane is an attractive black woman, about 5 feet 7 inches tall, large frame, who is well dressed. She sits with her folded arms resting on the desk top. Her eyes are focused on the student who is speaking. Another student makes a remark causing Jane to smile. A third student comments she is bored with class. Jane doesn't smile and stares at the student...Jane introduces herself to the class as a strong person, a good mother, a good wife, and a person who is always helping others" (Fieldnotes, 1-18-84).

Jane grew up in a metropolitan community in Michigan, the seventh of nine children. She described herself in an interview with the researcher:

"I'm intelligent; I'm high middle class. I live in an $80,000 home, furnished off nicely; I drive Cadillacs; my husband works two jobs and owns his own business...I am the mother of four children--a thirteen year old, a sixteen year old, an eighteen year old, and a nineteen year old" (Interview, 1-25-84).

Jane described her role in her immediate as well as her extended family:

"Everyone depends on me...Everyone brings me the problems - my mother, my husband, my brothers and sisters. I'm the seventh child, but I'm the mother to everyone" (Interview, 2-22-84).

Jane's assessment of her relationship with her mother was not a positive one:

"She's the type that will drain everything out of you. She's always saying she can't do this and she can't do that...She wants my time every five minutes and I've been giving it to her for the last five years... When she became ill, no one else wanted to take care of her, so it was like I had the job..." (Interview, 2-15-84).

Jane expressed her frustration that when she was growing up, her mother functioned only as a 'live-in mother':

"I have this teenager. He's reaching out and I want to be there for him. I was always reaching out, but there wasn't anyone there. I don't care how old you get or how young you are when you reach, someone needs to be there or you sort of lose yourself along the way...I just sort of got lost along the way and my mom...well, I had a live-in mother and father, but she's basically not dear to me" (Interview, 2-22-84).

Jane appeared to have a more positive attitude toward her father:

"My dad got ill and no one else wanted to take care of him. Well, they wouldn't...except to put him in a home...say like Johnson Community Hospital (pseudonym). Well, my dad and I are very close and I knew if he was going to live, I had to be there...so I nursed him back and then he got dependent on me. I would bathe him twice a day - I didn't want him getting bed sores. I would take him out in the sunshine two or three hours a day and just baby him and pamper him" (Interview, 2-15-84).

Jane talked about one of her sisters:

"My sister is in prison for drugs. She's 32. She's always manipulated me...She has a daughter. She'll be 9 years old. I take care of her because my sister doesn't want the responsibility of taking care of her. I don't mind taking care of her kid because I love her dearly. I was taking care of her and twice a month taking her to see her mother because I didn't want her to forget her mother...I was giving my sister clothes and $15 a month for cigarettes and things. I did that for 10 years because she's been in and out of prison. So when she came home in 1981, I sat down and

had a talk with her, 'If you choose to go back into prison, you go on your own; I won't be there for you'" (Interview, 2-15-86).

In a later interview Jane told about a sister who was there for her:

"When I went in to have my radical mastectomy, I was scared. My mother said, 'I can't come to the hospital. My heart's going to stop. I'm not that strong.' She never came to the hospital until 10 days later. My sister flew all the way from California. My sister she's always there for me and I'm always there for her. We're very close, but we just got close when I found out I had cancer and at that point we lost my older sister. I found out I have cancer one day and my sister died the next day. She had seizures. She died having a fourth seizure and it was really hard. Like the world had just caved in on me, 'cause my older sister and I were close, too, but then my sister Sue (pseudonym) and I became close...it was because of my mother. She's always crying. She doesn't feel good. She never has time for anyone else" (Interview, 2-22-85).

Jane elaborated on her health:

"I say I'm in remission; the doctor says,'No,' but I went in last week for my tests...my blood work and x-rays, all the cancer tests with the blood work. The doctor had his nurse call me and tell me he wanted me to come to the office today. I told the nurse I couldn't come because I had class at the community college and she said he really wants to see you. At quarter to six the doctor called, 'I think you should come; it's important!'...So I'm going to go, but I'm scared...I don't have to die from cancer. I could get hit by a car. Every day we don't know what's going to happen" (Interview, 2-22- 84).

The researcher's fieldnotes reflect the follow-up to Jane's visit to the doctor:

"Jane told me she found out last week she has cancer of the blood. The doctors told her she has nine months to a year to live. She said they told her that before she had her mastectomy and she's not ready to give up" (Fieldnotes, 2-29-84).

Jane discussed what it would be like for her husband if in fact she was no longer in remission and the cancer had become active again:

"But he loves me, I know he loves me. I know he'll adjust. He'll find a way to adjust. How he's going to do it I don't know, but I feel he loves me enough to come through. He grew up 20 years overnight when I found out I had cancer. He said, 'O.k., I don't want you taking responsibility of the bills, the budget--I'll take that on.' I'd been trying to get him to take that for 10 years. So he grew up. I think he'll take another step growing...He'll cry. He's always saying, 'You're my life,' and I say, 'Don't say that 'cause you're not my life. I'm not going to die if you're going to die'" (Interview, 2-22-84).

Offense

Jane talked about the night she shoplifted a $2.19 bottle of cold tablets from the store:

"That particular night my husband and I had a discussion with my 17 year old, she's 18 now, and I was really pissed off at the decision he chose to make. At that point I was on my way to the store. And I just took the cold tablets. I said I did it out of anger with him...my husband and I we have a totally different outlook for raising our kids. I will get angry after we have these discussions and the subject is brought up and he makes a wrong decision. Instead of blabbing it out right then in front of the kids I will wait until my husband I get alone to discuss it. I was mad when I left home that night when I was going to the store. So I went and stole the cold tablets instead of buying them. I was thinking, 'Well, I'll get even with him'" (Interview, 1-25-84).

The Program

Background

In determining the need for an educational intervention program through a community based survey conducted in 1974, the College recognized the importance of involving the criminal justice system in designing this program to meet the designated need. Several months were spent working with criminal justice personnel, community representatives, and offenders to design this alternative education program. The program was then institutionalized by integrating it into the

established structure of the community college.

The original intent of the Project Intercept Program was to intercept non-patterned offenders, either pending sentence or on probation, and expose them to supportive educational experiences. If the offender had not previously been involved with the criminal justice system it was hypothesized she or he would experience a great amount of anxiety and would be more receptive to the learning atmosphere of the educational system than the punitive atmosphere of the criminal justice system. This educational situation would focus on learning to conform, hopefully discouraging further involvement with the criminal justice system.

The inception of the program was based on several assumptions as follows:

1. the problem of crime belongs to the community and not just the criminal justice system;
2. systems can work together--specifically the educational system and the criminal justice system;
3. an offender is capable of responding to an educational experience at any age;
4. an offender is amenable to growth and change;
5. if the offender has not previously been involved with the criminal justice system, she or he will be anxious and receptive to learning rather than punishment, and
6. this learning can promote conformity, hopefully discouraging further involvement with the criminal justice system.

The general program goals were:

1. to provide the opportunity for students to develop responsible citizenship by attaining consistency between societal values and the student's behavior;
2. to provide students with a positive educational experience and encourage them to remain involved in the educational process, and
3. to reduce the probability of reinvolvement with the courts and to reduce self-defeating behavior.

The specific program goals were:

1. to help the person learn more about himself or herself;
2. to provide skills for growth and change;
3. to provide a setting of trust and support;
4. to encourage the trial of new attitudes and behaviors;
5. to provide a positive educational experience;
6. to increase awareness of individual responsibility, and
7. to increase awareness of the seriousness of the offense.

The general philosophy of the program was based on the following:

1. instructors in the traditional educational models are primarily interested in intellectual enrichment for the students. The instructors in this program are interested in teaching new attitudes and behaviors which the individual can apply to solve present and future problems;
2. students who are able to examine their behavior through a non-threatening and confidential approach can change it;
3. both individual and group involvement are important to this process, and
4. by examining attitudes and behaviors both individually and in a group situation, offenders will realize the seriousness of their offenses, will learn to assume responsibility, and thus, as individuals, will engage in more conforming behaviors (Oldt, 1980).

The Project Intercept Program has received recognition at the federal, state, and local levels. In 1980 the program concept was presented at the American Association of Community and Junior College National Conference in San Francisco. An article about the program appeared in the "Idea" section of The Chronicle of Higher Education (1981). The Michigan Department of Education recognized this alternative education program for offenders as a model program for the state. Locally, the program has gained

credibility and popularity as a community resource for the criminal justice system. This program allows offenders to move through the court system at a more rapid pace, saving the courts time and saving money for both the courts and the taxpayers.

The effectiveness of this program has been based primarily on assumptions as discovered by this researcher through a preliminary study conducted January through March, 1984, and as the Project Intercept Director from 1976-1979. Students assume they have benefitted from this educational experience as evidenced by the evaluations they complete at the end of their involvement in the program. Instructors assume success based on responses the offenders make in class as well as observable changes in some of the students' behaviors and appearances. Court personnel assume the program is making a difference because they claim they do not see many of their referrals who complete Project Intercept return through the courts' "revolving door." Based on these assertions that this alternative education program is effective, there was a need to understand how these assertions are formed and what is happening in this particular setting with this particular population.

The Teachers and the Students

The teachers in the program consist of a core group of ten men and women. All ten work part-time in the program, most having been involved for at least five years. Many of the teachers have a master's degree in counseling or social

work, have worked extensively with offenders, and are employed full-time in other positions.

The students in the program are misdemeanant offenders who have been referred to the program by the district courts. These students attend special classes at Knox Community College once a week for a ten week period. If these students/offenders successfully complete these classes, they can earn time off probation or in some cases have charges dismissed. For the past seven years over 300 students a year have completed the Project Intercept Program. Table 1 presents statistical information about the students.

TABLE 1

Project Intercept Student Information

1983 through 1985

Sex	
Male	50%
Female	50%
Age	
17-24 years old	60%
Over 24 years old	40%
Employment Status	
Employed	50%
Unemployed	50%
Marital Status	
Single	70%
Married or Other	30%
Education	
Non High School Graduate	40%
High School Graduate or Post Secondary	60%
Ethnic Background	
White	65%
Minority	35%

The Classroom

The Project Intercept students are involved in the classroom two hours a week over a ten week period. There are approximately twelve students in a class. The students are expected to attend class and be on time, have a positive attitude, participate in class session activities, and be responsible for completing class requirements. The teachers are expected to lead both group and individual activities appropriate to program goals; primarily through group interaction, guide students through a process of involvement, exploration, understanding, and action; evaluate students' progress and report to the referring court; and if appropriate, refer students to other educational and/or community programs.

The physical arrangement of the classroom is important. The tablet-arm chairs are arranged in a circle in the classroom. This seating arrangement is important to indicate among other things that all the participants, including the instructor, are equal as indicated in Figure 4.

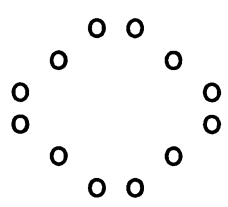


Figure 4

Seating Arrangement

A manual was written as a resource for achieving program goals. This manual suggests the following outline for classroom content:

Orientation/Expectations
Values clarification
Self assessment
Behavioral patterns and consequences
Discussion of offense
Setting goals
Achieving goals
    1. Determine plan of action
    2. Implement plan of action
Final assessment (Oldt, 1980).

Evaluation

The on-going evaluation process involves two parts - the teacher evaluating the student and the student evaluating his or her involvement in the program. The teacher is required to submit a written evaluation of each student to the referring court. This evaluation, depending on its content, can result in positive or negative court imposed consequences for the student. The positive consequences include receiving a shortened time on probation or having charges dismissed. The negative consequences include additional time on probation or in the extreme time in jail. Over eighty percent of the students completing the program receive a recommendation for maximum benefits, resulting in positive consequences for the students.

The students anonymously complete an evaluation form about their involvement in the program. The majority of the students evaluate the program in positive terms. Examples of student comments from past evaluations include the following:

"By learning to assume responsibility I am free to make my own decisions."

"It's not a punishment; it's more to help you understand your values and problems."

"Learning to assume responsibility makes me somebody."

"In this class I have gained respect for the law and what it stands for."

"I now realize that I cannot have justice and freedom unless I am honest with myself and other people."

(Written comments from student evaluation forms)

Benefits

The program was designed to provide benefits for four segments - the offenders/students, the courts, the college, and the community. The students benefit by learning to develop a better sense of reality, make better judgments, assume responsibility, and engage in more conforming behaviors. The courts benefit because the program provides another community resource for offenders. The college becomes more visible, especially to particular segments of the community and demonstrates that education can be used in a creative and flexible manner. The community benefits if the students involved in Project Intercept become more productive members of society.

The Research Site

The particular research site for this study involved five Project Intercept classes held in classrooms at Knox Community College. Initially 59 students referred by the district courts were enrolled in the five classes. The

information in Table 2, Profile of Students, presents a profile on these fifty nine students.

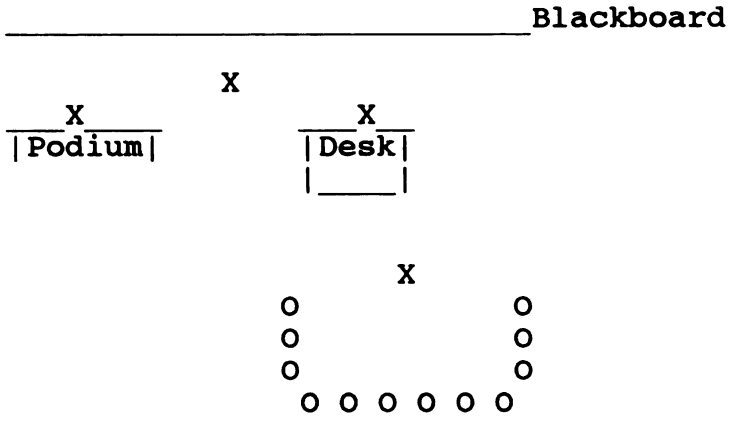
TABLE 2

Profile of Subjects

Age	
17 to 24 years old	63% = 37 students
Over 24 years old	37% = 22 students
Ethnic Background	
White	75% = 44 students
Minority	25% = 15 students
Sex	
Male	54% = 32 students
Female	46% = 27 students
Predominant Offense	
Shoplifting	

The two teachers observed in this study have taught in the program for over six years. One of the teachers is currently the program director. Both are considered "effective teachers" by court personnel. Both have developed a format different from the original program design. For example, they both use an interactive communication process, focusing on one student at a time. The students in the study referred to this as the "hot seat" approach.

In two of the classes the program director, as the teacher, physically separated herself from the students. She stood behind a desk or podium, by the blackboard, or in front of the class as indicated in Figure 5.



Legend:
X = Various Teacher
Locations
O = Student Locations

Figure 5

Teacher's Locations

In the third class taught by the program director and in the two classes taught by the other instructor, both seated themselves in a circle with the students as indicated in Figure 6.

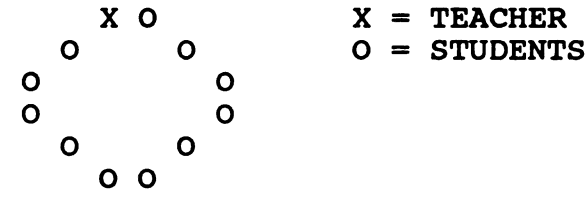


Figure 6

Seating Arrangement

Other areas in which the two teachers digressed from the original program design were course content and the amount of time allocated for classroom activities. From the standpoint

of content both of these teachers focused almost exclusively on the topics of choice, change, control, and consequences. They often referred to the students' offenses and the power of the court. Approximately sixty five percent of the class time the teachers spent interacting with one student at a time, twenty percent of the class time was spent in discussions between the teacher and the students, and the remaining fifteen percent of the time the students were involved in group activities.

Summary

This study includes data collected during a preliminary study conducted by the researcher from January through March, 1984, and data collected during the main study conducted May through October, 1985, as well as follow-up interviews conducted in June, 1986. The researcher observed 59 students and two instructors. Because the focus of the study was examining what was happening in the classroom setting from the students' perspectives, the time spent in the natural setting was of critical importance as a direct source of data.

The Project Intercept Program, the focus of this study, is affiliated with Knox Community College, a two year institution located in the center of Knoxville, a large metropolitan area. The college's student population consists of approximately 5,000 full-time students and 5,300 part-time students. More than 14,000 other individuals are served in

Community Service programs, such as Project Intercept.

Court personnel from six misdemeanant courts refer adult offenders to the Project Intercept Program. By using community resources, the probation officers are able to manage their bulging caseloads.

Most of the 59 subjects of this study were first offender shoplifters with no prior offenses. Various qualitative and quantitative measures, including participant observation, interviews, surveys, and personal documents were used by the researcher in studying the subjects.

With the assistance of the Program Director and two probation officers the researcher, using the criteria of sex; age; and the ability to express thoughts and feelings, identified three subjects who served as key informants for the study. In order to provide the readers with a better understanding of the program participants, the researcher presented a profile of these three key informants who were given the pseudonyms of Katie, Marilyn, and Jane.

Katie, one of eight children, grew up in a very small rural community in northern Michigan. Her childhood was one of pleasure and pain, of sufficiency and scarcity, of love and rejection.

Katie had a volatile relationship with her father whom she labeled an alcoholic. Katie described her mother as a very strong woman whom she respected, but when Katie's mother and father divorced, Katie chose to live with her father.

Presently Katie is married and the mother of a fourteen

month old daughter. She supplements her husband's income by babysitting other people's children. Katie and her husband are under tremendous financial pressure as a result of owing the IRS $5,000 in back taxes that, according to Katie, are really owed by her father-in-law.

Katie's offense was shoplifting meat, specifically a package of hamburger and a package of pork, in order to feed her family. After an unsuccessful attempt at getting food stamps for the family, Katie's explanation was, "I didn't know what else to do" (Interview, 6-17-85).

Marilyn grew up in a small conservative community. Her father, who just recently died, was a very important figure in her life. His focus on achievement served as a role model for Marilyn.

Marilyn had experienced several disappointments in her life, including a divorce from the father of her son. Her anger over the stigma attached to divorcees in her small conservative community was still evident even though the divorce had occurred several years prior.

Marilyn was experiencing difficulties in her second marriage as a result of losing her job. Because of a company policy that any employee who is caught stealing under any circumstances must be released, Marilyn lost an administrative position with a large corporation.

Marilyn still does not remember putting the vitamins and the shampoo in her purse. The police officer inferred she was having problems as a result of her "change," but Marilyn

responded, "I'm not going through my change; as far as I know I'm healthy and strong. I don't have a problem with that. I was in too much of a hurry" (Interview, 8-2-85).

Jane grew up in a metropolitan community in Michigan, the seventh of nine children. Her relationship with her mother was not perceived as a positive one. Jane felt her mother, as well as other members of her family, depended on her too much.

Jane was fighting what seemed to be a losing battle with cancer. An earlier diagnosis of remission was rescinded by Jane's physician while Jane was participating in this study.

Jane's offense was shoplifting a $2.19 bottle of cold tablets. She was angry with her husband and felt the theft of the cold tablets was a way of getting even with him.

The original intent of the Project Intercept Program was to intercept non-patterned offenders, either pending sentence or on probation, and to expose them to supportive educational experiences. These educational experiences were intended to focus on learning to conform, hopefully discouraging further involvement with the criminal justice system.

Even though the Project Intercept Program has received federal, state, and local recognition, the effectiveness of the program has been based primarily on assumptions. The researcher hopes this study will provide an understanding of what is happening in this particular setting with this particular population.

Over 300 students a year complete the Project Intercept Program which consists of students meeting two hours a week over a ten week period. The on-going evaluation process involves two parts--the teacher evaluating the student and the student evaluating his or her involvement in the program.

The program was designed to provide benefits for four segments--the offenders/students, the courts, the college, and the community. The students benefit by learning more conforming behaviors; the courts benefit by having access to another community resource; the college benefits by providing service to a neglected segment of the community; and the community benefits if the offenders become more productive members of society.

The particular research site for this study was comprised of five Project Intercept classes involving fifty nine students and two teachers. The two teachers digressed from the original program design in course content, in the amount of time allocated for classroom activities, and in the manner in which they conducted the classroom procedures.

CHAPTER FIVE

Presentation of the Findings

The Rehearsal

The Theater as Metaphor

Using the theater as a metaphor for real-life situations is a common practice among authors, sociologists, psychologists, and educators. Shakespeare noted the similarities in his famous quote:

> All the world's a stage
> And all the men and women merely players:
> They have their exits and entrances:
> (W. Shakespeare, As You Like It, Act II, Scene 7)

Sean O'Casey compared man's life to a career in the theater, "One man in his time plays many parts--some of them grossly under rehearsed" (Biddle, 1979, p. 55). This researcher chose to use the metaphor of the theater as a framework for presenting the findings of this study because of the similarities between what occurs in a stage production and what occurs in this alternative education program. For example, the subjects of this study were like actors who were cast in a variety of roles--some familiar and some unfamiliar. They learned to ad-lib, improvise, and rehearse their parts in order to perform in the drama. Many succeeded in becoming "competent actors" in the setting. This competency included knowing when to recite lines, which lines to recite, where to move on stage, how to interact with the

others who were on stage; in essence, how to demonstrate characteristic behaviors for their own roles as well as how to complement the other parts being played.

The director of this production was the teacher who allocated parts, corrected improper appearances, provided stage directions and assisted the actors in learning their lines. In addition to being the director, the teacher also played an actual part in the production she directed. Her role was that of the heroine, for as a representative of the educational system, she portrayed the gatekeeper of conformity, attempting to resocialize those who had deviated from the norms of society.

The plot of this drama was a familiar one--right vs. wrong, good vs. bad. The subjects of this study engaged in behavioral acts judged to be deviant by society. Because of this, these offenders/students were subject to punishment by the courts and were sentenced to learn more appropriate behavior. In order to carry out this sentence, the courts referred the offenders/students to an alternative education program at the college where the subjects were exposed to teachers whose roles were to assist in the subject's resocialization process. The marquee for this real-life drama might read as follows:

Welcome to the Theater of Life
Tonight's production, THE CASE FOR CONFORMITY
was written by Society hundreds of years ago.
The hero of this drama is CONFORMITY portrayed
by both the Court System and the Educational System.
The role of DEVIANCE, the villain, is performed by
59 adult offenders/students.

Assertions

The findings of this study are presented in the form of assertions. According to Spradley (1980), assertions are cultural themes or elements in a complex pattern that constitute a social situation and give meaning to this situation. In discovering the assertions of this particular study the researcher engaged in a continuous collection and analysis of the data. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) liken this process to a funnel. Initially data were widely collected to get a broad understanding of the parameters of the setting, the subjects, and the issues. Through a "dialogue with the fieldnotes," guided by the research questions, the researcher began to organize the data, break it into manageable units, synthesize it, search for patterns, and discover what was important and what needed to be learned (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). This analysis of the data led to the researcher's discovery of discernible categories. This discovery of categories was facilitated by the development of a coding system based primarily on patterns of behaviors, events, perspectives, and social structure. By coding the data, identifying and interpreting the patterns, and eliminating the discrepant cases, the researcher was able to formulate some working hypotheses. The testing of these working hypotheses with the participants then became the focus of future observation sessions, thus narrowing the scope of the data collection. Through repeated testing, guided by the researcher asking, "What is that I do not yet know?" (Bogdan

and Biklen, 1982, p. 149), these working hypotheses were modified, refined, or eliminated. In addition, new hypotheses emerged and were repeatedly tested. The final conclusions were then translated into concepts which became the assertions of the study.

According to Erickson, "...what qualitative research does best and most essentially is to describe key incidents in functionally relevant descriptive terms and place them in some relation to the wider social context, using the key incident as a concrete instance of the workings of abstract principle of social organization" (p. 61). These key incidents and the interpretations of these incidents together constitute the researcher's "working theoretical" model of social organization in the setting (Erickson, 1977).

Glaser and Strauss (1973) have labeled theory developed in this described manner, that is, from the bottom up, from collected data that are interconnected, grounded theory. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) compare this process to a puzzle that takes shape as the parts are collected and examined. This researcher collected the data, examined the data, studied the relationships, linkages, and patterns and in time was able to fit the pieces into the puzzle. In conducting this study, the researcher discovered ten assertions that constitute the theoretical model of social organization, thus, giving meaning to what was occurring in this setting. These assertions are intended to be limited in their application to this particular research site.

Description and Interpretation

The ten assertions that represent the findings of this study are first presented as they relate to the research questions. Six of the assertions are then individually described and interpreted in Chapter V with the remaining four assertions individually described and interpreted in Chapter VI. The six assertions presented in Chapter V are entitled "The Rehearsal" because they relate to events that occurred early in the students' involvement with the program. At this stage the student was still rehearsing his or her part and learning such things as what is happening in the setting, what do these happenings mean, and what do I, the student, have to know in order to function in this context.

Research Questions and Assertions

Question: How does the offender/student perceive his or her initial involvement with the court system?
Assertion: The offender/student perceives his or her initial involvement with the court system as a negative experience.

Question: What is the student's perception of the alternative education program for offenders prior to participation in the setting?
Assertion: Prior to participation in the program the students perceive the alternative education program for offenders will focus on punishment.
Assertion: Initially the student sees himself or herself as being different from the other participants in the setting.

Question: How do the students define and interpret their role in this setting?
Assertion: Students learn appropriate role behavior for this setting primarily from the teacher.
Assertion: The students perceive appropriate role behavior is "to participate."
Assertion: Appropriate role behavior includes learning to talk like the teacher.

Question: What happens in the classroom activities?
Assertion: The teacher focuses primarily on "change," "control," and "choice" which form the basis for classroom activities.

Question: What is the predominant nature of communication between the teacher and the students?
Assertion: The teacher's predominant communication pattern is to ask questions in order to elicit student responses.

Question: From the students' perspectives what are some of the consequences of involvement in the program?
Assertion: The students perceive they have more internal control in their daily lives as a result of participating in the program.

The last assertion relates to two of the questions.

Question: From the students' perspectives what are some of the consequences of involvement in the program?
Question: Upon completion of the program what are the students' perceptions of the teacher?
Assertion: The students perceive they benefit from their involvement in the program and their relationship with the teacher.

Being Cast in the Role

THE OFFENDER/STUDENT PERCEIVES HIS OR HER INITIAL INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COURT SYSTEM AS A NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE.

According to Biddle and Thomas (1966), when an individual's action corresponds with that which is prescribed by a norm or demand, it is commonly referred to as a "conforming performance" (p. 39). When the person's behavior does not comply with the norm or demand, it is considered a deviant performance, one that violates expectations that are structured within a given social system. According to Goffman (1959), deviance, usually in rather mild forms, exists in everybody's everyday life. The term deviance

denotes a broad spectrum of acts that can result in consequences of ridicule, indignation, sarcasm, official condemnation, and punishment. These acts can range from the outlandish to the intolerable, and a society displays its major values by indicating what behavior is considered deviant and how deviant it is considered.

When an individual commits an offense, such as shoplifting, she or he engages in behavior that is outside the norm. Because this behavior does not comply with the established standards, this individual, in essence, is writing his or her own script or rules of conduct. However, once this individual is apprehended and becomes involved with the criminal justice system, the script is no longer an original; now the individual is cast in the role of deviant or offender, relinquishing control and taking directions from others.

Involvement with the criminal justice system for most shoplifters, including the subjects of this study, usually begins with a police or security office approaching a suspect as she or he is leaving the premises and asking him or her to accompany the officer to the store's Security Office. Once there the suspect is ordered to reveal all possessions. An excerpt from The Booster and the Snitch (Cameron, 1964) describes this process, "Pockets and pocketbooks are thoroughly examined. All papers, letters, tickets, bills, etc., are read in detail in spite of considerable protest from the arrested person. Each person is made to explain

everything he has with him" (pp. 161 and 162). The shoplifted items are then identified and the guilty party is issued a summons to appear in court. In the case of other misdemeanant offenses this apprehension process can be as dramatic as the police pounding on the door of the suspect's home, a high speed chase in an automobile, a spotlight shining in the suspect's face; or it can be as mundane as the suspect receiving a letter in the mail informing him or her to appear in court. Whatever the process almost all apprehended suspects are ordered to appear in court.

The court appearance usually involves being fingerprinted and photographed for the police files. It also involves appearing before a judge. The following is from a sheet of instructions handed to defendants when they report for their court appearance at one of the District Courts:

"You are here today for your court arraignment. An arraignment means you will appear before a judge and plead either guilty or not guilty to the offense you are accused of committing.

"Before you see the judge you must complete the pre-arraignment process.

"First, you will be told when to go to the Identification Bureau where a police officer will take your fingerprints and picture and fill out certain forms required by the state. This process is necessary any time a person is accused of a criminal offense. If you are found not guilty of the crime you are accused of, you may request the return of your fingerprints.

"After you are finished in the Identification Bureau, you should have a seat in the hallway outside the court. As soon as possible you will be seen by one of the court's probation officers who must gather certain information for the court before your arraignment...This entire process is complex and will take one to three hours...We would urge you to cancel other appointments this morning since it is unlikely the process will move very quickly" (Arents, 1983, p. 2).

The researcher's impressions of the courtroom experience are reflected in the following fieldnotes:

"As I enter the courtroom I am struck by the similarities between this setting and the sanctuary of a church. A large raised podium is located in the front of the room. The rows of seats or pews for courtroom participants occupy the back portion of the room. There is a noticeable open space between the pews and the podium. A police officer sits in the jury box and a court clerk sits at a desk by the front podium. As the judge, wearing his flowing black robe, enters the courtroom by a side door, the clerk tells all those in the courtroom to rise. Once the judge is seated we are allowed to be seated. All eyes are focused on the imposing figure behind the podium. The judge conveys his authority with his tone of voice, his solemn demeanor, the pounding of his gavel, and the formal, legal language he uses as he addresses each case.

"When an individual's name is called she or he rises from his or her seat, steps to the center of the open space and stands, looking up at the judge. After the reading of the charges, the judge then asks the defendant how he or she wants to plead. If the plea is guilty, the judge sometimes orders the defendant to "tell what happened in your own words." Frequently there is a deafening silence before the person begins. One senses this truly is a day of reckoning" (Fieldnotes, 6-10-85).

When asked their perception of this court involvement, the offenders/students described it as a negative experience. The following comments from students who were interviewed by the researcher document these feelings:

> "I was scared out of my mind, you know. I didn't know what was going to happen to me, you know. Like maybe they were going to take me to jail or something like that" (Interview, 9-26-85).
>
> "It feels strange. It feels like a place I really don't want to be. It makes me feel like I'm getting into some serious big problems and makes me think about going off to jail and being locked up forever" (Interview, 7-29-85).
>
> "It was terrible...Oh, I felt real...like I didn't belong there and I just...I don't do these type of things anyway. I don't belong with all these criminals or need to be classified as that. I mean you are humiliated. I try not to think about it" (Interview, 8-12-85).

"I was nervous. I had never been to a courtroom. I didn't know how to handle it" (Interview, 8-5-85).

"To be frank it sucks...Everybody knowing that you're there because you did something wrong and there's no way to hide it" (Interview, 9-26-85).

"I was scared...The most scariest part was when they took the fingerprints and the pictures. That was the scariest" (Interview, 9-19-85).

"It's kind of like an experience, I think. They tell me what to do. They push me around" (Interview, 8-5-85).

"Let me tell you when I went there if I could have had a heart attack, I would have been the happiest person on God's earth because I was so panicky and so nervous and so upset that the fact I didn't have one is next to a miracle. I was petrified. I had never been in a court before...I just didn't know how to act" (Interview, 8-12-86).

Of the 59 offenders/students who began the program seven dropped out before the researcher was able to determine their perceptions. Of the remaining 52 the researcher found no discrepant cases.

An interpretation of these negative feelings is offered in studies conducted by Cameron (1964), Kraut (1976), El-Dirghami (1974), and Hiew (1981). These researchers found in their studies about shoplifters that most people who shoplift believe they will not get caught. In fact, those people who shoplift the most see the least amount of risks associated with it. An assumption is repeated performances without being caught reinforces a belief in invulnerability to apprehension. It was found that even if the shoplifter believed she or he would be caught, she or he perceived the consequences or sanctions imposed would be insignificant. In addition, it was discovered that most shoplifters do not

consider themselves as thieves, believe that everyone else is shoplifting, and feel that most people do not consider shoplifting a crime.

Apprehension changes most of these beliefs about other people and about the shoplifter himself or herself. According to Kraut (1976), "Apprehension exposes the shoplifter to unanticipated disapproval from family and employer and provides alternative definitions of the self and shoplifting and new information about the risks associated with it. At the very least, getting caught transforms what may have over time become a habitual and nonreflective action into a deliberate and self-conscious one. Apprehended shoplifters can no longer just shoplift; they have to think about it again" (p. 359).

Apprehension jolts the offender into a reality that has always existed but has previously been denied. Cameron (1964) described the reactions of a female shoplifter after apprehension, "'This is a nightmare,' said one woman pilferer (shoplifter) who had been formally charged with stealing an expensive handbag. 'It can't be happening to me! Why, oh why can't I wake up and find that it isn't so,' she cried later as she waited at a store exit, accompanied by a city and a store policeman...'Whatever will I do? Please make it go away,' she pleaded with the officer. 'I'll be disgraced forever. I can never look anyone in the face again'" (p. 163).

Not only does apprehension alter the offender's belief

system but it also projects him or her into a wholly unfamiliar legal system which is obviously frightening and unexpected. Watching a courtroom scene on television provides no reference for actually portraying the role of a defendant in real life. To paraphrase the descriptors used by the subjects of this study, "It was strange; it was terrible; it was humiliating; it was scary."

The effects of apprehension as well as the association with the court system may explain why prior to participation in the alternative education program the offenders/students perceive the Project Intercept Program will focus on punishment.

Unsure of the Script

PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR OFFENDERS WILL FOCUS ON PUNISHMENT.

The subjects of this study were cast in their role as offenders based on their deviant performance. Performing as a defendant in the courtroom presented its difficulties, but then the judge ordered them to accept the part of participants in the Project Intercept Program. There was a lapse of time between the casting and actual performance in the new role. Often when an individual is projected into an unfamiliar role, she or he tries to anticipate how the scene will be played and in doing so hypothesizes what the script will be like. At times this hypothesized script is accurate

and at times it is not. During various interviews students were asked what they anticipated would happen in the classroom prior to their actual participation in the setting. Their responses illustrate their hypothesized scripts which after participation the subjects discovered were not accurate.

> "I thought we were going to meet a great big police woman and we were really going to get it" (Interview, 9-19-85).
>
> "I thought it would be lecture time, you know, like they tell you what you did was wrong, you know. I was expecting basically a lecture to tell you why it's wrong and what effect it has" (Interview 9-26-85).
>
> "I wasn't sure. I thought we'd talk about shoplifting and how bad it is. I thought they'd tell us how bad we are" (Interview 7-29-85).
>
> "I don't know. I thought it wasn't going to be so psychological. I thought it was going to be more punishment" (Interview 8-5-85).
>
> "I didn't think it was going to be enjoyable at all... I thought they were just going to try to make us feel that it was wrong, you know, and not to shoplift anymore but not in a good way" (Interview 8-5-85).
>
> "I thought it would be more the teacher getting down on us for what we did. Make us feel really bad about ourselves or something" (Interview 8-12-85)
>
> "I thought it was just going to be a lady who stands in front of the class and just tells us we're wrong and we didn't do the right thing. Just yells at us and stuff and says we're wrong" (Interview 8-5-85).

Of the 59 students who began the program seven dropped out before the researcher was able to determine their initial perceptions. Of the remaining 52 there were seven discrepant cases. Three of these cases said they had friends who had previously participated in the program and told them what to expect. "I already knew what it would be like because I had

a friend who took the class and told me what to expect" (Interview, 2-28-84). Two of the cases were women who had talked with their probation officers. One of the two stated she knew what to expect because her probation officer let her read a newspaper article about the program, talked with her at length about what to expect, who would be involved, and what would happen in class (Interview 2-28-84). The other woman said she also talked with her probation officer who told her the students would primarily watch movies in class, "When I started, I was told it was going to be basically movies. I think my probation officer told me that because I was fearful what it was about, and she said movies" (Interview 9-19-85). The remaining two discrepant cases stated they thought the class would be boring and a waste of time. "I thought the class would be boring, a waste of time. I thought the teacher would be real flaky" (9-26-85). Four out of the seven discrepant cases indicate that prior information about the Project Intercept Program promotes a more realistic view of what to expect. Without the prior information the majority of the students anticipate the program will focus on punishment.

One interpretation of the offenders'/students' expectation that the program will focus on punishment relates to the manner in which these individuals are referred to the program. Offenders/students are usually sentenced to participate in the Project Intercept Program by the judge. Therefore, it stands to reason the individual will perceive

the program is an extension of this court of law that upholds punishment for those who break the law. According to B.F. Skinner (1953), a law usually has two important features. In the first place, it specifies behavior and in the second place, it specifies or implies a consequence, usually punishment. By his definition "a law is a rule of conduct in the sense that it specifies the consequences of certain actions which in turn 'rule' behavior" (Biddle and Thomas, eds., 1966, p. 322). Therefore, when a person breaks a law, she or he has been socialized to expect a consequence, which is usually punishment.

Kraut, in his study of shoplifters, offered additional information, "Getting caught shakes up the shoplifter's belief system. First, as one would expect, apprehension increased the risks a shoplifter saw associated with shoplifting; it makes the shoplifter aware of risks which were always present. While he or she may have been sensitive to them when stealing began, over time they get ignored or suppressed...In follow-up interviews, several shoplifters mentioned that following apprehension they became sensitive to the possibility they were watched and to the ways their actions could be interpreted by anyone who suspected them of stealing. For example, in order to allay potential suspicion, even when they had no intention of stealing, they would conspicuously leave a parcel in an open bag with a cashier rather than carry it through the store. During rainy weather they would wear their raincoats rather than fold them

over their arms. In a literal sense, apprehension caused these respondents to see themselves from the standpoint of others, in this case, suspicious others" (pp. 365 and 366). If apprehension forces the offenders to see themselves from the standpoint of others, this perception more than likely involves knowing others expect them to be punished for the transgression. Evidently the offenders internalize this expectation of punishment.

Cameron (1964) believed shoplifters act as children "would if they could" (p. 154). According to Maslow and Mittlemann (1941), "The objects stolen are either not of much use to these individuals, or they do not have to be obtained through theft...Sometimes a person steals objects which have a sexual significance..." (Cameron, 1964, p. 155). In a recent article in The Grand Rapids Press entitled "Some Elderly Suddenly Turn to Shoplifting," Dr. Philip Boswell of Miami Beach stated, "Stealing as a psychological issue is usually seen as due to feelings of deprivation in human relationships and as a compensatory mechanism - someone is giving them a gift - or as an angry gesture - if you won't give it to me, I'll take it." In this same article Dr. Lenore S. Powell, an assistant professor at the College of New Rochelle and a psychoanalyst specializing in gerontology, felt that on another level the elderly may be shoplifting because they want to be caught or at least noticed. "Part of the problem of being old is being discarded by society. Research shows that older people go to physicians not so much

because there's anything wrong with them, but because they're lonely." For older people stealing may be a way of getting attention. If this is true, punishment is a way of receiving attention.

Even though the offenders/students anticipate the program will focus on punishment, initially they do not perceive they will be like any of the other participants in the program.

A Reluctance to Accept the Part

INITIALLY THE STUDENT SEES HIMSELF OR HERSELF AS BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE SETTING.

The subjects of this study were cast in the role of deviant based on their deviant performance of shoplifting. Being cast in the role and accepting the part are two different things. For example, Goffman (1959) distinguished between a deviant act and a deviant identity. One can commit a deviant act but not accept the corresponding deviant identity. According to Gregory P. Stone (1962), "identity is the substantive dimension of the self...identity establishes what and where the person is in social terms...when one has identity, he is situated--that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations. One's identity is established when others place him as a social object by assigning the same words of identity that he appropriates for himself or announces" (Stone and Farberman, 1970, p. 399).

The research indicates initially the subjects of this study refused to redefine their self concepts to include the deviant identity. They did, however, impose this deviant identity on the other offenders beginning the Project Intercept Program. Whatever deviant act the offender committed, she or he entered the setting feeling she or he was different from the others who were there and his or her crime was not as significant as the others. The individual applied the negative stereotype of offenders to the others in the setting but not to himself or herself.

The researcher's fieldnotes indicate that during the first session in two different classes very little informal interaction occurred among the students.

"There are twelve students in the classroom - five women and seven men. They are sitting at desks which are arranged in rows. Most students have at least one desk between them and the next student. Each person is sitting quietly at his or her desk appearing to avoid eye contact and conversation with anyone. As I look around, I make eye contact with one person who quickly looks away. The next person maintains eye contact long enough for me to smile at her. She slightly lifts the corners of her mouth before she looks down at her desk" (Fieldnotes, 1-11-84).

The scenario is similar during the first session of another class.

"The students dwindle in one by one, each taking a seat at the table. For the most part they keep their eyes downcast rather than looking at one another. One student enters the room and recognizes a student already seated at the table. The entering student walks over to the acquaintance, shakes his hand and says hello. He doesn't sit beside his friend even though there is a seat available. Instead he walks to the other side of the table and sits down" (Fieldnotes 6-5-85).

The following are the students' responses to the researcher's question, "Before starting the class what did you think the other students in the class would be like?":

> "I thought they would be bad - like they'd have stolen cars, real bad type, not penny ante stuff. Like hard core criminals" (Interview, 9-26-85).
>
> "I didn't think others would be like me. I thought they would have different personalities, different way of thinking. different looks and also different kinds of people" (Interview, 7-29-85).
>
> "I just thought I just won't even belong there with those people cause they will come from such different backgrounds than what I do. They'll be older and won't have jobs and won't even care" (Interview, 8-12-85).
>
> "I had a vision of crooks, cut throats, motorcycle gangs, you know, just the worst" (Interview, 8-12-85).
>
> "Like criminal type things - basic raggy looking persons off the street" (Interview, 9-19-85).
>
> "I thought there would be a lot of low life scum in class" (Interview, 9-26-85).
>
> "I thought the other people would be like criminals-- hard core criminals" (Interview, 9-25-85).
>
> "Like maybe more criminal type or something...more of the hippish sort of people" (Interview, 9-1985).
>
> "I thought they'd be more the criminal type. I don't consider myself the criminal type. You know the type - the guy on the street who doesn't care, who's always in trouble, who smokes pot" (Interview, 7-29-85).

Of the 52 students who were interviewed there were four discrepant cases. Three of the cases said they knew what to expect because they had friends who had previously participated in the program and told them what it would be like. The fourth case was the woman who talked to her probation officer and was given enough information about the program so she knew what to expect.

The research provides an interpretation of this discrepancy between the students' perception of himself or herself and his or her perception of the others in the class prior to participation. Kraut (1976) surveyed 606 college students on their involvement with shoplifting. He found two thirds of the sample had shoplifted and one third had done so within two years prior to data collection. Part of this survey included an instrument to measure self descriptions and descriptions of shoplifters. According to Kraut, "Respondents indicated on four point Likert scales how closely each of twenty two adjectives from Gough's adjective checklist described them and described a typical shoplifter...The self shoplifter discrepancy measures the dissimilarity between a respondent's description of himself and of a typical shoplifter. It is the absolute difference between the extent to which the respondent applied an adjective to himself and to the typical shoplifter, averaged over the twenty two adjectives presented to him...The twenty two adjectives were reduced to four, factor analytically, unidimensional scales. The evaluative dimension was the most interesting; it was composed of the adjectives normal and good, scored positively, and dishonest, untrustworthy, and deviant, scored negatively. This scale was analyzed through a two-way variance, in which the respondent's experience with shoplifting (frequent, infrequent, and none) was crossed with the stimulus person described (self versus the typical shoplifter)...On the evaluative scale students in general

described themselves as better than a typical shoplifter; but within this differential evaluation, those who shoplifted more evaluated themselves lower and evaluated the typical shoplifter higher. A similar pattern also occurred on other adjectives scales measuring adventurousness, fearfulness, and self control. One might expect that apprehension would influence a shoplifter's belief about himself, as he or she either adopted or rejected the imputed identity. However, having been caught had no impact on a respondent's self concept, measured either by the self-shoplifter discrepancy or any individual scale. The only difference between apprehended and unapprehended shoplifters is that apprehended ones described a typical shoplifter as more fearful" (pp. 362 and 363).

Kraut also found that apprehension shifted the shoplifter's explanations for behavior. Initially the shoplifter explained behavior in terms that were intrinsic to it: wanting an item without paying for it and ability to take it. However, after being caught the shoplifter increasingly attributed behavior to extrinsic factors, like revenge, excitement, and social pressure. Shoplifters changed the meaning of the action to make it less reprehensible and themselves less responsible. Shoplifters did not attribute their stealing to their dishonesty, even though non-shoplifters attributed their own non-stealing to their honesty. Cameron (1964) also found that even after apprehension shoplifters did not think of themselves as

thieves. They strongly resisted identifying their behavior as theft.

Generalizing these findings to the subjects of this study provides an interpretation of the assertion that initially the offender/student sees himself or herself as being different from the other participants in the setting. Even after apprehension the offender/student is reluctant to see himself or herself as a criminal although she or he does see the other participants in the program as criminals. In this study this discrepancy was eventually reconciled, enabling the subject to accept membership in the group. In order to remain a member of the group, all students had to learn "appropriate role behavior" for this setting. Students learned this "appropriate role behavior" primarily from the teacher.

The Director

STUDENTS LEARN APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR FOR THIS SETTING PRIMARILY FROM THE TEACHER.

In examining a stage production one finds that a single individual is given the right to direct and control the progress of the dramatic action. This individual often plays an actual part in the performance she or he directs. In the classroom the role of director more often than not is played by the teacher. According to Goffman (1959), this director fulfills two functions. One is the duty of allocating the parts in the performance and the personal front that is

employed in each part. The other one is the duty of correcting for improper appearances. In Goffman's words, "The director may be given the special duty of bringing back into line any member of the team whose performance becomes unsuitable. Soothing and sanctioning are the corrective processes ordinarily involved" (p. 295).

The teacher's role during the first class session of Project Intercept was analogous to the director's role at the first play rehearsal. The teacher delineated the expectations, gave instructions, explained the sequence of learning experiences, interpreted signs of behavior, provided immediate correction for mistakes, and manipulated the environment. Just as the director uses a script as the basis for performance, the Project Intercept teachers used handouts with titles, such as "Criteria for Completion" and "Helpful Group Guidelines" to influence behavior. During the first class session the teacher spent time discussing these handouts she had distributed to the students. These handouts explained what was considered "appropriate role behavior" for the students. The researcher's fieldnotes from one of the classes she observed illustrate this process.

"Mary Smith, the teacher, is standing in front of the students. She moves to the blackboard and says, 'My name is Mary Smith.' She writes her name on the board. She turns to the class and says,'This is Project Intercept, a diversionary program run by the Courts. It is a self awareness class. We'll be together for ten weeks.' She then distributes folders to the students and tells them they must bring the folder to class each week. She continues, 'This class is going to be different from any other you've ever taken. There are no letter grades, but there will be an evaluation. The true test is how honest you can be with yourself and in the class. The Court has decided that you will benefit from this

class. The class will last two hours a week...I'm going to spend a lot of time talking tonight. I usually won't do that...but I feel it's important that I outline the expectations. I want to start by opening the folder and going over the Criteria for Completion. We'll read it in class and I will answer questions.' She then reads a statement that students must attend class unless there is a legitimate absence.

Teacher: 'What do we mean by a legitimate absence?'
Student: 'A doctor's appointment?'
Teacher: 'Yes, or an emergency. What other reasons?'
Student: 'A death in the family.'
Teacher: 'Yes.'
Student: 'What about work?'
Teacher: 'If you have a problem at work, then you need to contact the Court contact person. If you just feel like you need the week off, then that's not legitimate. If you're absent I will ask you if you have talked with your Court contact person. You're responsible for contacting that Court for approval. I send a slip saying you were absent. (Mary shows the class an absence slip.) Once received, the Court person will expect you to call. Call the Court person before the next class. If the reason is legitimate, they'll excuse you...If the absence is excused, then you have to discuss additional requirements with me. Normally that means you have to attend a make-up session. The make-up session will be scheduled in a two month period of time. There is an additional $10 fee. You must be on time for class...Fifty dollars is due by the fifth class. When is the fifth week of class? Let me get my calendar. (Mary refers to her calendar and announces the fifth week of class is the 23rd of August. She then goes to the board and writes, '8/23, fifth, pay up.')

"Mary continues outlining expectations, 'You have chosen to participate. In a moment we will read the class list and you'll note that not everyone is here. This is not a jail cell without bars. It is a self-awareness class. Who wants to deal with the judge again? Who wants to go to jail? Sometimes there are reasons why people don't report, but usually they are not legitimate reasons and so the person has to go back to Court to explain. I will be evaluating you. I will be reporting my unique observations. I don't care where you are in life, Ph.D or no high school diploma, this is a place to know yourself and to grow. How many classes have you had like this? Very few, I imagine. You will make the class either a positive experience for yourself or a negative one.'

"At this point Mary tells the class about a man she had in another class who said to Mary, 'You know, Mary, you can't teach me anything.' Mary responded to him, 'You know, you're right.' She explained to the class that it was the man who had the key to his own learning and it was the man who had to take the key and open the door to himself. 'I don't care who you are, what you are, or what you have done. We're all the same. We all grow, change, have a positive attitude or have a negative attitude. It's all up to us.'

"In conclusion of this introduction to the structure of the class Mary talks about participation, 'I will take into consideration that some of you are uncomfortable in talking in front of a group, but I want you to try to participate. I know it's hard to change behavior...We're going to be honest in this room. It's like walking down a path of life in the forest and you run into a tree.' (Mary goes to the board and writes 'MIS/TAKE.') She continues, 'A 'miss take' and thinking and feeling about this 'miss take' can lead to negative consequences. You all have done something illegal. You can tell me you won't do it again, but you have to look deeper. You have to be real. You have to face it. You have to face why you're here. If you can face it and look at yourself in the mirror and still tell yourself that you have potential, then you've got something'" (Fieldnotes, 7-25-85).

When the researcher in an interview with each student asked, "How do you know what you're supposed to do in class?" an overwhelming majority responded they knew what to do by what the teacher said, what she did, and how she related things to them. The disconfirming evidence was represented primarily by students who were noncommittal or not specific. "I just feel that's what's right" (Interview, 8-12-85). "It's just the way I feel it now" (Interview, 8-12-85). "I just know" (Interview, 8-19-85). "I don't know" (Interview, 2-14-84).

Aronson (1976) suggested that in unfamiliar situations individuals tend to conform to the behavior of others whom they suspect "know the ropes." He asserted that behavior learned in this way is an attempt to make sense of an

unfamiliar part of a person's world in order to give it security (Douglas, 1983). According to Douglas (1983), an individual is needed to "set things going...establish ground rules of behavior, and encourage interaction" (pp. 196 and 197). The evidence indicates that the students perceived it was the teacher who "knew the ropes" and who "set things going."

The students in this special learning environment had to be socialized to participation in this setting. Biddle (1979) defined socialization as, "environmentally induced changes in the behavior or conceptual state of the person that lead to greater ability to participate in a social system" (p. 282). Within this socialization model, environment is an independent variable; the person is dependent. "Socialization is successful to the extent appropriate role expectations or behaviors are induced in the person" (p. 283). In the Project Intercept environment the data indicate the teacher served as the primary inducer for students learning role expectations and behavior. Parsons (1959) stated that the teacher in the socialization role is responsible for motivating and training students for performance in roles that are beneficial to society and for encouraging conformance to the expectations of others as a technique of social control (Mehan, 1980). The teacher in the Project Intercept Program was responsible for directing the students in learning more socially acceptable behavior as participating members of the community.

Even though the students perceive they learn what they are supposed to do from the teacher, they themselves have to decide how they will play the part. When the researcher asked the students what they were supposed to do in class, they responded, "to participate."

Learning the Part

THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR IS "TO PARTICIPATE."

Although the director of a theater production may be the principal agent in setting the standards of performance, it is the actors themselves who must play the part. Each individual character is influenced not only by the direction she or he receives, but also by his or her perception of how the role should be performed, by the acting out of this perception, and by the other actors involved in the scene.

The subjects of this study perceived the primary direction for their role was provided by the teacher. When the researcher asked the subjects what they were supposed to do in the classroom, the majority responded "to participate." Further probing revealed "to participate" had two categorical interpretations--one involving an active role performance and the other involving a passive role performance.

Twenty five of the students defined "to participate" in active terms. Their responses included:

"Talk about things that you did."
"Talk with others."
"Express your feelings to the class."
"Give my answers to the teacher."

"Communicate."
"Have a response to things going on."
"Interact with the instructor."
"Open up and tell your feelings."
"Answer questions."
"Contribute to group discussions."
"Give our reactions."

(Comments from interviews with subjects)

Twenty three of the subjects defined "to participate" in passive terms, such as:

"Listen." (The most frequent response)
"Pay attention."
"Get whatever I can out of it for myself."
"The most important thing is to listen."
"Listen to the teacher."
"Be quiet."
"A lot of thinking."

(Comments from interviews with subjects)

"To participate" as appropriate role behavior for the subjects seemed to be influenced by three factors--the effect of interaction with other participants in the setting, particularly interaction with the teacher; the subjects' interpretations of appropriate role behavior based on past experiences; and the subjects' overt actions or role performance. Each of these contributed to the subjects' total picture of what "to participate" as appropriate role behavior encompassed. For example, the subjects' interaction with the teacher was influential in shaping the expected role behavior. The subjects' past experiences provided a reference for understanding the context and knowing what to do. The subjects' overt actions demonstrated the degree to which the students understood and/or embraced the appropriate characteristic behaviors. Each of these factors is addressed

separately in the following sections entitled "Interaction," "Past Experiences," and "Role Performance."

Interaction.

According to McDermott and Roth (1979), people in interaction serve as environments for each other. These environments change based on who is involved, what they are doing, and when and where they are doing it (Mehan, 1980). The interaction between the students and teacher in the Project Intercept Program served as an environment for shaping the expected role behavior for the students. Through this interaction the subjects learned what their position allowed and what it obligated them to be. For example, the field notes indicate that initially students voluntarily interacted with the teacher. Over time the students, particularly students under the direction of one of the teachers, modified this role of volunteering to a role of responding only when called on. The following documentation of the interaction between one of the teachers and one of the students over a ten week period illustrates this modification: (a space between the teacher/student interaction indicates other activities/interactions occurred)

First Class Session

Teacher: Who can tell me one of the alternatives for attending class?
Student: (Volunteers) Sitting in jail.
Teacher: Down here we call that the motel on Ball Street. How many have had the privilege of visiting this motel?

Teacher: Look at the handout titled "Helpful Group Guidelines." (Reading from the handout) Keep the discussion in the here and now. What does that mean?
Student: (Volunteers) Don't get off track.
Teacher: Let's hear from some voices I haven't heard before.

Teacher: You are not given grades in this class...I will decide whether you either pass or fail.
Student: (Initiates question) What happens if we don't pass?
Teacher: If you don't pass, you have to go before your probation officer and the judge.

Teacher: (After the students have participated in a classroom activity) Now, how do you feel?
Student: (Volunteers) Uncomfortable.
The teacher doesn't verbally respond. Another student speaks.

Second Class Session

The teacher directly asks a student how he feels about the class. Another student answers and then Katie, the student of this documentation, volunteers her response.

Student: I don't want to stand up to respond. I'm just going to sit here in my chair. I thought about the class and what was on the board. I'm learning by listening. I see a lot of myself in others.
Teacher: Everyone is our mirror...That's a good point, Katie.

The teacher calls on this student, Katie, to tell about her offense.
Student: ...I stole $14 worth of meat. It cost $140, eight months on probation, this class, and no jail time.
Teacher: What kind of meat did you steal?
Student: Fish, ham, and hamburger.
Teacher: You could buy a lot of meat with that. You know, class, even if you don't get caught, life will get even...
Student: It cost me shame and embarrassment plus the cost to my family. My husband kept asking me why he couldn't make more money so I didn't have to do what I did.
The teacher does not verbally respond to what the student says. Another student begins to talk about his offense.

The student volunteers personal information about herself.

Student: When I went into the store and took the meat, I convinced myself it was okay to leave...I convinced myself that what I was doing was o.k. because my family was hungry.

The teacher does not verbally respond to what the student says. Another student speaks.

Third Class Session

Student: (Volunteers information) I didn't understand the two articles. I thought the story that I read was realistic. I wondered if it was fiction or non-fiction.

The teacher does not verbally respond. Another student gives his reaction to the articles.

Teacher: (After asking the students to participate in an exercise) Why do you think I'm asking you to do that?

Student: (Volunteers) Because we're all sitting in the same seats.

Teacher: Yes, we are creatures of habit. What are you doing by habit?

Fourth Class Session

Student: (Raises her hand and waits to be recognized) We live by the park and when cars come racing down our street and I'm out in the yard, I grab the hose and I hose them down.

Teacher: Katie, you're taking your chances. Remember the consequences.

Teacher: Anybody have experience of using it (the exercise) as a control?

Student: (Volunteers) Yes, I used it with my sister-in-law. She bothers me a lot sometimes and rather than just lashing out at her I used the exercise and I thought before I talked. It made me feel better.

The teacher does not verbally respond. Instead she turns to another student and asks him a question.

Fifth Class Session

Student: (Volunteers) I went canoeing. I tried to canoe with my husband and that didn't work. Then, the women got in canoes together and the men got in

canoes and things worked out much better.

The teacher does not verbally respond to the student. Instead she turns away from the student and asks the whole class,

Teacher: Does anyone have any questions?

Teacher: Does anyone have a response for Joe (pseudonym)?
Student: (After no one else responds) Why don't you get a newspaper and circle some ads and then go with her to look at apartments?
Joe: Honey, that sounds so simple. If I got a newspaper and circled ads, she would just walk out of the room and pay no attention to me.

Sixth Class Session

The student was absent.

Seventh Class Session

Teacher: Katie, have the last fifteen minutes been very meaningful to you?
Student: I'm not sure I understand.
Teacher: Katie, shall we talk on the break?

Eighth Class Session

The student is not called on to respond.

Ninth Class Session

The student is not called on to respond.

(Documentation from fieldnotes over a ten week period)

This documentation indicates that initially the student volunteered information and responded without being called on. The teacher used verbal sanctions, such as "Let's hear from some voices I haven't heard before," "Life will get even," "Remember the consequences" and nonverbal sanctions, such as ignoring the student by not responding to what she

said, as feedback to shape the student's behavior. Eventually the student learned to respond only when called on.

Another observation made by the researcher was that, in general, the students' verbalized definition and interpretation of "to participate" were directly related to the amount of interaction the students had with the teacher. Those who interacted with the teacher more frequently defined "to participate" in active terms; those who did not interact with the teacher as frequently defined "to participate" in more passive terms. The students' frequency of interaction with the teacher was another feedback mechanism for shaping the students' concept of "to participate" as appropriate role behavior.

According to Douglas (1983), "The necessity to behave in specific acceptable ways can be spelled out clearly by the group through its representatives...For all practical purposes a group = interaction. Out of interaction grows the awareness of feedback; feedback is the prime stimulus to knowledge...and thus the endeavor to control the elements of the feedback situation...gives birth to the processes of familiarization, constellation formation, alliances, the development of the rules of this particular game, and the pursuit of given ends" (pp. 65 and 66).

Learning the "rules of this particular game"--"to participate"--enhances what Mehan (1980) labeled as "interactional competence" which he defined as "(1)...the competence that is necessary for effective interaction, and

(2)...the competence that is available in the interaction between classroom participants" (p. 146). According to Mehan, this interactional competence has two components--a communicative one and an interpretive one. The communicative component involves "knowing that certain ways of behaving (including talking) are appropriate on some occasions and not on others" (p. 146). The interpretive component refers to the "tacit dimension" of classroom rules that students must learn in order to successfully participate in the classroom. The evidence supports the teacher was a major source for students learning what constitutes interactional competence.

Past Experiences.

A second factor influencing the subjects' definition of "to participate" as appropriate role behavior was their own past experiences. Giola and Poole (1984) offered a conceptual framework for understanding how people understand and perform their own behaviors and actions in situations. According to the authors, a script is a schema held in memory that describes events or behaviors appropriate for a particular context. People know how to act because they retain a repertoire of scripts from past experiences that fit various settings.

These scripts provide two benefits for people. First, they enable understanding of situations and second, they provide a guide to behavior appropriate for those situations. "Understanding a situation involves a search of one's memory

to draw on previous situational experiences similar to the present one. One's behavior (and the effectiveness or consequences of the behavior) in these previous situations then serves as input to a memory schema. This schema specifies the behaviors likely to fit a present situation" (Giola and Poole, 1984, p. 450).

A similar explanation of how past experiences affect present behavior is reviewed by Mehan (1980). "Schutz (1962) equipped his model of the social actor with a 'stock of social knowledge.' According to Schutz, social knowledge is 'what everybody knows' about the social world in which they live. It is the fundamental, requisite, background information that people must know and use in order to function socially. Schutz (1962: 3-7) has said that all action taken in the natural attitude of everyday life is based on a set of previous experiences with the world. This socially accumulated stock of knowledge acts as a frame of reference to inform action to be taken at the present time" (p. 132). Mehan further discussed how members of society discriminately use their stock of social knowledge, "...the social actor is said to employ 'interpretive procedures' (Cicourel, 1973) to cast objects, the appearance of the situation, and the behavior of others into a typically known, and taken-for-granted form, which facilitates interaction in the social world" (p. 133).

All of the students in the Project Intercept Program had previously participated in educational settings. In

interviews with the researcher the subjects often referred to "past experiences," "other situations," and "that's the way it is in regular school" as references for defining and interpreting appropriate role behavior. According to Goffman (1959), people are aware that certain settings require specific performances and scripted performances are not always spontaneous or unconsciously executed. Just as a script for a play is used to guide performance, so past experiences are stored in memory as scripts to guide performances in real-life drama.

Role Performance.

The third factor influencing the subjects' concept of appropriate role behavior was their role performance. Biddle and Thomas (1966) defined role performance as overt behavior classified as action. These overt actions demonstrated the degree to which the students understood and/or embraced the expected characteristic behaviors. Most of the subjects' verbalized definition of "to participate" was congruent with their role performance. That is, those students who defined "to participate" in active terms did in fact perform in a like manner. Those who expressed the appropriate role behavior in more passive terms engaged in more passive behavior. The subjects' verbalized definitions were confirmed by their role performances. Their "deeds were related to their words."

However, the researcher found a discrepancy between

definition and role performance for ten of the students. Six of these ten defined "to participate" in active terms but performed in a passive manner and four of the ten identified passive behaviors as being appropriate but engaged in active behaviors. There was an incongruity between what was said and actual performance. For example, one of the students informed the researcher that "to participate" meant to think and to listen. However, the fieldnotes indicate this student talked far more than she listened. She described herself as "having a gift of gab" and added, "Everybody says talking is one of my favorite things" (Interview, 8-12-85). The teacher described this student as a person who enjoys being different. " She wants to be different from other people, an attention getter" (Interview, 10-9-85).

Possible explanations for this incongruity are (1) the individual perceptually believed she or he behaved in one way when in fact she or he performed in an opposite way or (2) the individual was desirous of performing in the described way and thought saying it made it so. Another explanation offered by Goffman (1961) is role distance. Goffman defined role distance as actions which effectively convey some disdainful attachment of the performer from a role she or he is performing. Even though the students said they were supposed to behave in one way, they engaged in opposite behaviors to show their lack of acceptance of the role. Goffman referred to data on role distance that come from situations where a subordinate must take orders or

suggestions and must go along with the situation as defined by superordinates. "At such times, we often find that although the subordinate is careful not to threaten those who are in a sense in charge of the situation, he may be just as careful to inject some expression to show, for any who care to see, that he is not capitulating completely to the work arrangement in which he finds himself. Sullenness, muttering, irony, joking, and sarcasm may all allow one to show that something of oneself lies outside the constraints of the moment and outside the role within whose jurisdiction the moment occurs" (p. 114).

A final interpretation of this incongruity between the students' "words and deeds" is offered by Mehan (1980), "...not all disruptions stem from a lack of interactional competence. Borrowing a metaphor from Wittgenstein, students may make mistakes, which may alternatively be cast as moves in a different game. Instead of being an incompetent move in a teacher's game, the behavior in question may be a very sophisticated move in a student's game, a move calculated to manipulate the teacher's normative arrangements to accomplish items on the student's agenda" (p. 147). For example, the researcher observed that Lee (pseudonym), the student who talked far more than she listened even though she defined "to participate" in passive terms, became even more talkative when the teacher asked probing questions about Lee's personal problems. Ironically, Lee's talk never related to herself, always to other topics. One could assume Lee had her own

agenda separate from the teacher's that explained why she behaved as she did. This assumption would support the conception of mutual engagement which "recognizes that students are active participants in the environments in which they act, not simply passive respondents to them" (Mehan, 1980, p. 147).

Whatever definition and interpretation the subjects attached to "to participate" as appropriate role behavior, role performance in this setting included learning to talk like the teacher.

Rehearsing the Lines

APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR INCLUDES LEARNING TO TALK LIKE THE TEACHER.

Part of the challenge of effectively portraying a role is to deliver the lines of the script in such a manner that they are believable. This involves becoming familiar with the vocabulary, rehearsing the lines so the words themselves, the pronunciation of the words, the timing, the rhythm, the voice inflection, etc. are characteristic of the part being played. Often the director will be a major influence in this aspect of the production.

The teachers in the Project Intercept Program had a script they wanted the students to learn. This script was comprised of a self-awareness vocabulary. During an interview with the researcher one of the teachers stated she

wanted the students to "parrot back my very words" (Interview 2-15-84). Some of the class exercises involved the students repeating the words of the teacher. For example, one of the teachers during a beginning class session had each student repeat after her, "I'm responsible for me and I have no one else to blame" (Fieldnotes, 7-1-85). In another class exercise the teacher had the students repeat to themselves at various intervals, "I am in control" (Fieldnotes, 6-22-85).

In order to present the evidence the students learned to talk like the teacher, the researcher has divided this section into three subparts entitled "Setting the Stage," "Talking Like the Teacher," and "Refusing to Learn the Lines." The subpart "Setting the Stage" is presented as evidence (1) the teacher used a self-awareness vocabulary, (2) initially there was an absence of this vocabulary in most of the students' speech, and (3) the teacher exhibited behaviors that could be interpreted as more accepting of the student responses that incorporated this self-awareness vocabulary. The documentation in this section consists of fieldnote excerpts from the first three sessions of one of the classes.

In the subpart "Talking Like the Teacher" the researcher presents fieldnote excerpts from later sessions of the same class. The purpose of this section is to provide evidence that the students, in this particular case, the student Bill (pseudonym) did learn to incorporate the teacher's vocabulary into his speech. The third subpart, "Refusing to Learn the

Lines," presents the disconfirming evidence about the discrepant cases.

Setting the Stage.

First Class Session

The following is written on the blackboard:

I hear - I forget
I see - I remember
I do - I understand
Chinese Proverb

"Standing behind the podium in the front of the class, the teacher calls roll and then proceeds to tell the students what the class is about. 'We will be doing and experiencing in this class...I take no credit if you grow, but I also take no blame if you don't grow. This is a class in self.' The teacher moves to the blackboard and writes the word 'SELF' on the board. She continues, 'This class is a gift, and you must decide what you will do with it...The past is dead, the future is imaginary, you must deal with what's happening now.' She then asks each of the students to introduce himself or herself by stating his or her name, a strength, a weakness, and the offense he or she committed that caused the court to refer him or her to this program" (Fieldnotes, 1-11-84).

In considering the vocabulary the teacher used in the preceding excerpt the following words or phrases are often associated with a self-awareness vocabulary: "doing," "experiencing," "grow," "self," "deal," "you must decide," "what's happening now," "strength," "weakness."

Second Class Session

The following interaction took place between the teacher and a student named Bill during the second class session. It is important to note that Bill did not use any self-awareness vocabulary at this time. He appeared hostile and uncooperative in responding to the questions asked by the teacher.

Teacher: Bill, how did things go at work this week?
Bill: Work isn't important here. I'm here cause I got caught smoking pot.
Teacher: This class is about attitudes.
Bill: I was in the wrong place.
Teacher: What did we talk about last week that can help?

Bill: I have a bad memory.
Teacher: And a bad attitude.
Bill: Thank you.
Teacher: It doesn't have to be that way. You have good things going for you.
Bill: Is this work on me day?
Teacher: We'll each take our turn. What good things do you have going?

At this point Bill turns his head away from the teacher, looks out the window, and says nothing. The teacher waits a short period of time, picks up a newspaper and focuses her comments on one of the articles (Fieldnotes, 1-18-84).

After class the researcher questioned the teacher about Bill's behavior. The teacher responded, "...Bill is not responsible; he is manipulative. He falls into the category of wearing many masks. He is annoying but not destructive. He hasn't gone far enough yet to really get into trouble" (Interview, 1-18-84).

Third Class Session

Jane who has previously been in therapy was another student in the same class with Bill. The following interaction between the teacher and Jane illustrates Jane, using some of the self-awareness vocabulary, talked more like the teacher and seemed to have a better idea of how to participate in the class even though it was only the third class session. Jane's having participated in therapy may have been an influencing factor. In this particular interaction the teacher appeared to exhibit behaviors that were more accepting of Jane than of some of the other students. For example, the teacher spent a longer period of class time talking with Jane than with other students, the teacher's voice volume and tone quality were softer, and the teacher indicated she would bring something special for Jane the next week. All of this could be interpreted by the other students as the teacher's acceptance of Jane.

Teacher: How many have not told your family you are here in this class?

Jane raises her hand and waits to be recognized by the teacher.

Jane: I'm not ready yet. I'm going to tell them before the end of class. I'm teaching my children one thing and I'm doing another. I think class will help prepare myself to tell them.
Teacher: I remember your talking about how your family supported you previously.
Jane: The children were younger. I promised my husband I wouldn't shoplift again. I broke a promise. I've been dishonest...I have to lean on someone.
Teacher: It's o.k. to lean on someone as long as you don't

knock them over.
Jane: I can't stand to be locked up.
Teacher: So it's the fear of being locked up that will prevent you from committing another offense?
Jane: And hurting my family. I have a son who will be 20. I would be so hurt if my son shoplifted but yet I shoplifted.

The interaction continues for at least another five minutes which is more time than the teacher usually spends focusing on one student. Jane's turn ends with the following:
Teacher: I would hope you can rise higher.
Jane: Well, I'm learning.
Teacher: And this is a good place to learn...Jane, you've been saying you wear many masks.
Jane: I do.
Teacher: I will bring something in next week for you that will talk about that (Fieldnotes, 1-25-84).

Talking Like the Teacher.

The following documentation illustrates that Bill, the student who at the second session did not use the teacher's vocabulary, did change and learned to talk like the teacher.

Fifth Class Session

Teacher: Bill, did you think about us?
Bill: Yea.
Teacher: How?
Bill: I don't know. Come back to me. I'm still trying to wake up.
Bill does not appear to be as hostile and uncooperative as he did during the second session. Rather than refusing to respond as he had done previously, he asks for time before he has his turn.

About an hour later:
Teacher: Bill, back to you.
Bill: I bought my mom a rose this week.
Teacher: What did your mom say?
Bill: She was shocked and wanted to know what I did?
Teacher: Did you want something?
Bill: No.
Prior to this time Bill has not talked about anything personal he has done (Fieldnotes, 2-8-84).

Sixth Class Session

Teacher: Bill, what have you gotten out of this class?
Bill: I had a bad attitude and a bad temper. I have a better attitude and I'm working on my temper. A couple of old men at work still bother me.
Teacher: You have to have more patience.
Bill: I'm trying. The class has helped me a lot--to grow, you know.

Bill tells the teacher he has a bad attitude which is what the teacher told him the second session (Fieldnotes, 2-15-84).

Eighth Class Session

At the eighth class session the researcher interviewed Bill.

Researcher: What do you think you're supposed to do in the class?
Bill: Participate. Behave like an adult. You should have some response to things going on.
Researcher: How do you know that's what you're supposed to do?
Bill: By the teacher and by the things she talks about, how she says them, and how she relates them to us.
Researcher: What did you get out of coming to this class?
Bill: I'm starting to see myself and things that need to be changed like my attitude and my anger... It's good the way the teacher talks to you. It's on my level. She hasn't used too big words that I can't understand. She has a good way of doing things like writing on the board and all. She'll harp on you and tell you you shouldn't do this and that but it's up to you. I knew I needed to change things, but I wouldn't have worried about 'em if I hadn't come to this class (Interview, 2-29-84).

It is important to note that Bill used words and phrases that previously were not part of his speech in class. These include "hear each other out," "try to help each other," "relates them to us," "starting to see myself," and "need to change." Also important to note is that when asked, "How do you know that's what you're supposed to do (in class)?" Bill responded, "By the teacher and by things she talks about and how she says them and how she relates them to us."

In examining the data the researcher found the assertion seems to be applicable to forty three out of the fifty two students who completed the program.

Refusing to Learn the Lines.

Of the nine students who didn't learn to talk like the teacher one of them named Kay (pseudonym) appeared to either never understand or not care to understand how to participate in the setting. She always came to class about fifteen minutes late, sat at the back of the room away from the other students and either did not respond to the few questions asked her by the teacher or responded in what seemed to be a hostile manner. The following interaction among Kay, the teacher, and the other students illustrates Kay's responses, as well as what could be interpreted as the other students' rejection of Kay:

Fifth Class Session

The teacher writes on the blackboard

When we share
Joy is doubled
Problems (challenges) are divided.

She faces the class and says:

Teacher: Maybe some of you can give Kay some options.
Kay: I don't need their help. I don't want their help.
Jack: She doesn't like herself.
Jane: She'll probably end up in prison.
Kay: Naw, I won't. I won't go to the store to steal.
Jane: Why did you steal before?
Kay: Because I wanted to.
Jane: Then you'll probably steal again.
Teacher: Well, when you want to change, you will. If you want to remain in these circumstances, you will. I will do everything I can to help, but the choice is yours. I can give principles, but you have to invest. Anyone who sits in class and says she gets nothing out of it has problems (Fieldnotes, 2-8-84).

During the eighth class session the researcher asked Kay what she thought she was supposed to do in class. Kay responded, "I don't know. The class is supposed to help you, but I feel it helps some and some it doesn't...I didn't get nothing out of the class" (Fieldnotes, 2-29-84).

Ann (pseudonym), another one of the students who refused to learn her lines, did arrive on time for class, did sit with the other students and did respond when asked questions by the teacher. However, the data reveal she did not use any of the teacher's self awareness vocabulary either in her speech in class or in her written documents. Ann was not present the first night of class. Further research would have to be done to determine if absence from the first session is an influential factor in a students's learning to talk like the teacher. In "revisiting the fieldnotes" the researcher also discovered that during the class sessions the interaction between the teacher and Ann, as compared to the teacher's interaction with other students, was limited. The following documents this limited interaction between Ann and the teacher:

First Session:	Ann was absent.
Second Session:	The teacher asked Ann to introduce herself by stating her name, her strength, her weakness, and her offense. Ann complied with the first three but refused to state her offense.
Third Session:	The teacher asked Ann to discuss her offense. Ann refused.
Fourth Session:	The teacher asked Ann only two questions which Ann answered during the two hour class period.
Fifth Session:	During the two hours the teacher asked Ann only three questions which Ann answered.
Sixth Session:	The researcher was ill.
Seventh Session:	The teacher was not present.
Eighth Session:	The teacher spent about ten minutes talking with Ann alone (Documented from Fieldnotes, 1-11-84 through 2-29-84).

The researcher asked the teacher about the amount of time in class focused on Ann and the teacher confirmed the focus on Ann was limited:

"I decided early on Ann would not be one of those people I would try to work with in class. She thinks she has all the answers. She is totally outside of herself. She is rigid in her thinking, has her mind set, and came to class only to comply with the law. Why give one like that time? Only give them a dab of attention. Let them grow and experience by being in class. Anytime I talked with Ann she always said, 'Well, I already knew that' or 'I've already done that.' I have to spend my time with people who want to change" (Interview 3-6-84).

During the last class session the researcher interviewed Ann and asked her questions which she answered as follows:

Researcher: What do you think you're supposed to do in the class?
Ann: Participate.
Researcher: How do you know that's what you're supposed to do?
Ann: In anything you do you're supposed to participate.
Researcher: What did you get out of coming to this class?
Ann: Sick. It bothers me to see younger people to the extent they are...I knew it was bad but to see the largeness of it bothers me.
Researcher: What is it?
Ann: Kids that are bumbling around with negative behavior. I feel if Mother stayed home this wouldn't happen. Kids need more supervision. When I was growing up teachers didn't smoke (the teacher of this class smokes) or drink. Teachers nowadays want to be a pal and that's wrong. They don't know how to establish a relationship. There has to be a certain amount of fear and respect.
Researcher: How would you describe the way the teacher talks to you in class?
Ann: She's phony. She's trying too hard. I don't know how long she's been at it.
Researcher: How does that make you feel?
Ann: It doesn't bother me because she has something wrong, not me. I think she has some hang up (Interview, 2-29-84).

It is important to note that Ann does not use any of the self awareness vocabulary and that of all the students interviewed Ann was the only one who said the teacher had something wrong--some hang up.

The data seem to support the assertion "Appropriate role behavior includes learning to talk like the teacher." Of the

fifty two students who completed the program the researcher can document through observation, fieldnotes, interviews, and student documents that forty three of the students began to include some of the teachers' self awareness vocabulary in their own speech in class and in the written documents the students completed for class assignments.

Speech, a social phenomenon, is said to be the most important human communication system. Speech cues provide information about a social situation. For example, people adopt another person's speech pattern (1) for group identification, (2) for self definition, (3) to facilitate cognitive similarity, (4) for information flow, and (5) for communication satisfaction (Scherer and Giles, 1979). All of these seem to be valid interpretations of why the subjects of this study adopted the teacher's vocabulary.

Another interpretation for learning to talk like the teacher involves the nature of the class discussion--self disclosure. Research indicates people are reluctant to reveal personal information about themselves presumably because self-disclosure renders the person vulnerable. When an individual is faced with a threatening situation of revealing information about the self, as is required in the Project Intercept Program, she or he will adopt another person's speech pattern (or vocabulary) in order to enhance his or her self-image. Talking like the teacher made the student less vulnerable because in sharing the teacher's vocabulary the student could then identify with the teacher.

The teachers expected the students to adopt their vocabulary. Research findings indicate a direct relationship between expectations and performance--the higher the expectations held, the higher the level of performance. One of the teachers stated she wanted the students to "parrot back my very words" in order to influence their behavior (Interview 2-15-84). Douglas (1983) stated in order to interact with others or influence their behavior it is necessary to open some form of communication system with them. Litvak (1967) in the book Groups (Douglas, 1983) indicated this communication system becomes the central control system of the group. According to Douglas (1983), a group can define "reality" for its members by defining the categories of language that govern the selection of sense data. The teachers expected the students to adopt the self-awareness vocabulary which would then become "reality" for the group. Goffman (1959) cautioned that an individual "can be sincerely convinced that the impression of reality which he stages is the real reality. When his audience is also convinced in this way about the show he puts on--and this seems to be the typical case--then for the moment at least, only the sociologist or the socially disgruntled will have any doubts about the 'realness' of what is presented" (p. 17).

A recently published book What to Say When You Talk to Yourself (Helmstetter, 1985) supports the teacher's theory that the students' public espousal of the teacher's "very

words" would influence their behavior. The author explained that our brains are like computers and as such can be reprogrammed. We can choose the messages we want to send to our brains. These selected messages will then be stored in the brain as a computer stores data and will act as a blueprint for our future performances (Detroit Free Press, August, 1986). Thus, the students' incorporation of the teacher's messages into their own vocabulary should lead to more conforming behaviors. According to Biddle (1979), "Public declaration probably 'commits' the person more strongly to act (Keisler, 1971), may have a self-persuasive effect (Collins and Hoyt, 1972; Janis, 1968), and should allow others to act with greater assurance to support conformity" (p. 171).

Summary

Because of the similarities between what occurs in a stage production and what occurs in Project Intercept, the alternative education program that is the focus of this study, the researcher decided to use the metaphor of the theater as a framework for presenting the findings of this study. The findings are presented in the form of assertions, which are cultural themes or elements in a complex pattern that constitute a social situation and give meaning to this situation. The researcher discovered ten assertions that gave meaning to what was occurring in this setting. These

assertions are intended to be limited in their application to this particular research site.

Six of the assertions are presented in this chapter and four of the assertions are presented in Chapter VI. The six assertions presented in this chapter are entitled "The Rehearsal" because they relate to events that occurred early in the students' involvement with the program. At this stage the students were still rehearsing their parts and learning what they had to know in order to function in this context. The researcher first presented these assertions as they relate to the research questions and then each assertion was individually described and interpreted.

THE OFFENDER/STUDENT PERCEIVES HIS OR HER INITIAL INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COURT SYSTEM AS A NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE.

When the researcher asked the offenders/students their perception of their involvement with the court system, they responded with negative descriptors, such as "It was terrible; it was humiliating; it was scary" (Comments from students during interviews with the researcher). Explanations for these feelings are found in research studies that indicate most people who shoplift believe they will not get caught. In addition, most shoplifters do not consider themselves as thieves. However, in the court system these shoplifters are labeled criminals and encounter disapproval for their actions. Being apprehended projects the offenders into a wholly unfamiliar legal system which is obviously frightening and unexpected.

PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR OFFENDERS WILL FOCUS ON PUNISHMENT.

The students indicated that prior to participation in the Project Intercept Program, they thought the main thrust of the program would be punishment. Considering these students are usually sentenced to the program by the judge, it stands to reason they would perceive the program as an extension of the court that upholds punishment for those who break the law. Some of the older ones who shoplift may be stealing in order to get attention; punishment is a way of receiving attention.

INITIALLY THE STUDENT SEES HIMSELF OR HERSELF AS BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE SETTING.

Even after apprehension the offender/student is reluctant to see himself or herself as a criminal although she he does see the other participants in the program as criminals. Even though these individuals commit deviant acts, they are reluctant to accept the corresponding deviant identity. A study by Kraut (1976) found that having been caught had no impact on an offender's self concept. Apprehension did, however, shift the shoplifters explanations for behavior. They changed the meaning of their action to make it less reprehensible and themselves less responsible.

STUDENTS LEARN APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR FOR THIS SETTING PRIMARILY FROM THE TEACHER.

The evidence indicates that the students perceived they

learned appropriate role behavior for this setting primarily from the teacher. Aronson (1976) suggests that in unfamiliar situations individuals tend to conform to the behavior of others whom they suspect "know the ropes." The data show the students believed it was the teacher who "knew the ropes." When the researcher in an interview with each student asked, "How do you know what you're supposed to do in class?" an overwhelming majority responded they knew what to do by what the teacher said, what she did, and how she related things to them.

THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR IS "TO PARTICIPATE."

When the researcher asked the subjects what they were supposed to do in the classroom, the majority responded, "to participate." Further probing revealed "to participate" had two categorical interpretations--one involving an active role performance and the other involving a passive role performance. "To participate" as appropriate role behavior for the subjects seemed to be influenced by three factors--the effect of interaction with other participants in the setting, particularly interaction with the teacher; the subjects' interpretation of appropriate role behavior based on past experience; and the subjects' overt actions or role performance. Each of these contributed to the subjects' total picture of what "to participate" as appropriate role behavior encompassed.

APPROPRIATE ROLE BEHAVIOR INCLUDES LEARNING TO TALK LIKE THE TEACHER.

The teachers in the Project Intercept Program had a script they wanted the students to learn. This script was comprised of a self-awareness vocabulary. Most of the students did, in fact, incorporate this vocabulary into their responses during the class sessions. Possible explanations for this incorporation include (1) for group identification, (2) for self definition, (3) to facilitate cognitive similarity, (4) for information flow, and (5) for communication satisfaction (Scherer and Giles, 1979). All of these seem to be valid interpretations for why the subjects of this study adopted the teacher's vocabulary. Another important factor was that the teachers expected the students to learn this language in order to influence their behavior. Research findings indicate a direct relationship between expectations and performance--the higher the expectations held, the higher the level of performance. Findings also support the teacher's theory that the students' public espousal of the teacher's "very words" would influence the students' behavior.

CHAPTER SIX

Presentation of the Findings

The Performance

Introduction

The assertions presented in this chapter are entitled "The Performance" because they represent patterns that emerged after the participants' extended involvement in the Project Intercept Program. At this stage both the teachers and the students had rehearsed their parts, understood their interdependency, and could aptly perform their roles. The first two assertions concerning classroom activities and the teacher's communication pattern relate to what Goffman (1961) labeled situated activity systems. Such a system he defined as face-to-face interaction with others for the performance of a single joint activity...a circuit of interdependent actions (p. 96). The classroom activities and the communication pattern were joint activities between the teacher and the students. As the students became familiar with these systems, they adopted situated roles or roles that involved a series of activities visibly performed before a set of others and visibly meshed into the activity these others performed (Goffman, 1961). The actors had to understand the characteristics of these joint activities,

such as the complement of behaviors, persons, contexts, functions, and expectations in order for these activities to be performed effectively. As stated by Mehan (1980), "effective participation in the classroom entails recognizing different contexts for interaction and producing behavior that is appropriate for each context" (p. 137).

The last two assertions reflect the actors' evaluation of performance from two perspectives. One is from the perspective of how they personally benefitted from their involvement in the drama and the second is from the perspective of their feelings about the director's performance.

Being on Stage

THE TEACHER'S VOCABULARY INCLUDES "CHOICE," "CHANGE," AND "CONTROL" WHICH ARE THE BASIS FOR MOST CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.

As is true in any theater production, the time comes when the rehearsals are over, the curtain rises, and the play begins. The actors, through their performances, are able to demonstrate how well they have learned their roles. The students in the Project Intercept Program learned how to perform in the classroom activities that focused on making choices, implementing changes, and taking control.

During interviews with the researcher both teachers acknowledged that "choice," "change," and "control" were the basis for most of their classroom activities.

FIRST TEACHER

"Well, I think first of all they (the students) have to recognize that there are choices in life. Once we make choices then we have to make changes...And there's taking control and how to do that, which is part of self responsibility, and also consequences. You know, 99 times out of 100 these people have not thought about consequences. They just happened into their problems. The principles I talk about are the things I put on the board. But, they all pretty much revolve around choices, changes, consequences, and control" (Interview, 8-16-85).

SECOND TEACHER

"O.k., after you get them (the students) to come in and they commit their time, it is important to develop a greater awareness of some area like challenges and making choices. They need to understand that if they are not happy in life, they don't feel fulfilled or if they feel bored or restless or frustrated or angry, what are they choosing? They need to understand that they can choose otherwise. Giving them a few skills, a few experiences where they have to make some other choices...Try a new behavior. It's very important...I think because this is a court sponsored program, it's recognized that people are doing things, getting themselves into trouble with the law and some changes have to be made. Some changes in awareness and consequently in behavior" (Interview, 10-9-85).

The teachers emphasized "choice," "change," and "control" through writings on the board, through assigned classroom exercises, through interactions with the students, and through written responses on the students' papers.

<u>The teachers emphasized "choice," "change," and "control" through writings on the board</u>.

Every class session one of the teachers in particular used the writings on the board for class discussions. These writings invariably focused on "choice," "change," and "control" as illustrated by the following examples:

a. Dare to change
   Dare to risk
b. I am all I have chosen to be
   I can be more--better/different
   I dare to change
c. Be child-like, not child-ish
   I can do it, I can do it
   If I put my mind to "it"
   "It" is anything you choose
d. Choices are followed by changes
   Have to dare to be different
   Have to dare to risk
e. I can be happy or I can be sad
   I always and in all ways have a choice
   I can be healthy or I can be ill
   I can be educated or I can be illiterate
   I can be involved with the criminal justice system or I can be free
   It starts with attitude, making choices
f. I am poised, patient, positive
   I am in control
g. If I change my attitude,
   I change my world
h. Life is a mental journey
   My thoughts control my trip
i. If it's to be
   It's up to me
j. Choices, changes, consequences
   If I say I can, I can
   If I say I can't, I don't want to
   No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. (Eleanor Roosevelt)

(Excerpts from Fieldnotes)

<u>The teachers emphasized "choice," "change," and "control" through assigned exercises</u>.

The following excerpts from fieldnotes illustrate the teacher's emphasis on "choice," "change," and "control" in assigned exercises:

"In one of the class sessions the teacher introduced an exercise to teach control. Each student was asked to deeply inhale, pause, mentally repeat the words, "I am in control." and then slowly exhale. The students practiced this sequence at their desks, and then the teacher asked them to stand, walk around the room, and at intervals signaled by a clap of the teacher's hands, stop and use the sequence. The teacher told the students she wanted them to practice this exercise

during the week, particularly if one of them was faced with a stressful situation. The next week in class the students discussed how they had used the exercise in their daily lives."

"Another exercise involved the students breaking into groups to discuss what makes them lose control. Each student had to relate to the others in the group what caused him or her to lose control. These groups then "reported out" to the teacher, and the factors causing loss of control were listed on the board and discussed."

"The students were given a written assignment to keep a daily journal during the week of what they changed, how they changed, and how they felt about the change."

"During class one day the students were asked to change their seating arrangement. The discussion then focused on how this felt and the symbolism of those feelings."

(Excerpts from Fieldnotes)

The teachers emphasized "choice," "change," and "control" in their written responses on the students' papers.

The following examples illustrate the teachers' written responses on various students' papers:

a. If you want to change you will.
b. To change the world, you must start with yourself.
c. You won't need to if you stay in control of your thoughts and actions.
d. Life is a constant state of change. Don't you want to consciously control some of these changes?
e. Move slowly. Make positive choices and changes.
f. Everything always has both a positive and a negative aspect. The choice is yours to see and do the positive.
g. Dare to be different! But, don't be "different" just on a "dare!"
h. Awareness brings simple changes to our lives.
i. So why not be happy? Why are you choosing to pretend?

(Recorded from Student Documents)

The teachers emphasized "change" in their interactions with the students.

The following examples illustrate the teachers' verbal responses to students during class:

a. Teacher: You need to tune in and make changes.
b. Teacher: Are you consciously changing?
c. Teacher: You have to change consciously.
d. Teacher: Have you been afraid to change because of your friends?
e. Teacher: This week dare to change consciously.
f. Teacher: Doing brings about changes. As you begin to change, you are doing. It's a vital circle, not a vicious one.
g. Teacher: I've talked a lot about change. In order to change, we have to have experiences. We can change by taking control.

(Excerpts from Fieldnotes)

During an interview with the researcher one of the students expressed his feelings about the teacher's focus on change.

"It's almost like I'm trying to be changed. To change or do this that I really don't want to do. If I wanted to do it, I'd do it...She (the teacher) stresses on how to change this or to change that or how to go about making changes. What if I don't have anything I want to change?"

When the researcher suggested the student just tell the teacher he had nothing he wanted to change, he replied, "She would say, (mimicking the teacher's voice) 'Oh, there's always got to be something you want to change.'"

(Interview, 2-1-84)

The teachers in this program were faced with the responsibility for motivating and training their students to engage in more conforming behaviors and thus to perform in roles that were more beneficial to society. This involved convincing the students to take control, to make better

choices, and ultimately to change their behavior from that of deviancy to conformity. When the researcher asked one of the teachers the overall purpose of the program, the teacher responded, "To help people live more fulfilling lives. The most practical purpose of the program, of course, is to get them (the students) to understand why they shoplifted or committed the illegal offense. What were the feelings, thoughts, situations that contributed to their acting in that way and, of course, helping them look at alternatives that they have to doing that again. But, I think you can also go way beyond that and look at how that person is living their life in general. Are they happy? Are they fulfilled? Are they using the potential that is within them? There's not a person on the face of this earth, as far as I'm concerned, that can't learn more and can't do more in some way or another... learn more about yourself and be more positive and really stop and take a look at the attitude they have toward life and themselves and how do those attitudes influence what they do and shape what they become. Can they change those attitudes? Can you get a Mary (pseudonym) to say, 'Hey, wait a minute. No, I'm not going to jump back into the rat race; I really don't want that.'? Can you get a Joe (pseudonym) to stop using drugs and make the effort?" (Interview, 10-9-85).

The teacher's responsibility for motivating students to change to more conforming behaviors was not an easy task. Success, in large part, depended on the students' receptivity

to change. The data support that the students in this program perceived their involvement with the criminal justice system as a major disruption in their lives--as a crisis. Research studies indicate that when people are faced with a crisis in their lives, they are often disappointed with themselves and change becomes an urgent and desirable necessity. Placing these offenders in a group situation that focused on learning more conforming behaviors may have been the most effective way of bringing about the desired changes. As stated by Douglas (1983), "Working on the basic assumption that group influence was largely responsible for shaping the individual, it is not hard to see why it should be suggested that groups should be created to use exactly the same kind of influence process to bring about desirable change. Many people when faced with crisis in their lives, or when reviewing the cumulative effect of their life for one reason or another, are often disappointed with some part or even with much of what stands revealed. Behavioural patterns, habits, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and responses to others tend to be unsatisfactory to the point of being disruptive of social life, handicapping, disorganizing, or even destructive. Thus change, defined as movement to a more agreeable and acceptable quality of living, becomes an urgent and desirable necessity" (p. 191).

Douglas elaborated on groups that attempt to enhance learning for the purpose of change. He cited Blumber and Golembiewski (1976) who see learning and change as occurring

together and listed Bennis's (1962) metagoals of laboratory education:

> 1 expanded consciousness and recognition of choice;
> 2 a spirit of enquiry;
> 3 authenticity in interpersonal relations, and
> 4 a collaborative conception of the authority relationship (p. 198).

The aim of this learning group is not to deal with a common problem but to attempt to reach the central being of any person, whether or not he or she apparently has a problem. According to Douglas (1983), the success of a group like Project Intercept is "...dependent on the existence of norms plus the addition of sanctions. It also requires high levels of interaction, a supportive milieu in which confrontation has a beneficial rather than a harmful outcome" (p. 194).

Although the members of a learning group may be exposed to information about behavior, their own and others, which can increase understanding, Douglas (1983) cautioned that this type of learning "seems to endure more in the form of knowledge of what is possible in a secure situation than become an influence on ordinary everyday behaviour" (p. 200). One of the reasons this may be true is because of the ambiguity about what it is the student needs to achieve and the processes that are affective in achieving "it." For example, the teacher's topics of "choice," "change," and "control" contained elements of vagueness that did not spell out the "what's" or "how's." Therefore, transferring this learning to everyday life became difficult. Another factor influencing this transition of learning in the classroom to

daily living is the degree to which the students internalize this learning so that its influence is independent of the source. According to Douglas, "...public conformity is not necessarily private acceptance and it is this (continuing conformity even when the pressure to conform is removed) that is the element of change" (pp. 43 and 44). Determining if and/or how the subjects of this study transferred the learning that occurred in the classroom to their everyday lives would involve further research beyond the scope of this study, but according to the testimonials of students in previous classes, this transference did take place. For example, two women who were interviewed for a newspaper article explained to the reporter how the class had personally affected them.

"My husband wants to know what the heck is happening to me," reported Mary Jo. "Even my kids say, 'Mommy, you're different.' And I am. I'm stopping to think before I act, and I'm saying what I really feel. I used to hold it inside until I blew up and said things I regretted later. I think first. I don't carry a purse when I go in the store anymore because it's too much temptation. I never had that foresight before. I like not having to be scared about what might happen."

Another female student expressed her thoughts:

"I don't know exactly when the transformation began. It started so slowly that those around me could see nothing. I always knew what kind of person I wanted to be, but I didn't know how to achieve this goal. I felt like a second-class person whose thoughts and feelings were of little value to those around me. When I realized I could be in control and couldn't change the world, only myself, I turned into who I wanted to be. I didn't look outside myself for proof that I was growing. It was inside me all the time" (Arents, 1983, p. 3).

One of the most influential factors in any learning group is the type of communication that occurs. In the

setting of this study the teacher engaged in a communication pattern of asking questions in order to elicit student responses.

Playing the Scene

THE TEACHER'S PREDOMINANT COMMUNICATION PATTERN IS TO ASK QUESTIONS IN ORDER TO ELICIT STUDENT RESPONSES.

In the theater a stage production is comprised of scenes. These scenes dictate who will perform and what type of actions and dialogue are appropriate for that context. One of the scenes that frequently occurred in the Project Intercept Program was a question-answer activity between the teacher and students. The students learned to pick up their cues for how to perform in this scene.

In examining the teachers' communication style, the researcher created a taxonomy and then tabulated the number of times the teachers' verbal behaviors, as recorded in the researcher's fieldnotes, fit into one of the categories. Table 3, A Taxonomy of the Teachers' Verbal Behaviors, indicates the results of this tabulation.

TABLE 3

A Taxonomy of the Teachers' Verbal Behaviors

Verbal Categories	Number of Times	Percentage of Total
Asks questions	714	53%
Gives opinion	182	13%
Uses sanctions	139	10%
Gives directions	138	10%
Gives information	95	7%
Makes supporting remarks	47	4%
Reveals personal information	29	2%
Clarifies or summarizes	16	1%

As illustrated by this table, 53% of the teacher's verbal behavior was asking questions. The purpose of asking these questions was to elicit responses from the students. One of the teachers in an interview with the researcher expressed her feelings, "I think one of the objectives of the program and one of my responsibilities as a teacher is to be able to question people. You can ask them, 'What are your values? How are you living with this? What are your goals in life? You're telling me what you want out of life, but what are you willing to give?' Get people to think and ask themselves, 'What am I doing with my life? Am I spending my life in front of the TV set? I say I want to be off ADC; well, I'd better do something different. Maybe I should enroll in a skills training program or get myself a job if I already have some skills.' We have to ask questions. Otherwise, it would just be too easy for people to squeak by and not accomplish anything" (Interview, 10-9-85).

The following excerpt from the fieldnotes is a sample of this question-answer activity between the teacher and an older student who had been working long hours of overtime at his job. He was close to retirement and was reluctant to refuse the overtime for fear of losing his job.

Teacher: Ed, when you shoplifted, what were your feelings and what was the situation prior to your shoplifting?
Ed: I know I won't do it again.
Teacher: Refresh my memory. What was the situation?
Ed: I was overworked and overtired. The last two weeks I'd been really busy.
Teacher: You say you won't shoplift again?
Ed: I don't go grocery shopping anymore.
Teacher: What do you do when you're hungry?
Ed: I take my wife.
Teacher: So you're using the buddy system with your wife. Do you think there will be a time when you can go to the store by yourself?
Ed doesn't respond. The teacher continues.
Teacher: The real point is getting in touch and getting in charge of ourselves. Knowing that we can control our behavior. Having an inner awareness helps control. When you are tired and burned out, it's hard to maintain control. How can you take better care of yourself, Ed?
Ed: Get more rest.
Teacher: Can everyone see a pattern to what Ed has done? He's tired. He's burned out and he doesn't have control.
Ed: Sometimes I also have an "I don't care" attitude.
Teacher: Yea. We get to where we don't want anyone else around. We don't want anyone else to bother us and we have to find a way to build ourselves up.
Ed: I was on the road for 25 years. I thought my job would be easier by working in the plant. So far that's not true. We have a new building going up and that should help.
Teacher: When will that be completed?
Ed: In March. (He pauses and then sort of laughs.) But I didn't say what year.
Teacher: They can't take care of you, Ed. You do understand?
Ed: I know. I have to take care of myself. I need to rest more at home.
Teacher: Are you a workaholic?
Ed: Yea. I guess so.
Teacher: Each of us has a pattern to our behavior. Some patterns are good and some patterns are bad...Ed,

you have to make changes in your life. You must learn when to stop and say, "I need time for me." Have you talked to your boss about being burned out?

Ed: No.

Teacher: What would happen if you did?

Ed: I don't know. I'm one of the older ones. There's only one other person older than me and he's going to retire. I have two and a half years to go before I can retire. I don't want to lose my job.

Teacher: Well, we can't sit on the sideline. We need to take better care of ourselves.

Ed: I go to work and I don't expect things to happen, but problems arise and I have to handle them.

Teacher: Still, you can't work until you lose control. You have to learn to take care of yourself.

At this point the teacher turns her focus to a young man in the class and begins asking him questions.

During this interaction the teacher's predominant communication pattern was to ask Ed (pseudonym) questions in order to elicit responses from him. Initially the students resented the questions and referred to the activity as "taking a turn on the hot seat." In time, however, they adjusted to "being in the conversational spotlight" and learned to respond with more than one-word answers. One of the students expressed his feelings about the activity, "I thought that she (the teacher) talked, she talked to me, but at times she talked at me because I wasn't really used to that question after question. You know, it was consistent, she was consistent with the questions. At first I was really--you know--like you know--I couldn't wait until she stopped. I wanted her to stop, but I'd say, maybe after the fourth week, I got used to it, and I was waiting for her to come on with the questions, so I kind of got used to it. It didn't really bother me after the fourth week...Most of the time it made me think, cause like, maybe the third question

she'd ask, it would make you think. During the first two I'd answer with a quick 'yes' and then the third time she'd ask me something she'd make me really think and that would really bring me out" (Interview, 8-5-85).

According to McDermott, et. al.(1976), the object of any ethnography is to describe people's activities and to locate these activities within the various contexts for their occurrence. Contexts are constituted by what people are doing and where and when they are doing it (Erickson and Schultz, 1977). These contexts are "(1) in some way, formulated by the members of the group: in words or gestures; (2) in some way, usually by postural positioning, acted out in form as well as content; (3) behaviorally oriented to as patterns by the members at certain significant times, and (4) used by the members to hold each other accountable" (McDermott, et. al. 1976, p. 3). Social competence involves knowing what context one is in and when contexts change.

The question-answer activity in the Project Intercept Program constituted a context in which the students learned interactionally appropriate behavior for casting their knowledge (Mehan, 1980). When the teacher, primarily through verbal cues, put a student "on the hot seat," this student learned to listen to the teacher's questions, maintain eye contact, and provide the appropriate responses. The remaining students in the setting learned to sit quietly, but stay alert in case their turn was next.

The researcher observed that the teacher's questions and the student's responses often related to identified needs or problems, mutually accepted by both participants in the activity. Further investigation by the researcher revealed that both teachers did indeed set goals or a focus for each student. One of the teachers elaborated on this in an interview with the researcher after a group had completed all the sessions, "I pretty much was able to get people at the goals that I had...at the place that I wanted them to be...What I normally do is get to know the people and I just get a feeling for what they need either from what they have expressed or from what they don't say" (Interview, 10-9-85).

In the preceding interaction between the teacher and Ed, Ed accepted the teacher's assessment that he needed to slow down and take time for himself in order to have more control over his life. Therefore, he was able to appropriately interact during the question-answer activity. Without this mutual acceptance, however, the interaction broke down. The following excerpt from the fieldnotes illustrates this break down when a student refused to respond to the teacher's questions because she did not accept the teacher's presenting problem that she, the student, was not exercising "choice."

"This is the sixth session for this group and the teacher asks each student to share information about himself/herself,
Student: I had a terrible weekend.
Teacher: Why?
Student: Because nothing is going right.
Teacher: What does that mean?
Student: Nothing is going like I wanted it to happen.
Teacher: Can you give an example?
Student: No.

Teacher: Life is a lot easier when the universe is spinning on your fingertip.
Student: Yea.
Teacher: You recognize that, huh? What are you doing about it?
Student: Nothing.
Teacher: Do you have a choice?
Student: No.

The teacher addresses her question to the class.

Teacher: How many in here don't have a choice?

No one raises his/her hand.

Teacher: That means that everyone has a choice.

The teacher makes other statements about "choice," interacts with some of the other students, and once again focuses on this student.

Teacher: When you sit around and wait for others to create your happiness, you're in trouble. You have a choice. Am I right, Betty?
Student: I pass.

(The student's face is flushed, her legs are crossed, and she is rapidly moving one of her legs back and forth. Her eyes are focused on her lap, not on the teacher.)

(Fieldnotes, 7-15-85)

The student's refusal to mutually accept the content of the interaction--that she had a choice--rendered her incapable of appropriately participating in the activity.

An area that did gain acceptance by a majority of the students was that after participation in the program the students perceived they had more internal control over their daily lives.

The Critic's Review

When the curtain falls on the final performance of a stage production, the actors often reminisce about their involvement and assess what the experiences have meant to them. The subjects of this study were asked to reflect on the past ten weeks and to consider the perceived benefits of

their involvement in the Project Intercept Program. The following two assertions present the findings related to these perceived benefits.

THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THEY HAVE MORE INTERNAL CONTROL OVER THEIR DAILY LIVES AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.

The majority of the students perceived that one of the results of participating in the Project Intercept Program was they had more control over their lives. The following student comments document their feelings:

a. It (the class) has made me stronger and more in control. It has opened a door I had overlooked before.

b. I feel better about myself and about who I am and what I do in my life. I'm going to control what I do and change some things that should have been changed a long time ago.

c. The thing that has helped me the most is learning that I am in control of my life.

d. I have learned to have more control of my life.

e. It (the class) has made me aware of the dynamics of change and given me what I need to take control of my life.

f. I can take control of my life. People are responding to the "new" me positively. I have changed many of the negative things in my life and this class has made me determined to continue to change, to create the person I want to be.

(Recorded from Student Documents)

Goldfried and Merbaum (1973) defined self-control as: "a personal decision arrived at through conscious deliberation for the purpose of instigating action which is designed to

achieve certain desired outcomes or goals as determined by the individual himself" (p. 102). They listed the five basic ingredients for self-control:

1. the individual himself or herself determines the goal or direction of change;
2. she or he must deliberately and consciously rearrange his or her life or environment to achieve the set goal;
3. because self-control refers to outcome, the success of one's actions, not the actions themselves, is important;
4. self-control is not a general characteristic; a person can have good self-control in some aspects of his or her life and not in others, and
5. finally, and most important, self-control is learned. Any individual with the right experiences can gain some control over his or her behavior.

The subjects perceived that the experiences they had in Project Intercept helped them gain control over their lives. They used various techniques to achieve this feeling of being in control. For example, several of the students informed the researcher they silently repeated the words, "I am in control" when they were faced with stressful situations. Goldfried and Merbaum (1973) stated that self-instruction and self-reinforcement can function as behavior regulators. "Therapists have learned that persons can 'talk to themselves' in ways that profoundly affect their behavior" (p. 104).

The researcher observed that the teachers seemed to operate from the hypothesis that many of the students did not think before they acted. Therefore, these teachers encouraged the students to focus on thinking they were in control of situations and then to translate these thoughts into corresponding actions that demonstrated they, in fact,

were in control. James Allen in a poem from As a Man Thinketh expressed this concept that man, by virtue of his thoughts, is the maker of himself:

> Mind is the Master power that moulds and makes,
> And Man is Mind, and evermore he takes
> The tool of Thought, and, shaping what he wills
> Brings forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills:
> He thinks in secret, and it comes to pass:
> Environment is but his looking-glass.
>
> (Allen, 1939, p. 5)

In interviews with the researcher the students cited specific examples that from their perspectives illustrated their having more control over their lives. Some of these examples are as follows:

One of the students told her husband that on Monday nights it was his responsibility to take care of their daughter. She informed him she was planning on taking classes at one of the colleges in order to earn a degree. This was something she had been wanting to do and she decided now was the time to do it (Interview 6-15-85).

Another student perceived she no longer let her husband "pull her strings." Whenever he became angry, she did not allow him to upset her. Instead she remained calm by internally repeating the words, "I am in control." As a result, she perceived she no longer responded as a puppet; she felt she consciously chose how she would behave toward him (Interview, 6-20-85).

One young woman perceived she improved her relationship with her mother by not always reacting to her mother's criticism. As she explained the situation, "Our relationship is still not good, but it surely is better than it was" (Interview, 6-27-85).

One of the female students, who was engaged to be married, perceived she learned to focus on her own behavior and not the behavior of her fiancee. "I have learned that I cannot control others; I can only control myself" (Interview, 7-15-85).

As demonstrated by most of the preceding examples, the students perceived the class helped them in controlling their

reactions to others. In one of the class exercises the teacher instructed the students to "raise your arms; now, lower your left arm; now, lower your right arm; bend your right knee," etc. In the "talk down session" the teacher pointed out she was pulling the students' strings as one would pull the strings of a puppet. In discussing their feelings about this exercise, the students agreed that a person forfeits a lot of freedom and control when she or he allows others to define his or her behavior.

Another significant example involved the researcher and an older student who lived in an adult foster care home. This particular student was afraid to ride alone on the elevator at the college. Therefore, someone had to meet her at the front door every week and accompany her on the elevator. By the sixth class session this woman declared she wanted to learn to ride the elevator by herself. The researcher and this student rode up and down in the elevator until the woman felt comfortable pushing the buttons and felt secure on which floor she should exit the elevator. From then on no one had to meet the student at the front door.

The students in this program practiced classroom exercises that focused on their being in control of situations. These exercises included talking to themselves, practicing relaxation techniques, and recognizing their own reactive behavior. The teachers in this program encouraged the students to try new behaviors. It seemed that because the teacher and the students acted as a support group,

providing positive reinforcement, the students were willing to try new behaviors and to discuss their successes and sometimes their failures in the class sessions that followed their endeavors. This new behavior was often labeled as being in control. Therefore, the students perceived that they were, in fact, more in control of their own lives. As indicated by Goldfried and Merbaum (1973), "...self-control is learned. Any individual with the right experiences can gain some control over his behavior." However, Goldfried and Merbaum also pointed out, "Self-control is not a general characteristic; a person can have good self-control in some aspects of his or her life and not in others" (p. 102).

The student's perception of having more control was substantiated by the pre and postscores on the Rotter I-E Scale. The researcher collected these scores on 159 participants in the Project Intercept Program over a two year period. The Rotter I-E Scale is a forced-choice instrument consisting of 23 items and 6 filler items developed as a broad gauge instrument to allow for a low degree of prediction of behavior across a wide range of potential situations (Rotter, 1975). The Rotter I-E Scale was designed to measure locus of control which is a construct measuring one's perception of control in connection with the events of everyday life (Rotter, 1954, 1966, 1975; Leefcourt, 1966). Internal control reflects a belief that an individual's own actions, to a large degree, determine what happens to him or her. External control suggests that the individual has a

view of his or her own life as largely controlled by external forces such as luck, fate, or chance (McBride, 1982).

The researcher hypothesized that the students' scores on the Rotter I-E Scale would be affected by participation in the Project Intercept Program. Pre and posttests were administered to Project Intercept participants to test the hypothesis. The following information relates to the investigation:

SUBJECTS

The subjects were 159 participants in the Project Intercept Program, 100 females and 59 males.

PROCEDURE

During the first class session each subject completed the Rotter I-E Scale.

During the final class session each subject completed the Rotter I-E Scale.

A score of 0 was given for an internal response and a score of 1 for an external response with a possible scoring range of 0-23.

RESULTS

The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Repeated Measures

ANOVA of Pretest/Posttest Scores

Rotter I-E Scale

	$\bar{X}$	N	F
Pretest	7.7	159	14.0*
Posttest	6.6	159	

* $p < .05$

A significant difference was found between the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Rotter I-E Scale. Students tended to score in the direction of internal locus of control on the posttest. Seventeen percent of the subjects had no change between their pretest and posttest scores.

DISCUSSION

As was hypothesized, there was a significant difference between the pretest scores and the posttest scores of the participants in the Project Intercept Program. At first glance, this seems like a very important finding, but in reviewing the literature the researcher found an article by Rotter that offered a caution. "They (questionnaires) are also limited by their dependence on conscious awareness. For example, studies have shown that alcoholics (Goss and Morosko, 1970) are more internal in their test response scores than college students. It is possible that this is an accurate portrayal of alcoholics and that their alcoholism is related to their guilt over failure. However, it is more

likely that they have been told so many times and by so many people that their cure is 'up to them' that they have fully recognized that this is the attitude they are supposed to present to the staff when they are trying to appear cooperative in a treatment program" (Rotter, 1975, p. 62).

The pre and posttest subjects may in fact have perceived they had more internal control over events in their daily lives as a result of participating in the Project Intercept Program. Another possibility, however, is the program may have heightened the subjects' awareness of social desirability or, as stated by Rotter, the subjects were more consciously aware, and this awareness influenced the choices they made on the posttest. Further research would have to be done to determine which of the two explanations is applicable.

In addition to perceiving they had more control over their lives, most students perceived there were other ways in which they benefitted from their involvement in the Project Intercept Program and from their relationship with the teacher.

THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THEY BENEFIT FROM THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM AND FROM THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEACHER.

The last class session the students were asked to anonymously complete a form evaluating the program. The following information lists the percentage of subjects who checked the indicated area as one in which they benefitted as

a result of their involvement in the program:

a. 92% checked the program helped them to learn more about themselves;
b. 88% said the program encouraged them to try new behaviors;
c. 75% indicated the program increased their awareness about the seriousness of their offense;
d. 73% said the program provided skills for growth and change, and
e. 63% checked the program provided a setting for trust and support.

(Recorded from Student Evaluation Forms)

The following comments from student documents or interviews illustrate the students' perception that they benefitted from their involvement:

a. I have benefitted from this class in the fact that it has given me what I need to take control of my life and change it for the better. I really feel that my life has changed and that I am going to continue this change for the rest of my life.

b. I've learned that "if it's to be, it's up to me." This class has been more than just a class to prevent further criminal behavior...It has changed my life. It served as a second wind, getting me in touch with life.

c. I feel I benefitted a great deal from this class... I realize I'm the only one that can change my actions and behaviors in life. There may be risks involved, but I'm willing to take these.

d. I can't pinpoint what it is exactly, but the class is giving me self-confidence that I didn't have before.

(Recorded from Student Documents)

a. "I got a better understanding of myself and other people's feelings and different thoughts. Sometimes I catch myself thinking way ahead of time. The program has turned me around from being in trouble to getting into a good everyday living."

b. "I've learned to look inside myself and see the problems I have that nobody really cares about. I notice things about myself--things I do over and over again...Just like she (the teacher) was talking

week before last when she was talking to me about being a victim. I give someone something and I expect something back. If I don't get it, I get angry. It hadn't dawned on me that that was going on. That's something she helped me figure out."

c. "What have I gotten out of coming? Meeting people that have the same problems I have. I thought I was the only one in the world and I didn't know what I was going to do."

(Excerpts from Interviews with Students)

The students were asked to anonymously rate the teacher on the final evaluation form on a scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor. Sixty three percent of the students rated the teacher as excellent and thirty seven percent rated the teacher as good. During interviews with the researcher the students expressed their feelings about the teacher.

a. "She's good at taking time with each person. She doesn't just go to one for their answer and then go to another. She makes you think."

b. "...she's right down here on my level, too...and I feel I can talk to her about a lot of different things...It's not like she's sitting here and saying, 'Oh, I can't identify with that because I'm a teacher and you're a student.'"

c. "She talks to us like we're all together in this world. We can't make it unless we do things for one another. I feel good when I'm around her."

d. "I never thought I'd ever meet anybody like her to tell you the truth. But it just goes to show you that there are people like that. Kind of surprised me a lot...She's interested in your life and she wants you to be interested in her life."

(Excerpts from Student Interviews)

There were five discrepant cases, all of whom said they did not benefit from their involvement in the program. Their feelings about the teachers were as follows:

"I think she's a good teacher, but I think she should try to understand the problems the students have."

"I don't really agree with a lot of stuff she says...I think she's a little bit phony...I think she takes everything that happens and analyzes it. She's hyperanalytical."

"I think she's a phony...she's the one with a hang-up."

(Student responses in interviews with the researcher)

None of these students was considered cooperative by the teacher and four of the five did not receive much attention from the teacher as illustrated in earlier vignettes.

Perhaps one of the reasons the students felt they benefitted was because the program and the teacher were seen as alternatives to the courtroom and to the judge. Faced with the options, the students preferred an association with the educational system rather than the criminal justice system. This enabled them to be involved in an atmosphere of learning rather than one of punishment.

A recurring theme among the students was the feeling that the teacher really cared about them, that she listened, and that she had answers for solving problems. The students had faced a crisis in their lives and were experiencing a large dose of anxiety. They needed attention to their feelings and to their problems. The teachers in this program gave them this attention as well as advice and support. One of the teachers equated the class to a dumpster where the students could come and get rid of their trash. Had the students' circumstances been different, perhaps their feelings about the program and about the teacher would have been different, but as it was, the students appeared to

believe that their involvement was beneficial.

Another interpretation of this finding involves the influence of the teacher. The teacher was a powerful figure in this setting. She was required by the courts to submit a written evaluation of each student to the referring court representative. This evaluation, depending on its content, could result in positive or negative court imposed consequences for the student, such as either extended or shortened time on probation, referrals to other community programs, or, in the extreme, time in jail. The students were aware of this evaluation process. As one of the subjects stated in a follow-up interview a year after she had completed the program, "Some of us worried about how our probation would be affected. For example 'If I say too much, is she (the teacher) going to tell my probation officer and will I have to be on probation longer?'" (Interview, 8-8-86). Even though the teachers instructed the students to anonymously complete their evaluation forms, possibly the students didn't trust this anonymity and felt positive ratings would be viewed more favorably than negative ones.

The teachers' expectations may have been another factor affecting this finding. The teachers expected the students to benefit from their involvement in the program and told them so. Students frequently heard the teachers make comments, such as, "This class is a gift," "You have learned a lot; just think about it," "This class is like a friend," "We are one big family," "Think of all you've gotten from

this class" (Teachers' comments recorded from Fieldnotes). As stated previously, people tend to live up to expectations. George Bernard Shaw gave the following advice on his 90th birthday, "Remember, our conduct is influenced not by our experience but by our expectations" (Biddle, 1979, p. 115). Like a self-fulfilling prophecy, the teachers expected the students to benefit so the students perceived that they did, in fact, benefit.

Summary

The four assertions presented in this chapter are entitled "The Performance" because they represent patterns that emerged after the participants" extended involvement in the Project Intercept Program. At this stage both the teachers and the students had rehearsed their parts, understood their interdependency, and could aptly perform their roles.

THE TEACHER'S VOCABULARY INCLUDES "CHOICE," "CHANGE," AND "CONTROL" WHICH ARE THE BASIS FOR MOST CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.

During interviews with the researcher both teachers acknowledged that "choice," "change," and "control" were the basis for most of their classroom activities. The teachers emphasized "choice," "change," and "control" through writings on the board, through assigned classroom exercises, through interactions with the students, and through written responses on the students' papers.

The teachers in this program were faced with the responsibility for motivating and training their students to engage in more conforming behaviors and thus to perform in roles that were more beneficial to society. This involved convincing the students to take control, to make better choices, and ultimately to change their behavior from that of deviancy to conformity. These students appeared more receptive to change because they considered their involvement with the criminal justice system a crisis, and research studies indicate people faced with a crisis seek change as an urgent and desirable necessity. Under the circumstances placing these offenders in a group situation that focused on learning more conforming behaviors may have been the most effective way to bring about the desired changes.

One of the most influential factors in any learning group is the type of communication that occurs. In the setting of this study the teacher engaged in a communication pattern of asking questions in order to elicit student responses.

THE TEACHER'S PREDOMINANT COMMUNICATION PATTERN IS TO ASK QUESTIONS IN ORDER TO ELICIT STUDENT RESPONSES.

In examining the teachers' communication style, the researcher created a taxonomy and then tabulated the number of times the teacher's verbal behaviors, as recorded in the researcher's fieldnotes, fit into one of the categories. The researcher discovered that 53% of the teachers' verbal behavior was asking questions. As revealed by one of the

teachers in an interview with the researcher, the purpose of asking these questions was to elicit responses from the students.

This question-answer activity (which the students referred to as "the hot seat") constituted a context in which the students learned interactionally appropriate behavior. When the teacher, primarily through verbal cues, put a student "on the hot seat," this student learned to listen to the teacher's questions, maintain eye contact, and provide the appropriate responses. The remaining students in the setting learned to sit quietly, but stay alert in case their turn was next.

For this interaction to work there had to be a mutual acceptance of the student's need or problem as presented by the teacher because this presenting need or problem comprised the interactive content for the question-answer activity. If the student did not accept the teacher's presenting problem or need, the student could not appropriately participate in this context.

An area that did gain acceptance by a majority of the students was that after participation in the program the students perceived they had more internal control over their daily lives.

THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THEY HAVE MORE INTERNAL CONTROL OVER THEIR DAILY LIVES AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.

The majority of the students perceived that one of the results of participating in the Project Intercept Program was they had more control over their lives. These students felt that the classroom exercises gave them practice in maintaining control. These exercises included the students' talking to themselves, practicing relaxation techniques, and recognizing their own reactive behavior. The teachers in this program encouraged the students to try new behaviors. It seemed that because the teacher and the students acted as a support group, providing positive reinforcement, the students were willing to risk trying new behaviors and to discuss their successes and sometimes their failures in the class sessions that followed their endeavors. This new behavior was often labeled as being in control. Therefore, the students perceived that they were, in fact, more in control of their own lives. As indicated by Goldfried and Merbaum (1973), "...self-control is learned. Any individual with the right experiences can gain some control over his behavior." However, Goldfried and Merbaum also pointed out, "Self-control is not a general characteristic; a person can have good self-control in some aspects of his or her life and not in others" (p. 102).

The students' perception of have more control was substantiated by the pre and postscores on the Rotter I-E

Scale. The researcher collected these scores on 159 participants over a two year period. The Rotter I-E Scale is a forced-choice instrument designed to measure locus of control which is a construct measuring one's perception of control in connection with the events of everyday life (Rotter, 1966). Internal control reflects a belief that an individual's own actions, to a large degree, determine what happens to him or her. External control suggests that the individual has a view of his or her own life as largely controlled by external forces such as luck, fate, or chance (McBride, 1982). A significant difference was found between the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Rotter I-E Scale. Students tended to score in the direction of internal locus of control on the posttest.

The pre and posttest subjects may, in fact, have perceived they had more internal control over events in their daily lives as a result of participating in the Project Intercept Program. Another possibility, however, is the program may have heightened the subjects' awareness of social desirability or, as stated by Rotter, the subjects were more consciously aware, and this awareness influenced the choices they made on the posttest. Further research would have to be undertaken to determine which of the two explanations is applicable.

In addition to perceiving they had more control over their lives, most students perceived there were other ways in which they benefitted from their involvement in the Project

Intercept Program and their relationship with the teacher. THE STUDENTS PERCEIVE THEY BENEFIT FROM THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM AND FROM THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEACHER.

The students perceived they benefitted from the program in learning more about themselves, in trying new behaviors, in increasing their awareness about the seriousness of their offense, in learning skills for growth and change, and in being part of a setting that provided trust and support (From student evaluation forms). Sixty three percent of the students evaluated the teacher as excellent and thirty seven percent evaluated the teacher as good.

Perhaps one of the reasons the students felt they benefitted was because the program and the teacher were seen as alternatives to the courtroom and the judge. Faced with the options, the students preferred an association with the educational system rather than the criminal justice system. This enabled them to be involved in an atmosphere of learning rather than one of punishment.

Another factor influencing the students' perception of benefitting from the program was the students' feeling that the teacher really cared about them, that she listened, and that she had answers for solving problems. The students had faced a crisis in their lives and were experiencing a large dose of anxiety. They needed attention to their feelings and to their problems. The teachers in this program gave them this attention as well as advice and support.

A third explanation involves the influence of the teacher. The teacher was a powerful figure in this setting. She was required by the courts to submit a written evaluation of each student to the referring court representative. This evaluation, depending on its content, could result in positive or negative court imposed consequences for the students. The students were aware of this evaluation process and even though they anonymously completed their evaluation forms, perhaps they did not trust this anonymity, so positively rated the program and the teacher.

The teachers' expectations may have been another factor affecting this finding. The teachers expected the students to benefit from their involvement in the program and frequently told them so. Like a self-fulfilling prophecy, the teachers expected the students to benefit from the program, so the students perceived they did, in fact benefit.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary and Conclusions

In this study an alternative education program for first offender shoplifters was examined from the participants' perspectives. In conducting this study the researcher was guided by six research questions. The findings of the study provided answers to these research questions. The conclusions, which are presented as possibilities, not certainties, were then derived from the findings. In the summary each research question is stated, followed by the findings. Using this format, the researcher has rearranged and combined some of the questions and findings. The conclusions follow the summary.

Summary

WHAT IS THE STUDENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR OFFENDERS PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THE SETTING?

Prior to participation in the program the students perceive the alternative education program for offenders will focus on punishment.

Initially the student sees himself or herself as being different from the other participants in the setting.

The students' perception that this alternative education program would focus on punishment is understandable because of the unusual relationship that existed between the criminal

justice system and the educational system. These two systems had joined forces to address a common problem--the problem of encouraging conformity for the benefit of society. Strange as it may seem, their areas of responsibility were complementary for addressing this problem. The criminal justice system was responsible for monitoring society's behavior in order to identify acts of deviancy and for establishing consequences for this deviancy. The educational system was responsible for teaching these non-conforming adults more appropriate behaviors. Representatives of these two systems believed that by establishing this complementary relationship, they could increase their effectiveness. Even though this alternative education program was under the auspices of the educational system, the students saw it as an extension of the criminal justice system, a system that determines punishment for those who break the law.

The classroom in this study was a social structure organized around interactive events. For the students to participate in these events they first had to accept membership in the group. Initially they were reluctant to do so because accepting membership in the group also meant accepting the deviant identity that was attached. As indicated in the findings, the students entered the setting believing the other participants were offenders but they themselves were not. "Raggy looking persons, low life scum, crooks, cut throats, and motorcycle gangs" were the descriptors initially used by the students to portray their

image of the others in the class. Imposing this negative stereotype on offenders is a common practice. However, as indicated by the descriptions of the key informants; Katie, Marilyn, and Jane; offenders frequently are average people who have engaged in a deviant act. It is the apprehension and conviction that identify these people as offenders, not any physical or material characteristics. In a follow-up study after completion of the program the researcher found that Katie was enrolled in an educational program and Marilyn was still married and had entered a new profession. Both of these women had resumed a normal life in society without any visible signs of their previous offender status. The only follow-up information the researcher was able to obtain about Jane was that Jane's telephone had been disconnected. Although initially the students saw themselves as being different from the other participants, the teachers in the program were able to shift this focus on differences to a focus on similarities. Thus, a sense of group membership emerged among the students.

WHAT IS THE OFFENDER'S/STUDENT'S PERCEPTION OF HIS OR HER INITIAL INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COURT SYSTEM?

The offender/student perceives his or her initial involvement with the court system as a negative experience.

The subjects' negative feelings about the criminal justice system also provided an impetus for their willingness to accept membership in this alternative education program. Given an option, the students preferred an association with

the educational system rather than the criminal justice system. With the focus of the criminal justice system on punishment and the focus of the educational system on learning, the students' preference is easily justified. One of the students expressed her feelings, "When I go to court, I feel like a criminal; when I come to the college, I feel like a student" (Interview, 2-22-84).

HOW DO THE STUDENTS DEFINE AND INTERPRET THEIR ROLE IN THIS SETTING?

Students learn appropriate role behavior for this setting primarily from the teacher.

Students perceive appropriate role behavior is "to participate."

Appropriate role behavior includes learning to talk like the teacher.

Being a student in this alternative education program meant learning how to behave appropriately in the classroom. According to Erickson (1977), "School classrooms are settings in which special attention is paid to appropriate ways of behaving" (p. 65). The person who appeared to be in charge of establishing what constituted appropriate behavior was the teacher. She was the one who established the rules; who managed the interactive events; and who shaped the students' behavior, by frequency of interaction and by using not only verbal sanctions but also nonverbal sanctions, such as ignoring students' comments. She, in essence, was the one who established the social order for this environment.

The students were expected to learn how to appropriately interact in this classroom. Initially the teacher devoted her energy to simply getting the students to interact and then she focused on teaching them how to appropriately interact. Under the teacher's tutelage the students practiced and many were able to achieve what Mehan (1980) referred to as an "interactional competence." The students individually learned the requisite skills, abilities, and knowledge necessary for participating in this environment. This learning then was referenced to the other participants, especially the teacher, and to the situational events that occurred. Interactional etiquette included knowing and displaying how to interact, when to interact, and with whom to interact. These became the indicators of a student's interactional competence.

Using the Getzels-Guba model which defines behavior as a function of role interacting with personality, the researcher found that in this setting the students' role was maximized and personality was minimized. That is, behavior was more a function of the participants' performing their student roles defined by the expectations attached to them than a function of the personalities of the individuals.

Not all students were equal in their learning. Some learned faster than others and these students often served as role models for those who were still struggling to grasp the meaning of appropriate behavior. There were a few students who at times demonstrated appropriate behavior and at times

they didn't. The teachers often labeled these students as "students who just want attention." Perhaps they did want attention, but their inconsistent behavior often succeeded in diverting the teacher's focus from them to some other topic. These students appeared to have their own agenda and their own rules of conduct, one of which was "Behave according to what you can get away with--but don't push it too far."

A few of the students failed to learn how to perform in this setting or if they did learn, they failed to display this learning. This was the group that usually comprised the discrepant cases of the study. Understanding this group presents difficulties because the teacher said these students had problems resulting from the students' failure to invest in the program. Most of these students said they had problems because the program and/or the teacher didn't offer anything for them. Recognizing the mutual responsibility and the mutual influence of the teacher/student relationship, the researcher feels this is an area that merits additional research.

Ironically, this group of discrepant cases served as the deviants of this social structure. In this deviant role they represented a microcosm of the role all the students/offenders had originally played in the larger society. Most of the students/offenders complied with the role expectations in the classroom setting, but as in any social structure there were those who refused to conform.

The teacher's vocabulary was of special significance in this social context. By adopting the teacher's vocabulary, the students had a common identity not only with the teacher but also with the other students. Thus, this vocabulary became a symbol of belonging. In addition, the vocabulary served as a symbol of status. The teacher more frequently interacted with the students who learned to talk like the teacher, primarily because the common vocabulary allowed for a smooth flow of communication. Adopting the teacher's vocabulary was the nexus to effective communication. This vocabulary provided a vehicle for communication which enabled both the teacher and the students to perform more effectively in their interactive roles. In addition, this vocabulary was the content for most classroom activities.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES?

WHAT IS THE PREDOMINANT NATURE OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TEACHER AND THE STUDENTS?

The teacher focuses primarily on "change," "control," and "choice" which form the basis for classroom activities.

The teacher's predominant communication pattern is to ask questions in order elicit student responses.

As mentioned previously, the classroom in this study was a social structure organized around interactive events. These events were interactional configurations definable by form and content. They were also definable by what the participants were doing and where and how they were doing it, which, according to Erickson and Schultz (1977), constitutes

a context. The researcher has categorized these interactive events as follows:

1. entering the classroom;
2. taking over the class by the teacher;
3. warming up the class;
4. taking a turn on the hot seat--a question-answer activity;
5. taking a break, and
6. dismissing the class.

The teacher's role, as well as the roles of the students, varied with the event. For example, during the question-answer activity the teacher was like a switchboard operator (to borrow Erickson and Mohatt's metaphor, 1982) in that she decided who would talk and how long they would talk. However, during the breaks the teacher took on the role of an active listener, giving her full attention to any student who needed her.

In order for these interactive events to work, all participants had to understand and be able to perform their parts. They had to know when to act as a member of the audience, when to move to center stage, and when to become the director. In addition, there had to be a mutual acceptance of content. Often the teacher focused the interaction on her assessment of a student's problem. If the student didn't agree with the teacher's assessment, the structure of the activity disintegrated.

One of the problems with the classroom activities was being able to identify referents for the words, such as "choice," change," and "control," which were a major portion of the lessons. These were abstract concepts that were

difficult for the students to translate into actions. The object of these lessons was to teach the students to engage in more conforming behaviors, but one can only conjecture that these lessons were transferred to the students' daily lives.

FROM THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM?

UPON COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM WHAT ARE THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHER?

The students perceive they have more internal control over their daily lives as a result of participating in the program.

The students perceive they benefit from their involvement in the program and from their relationship with the teacher.

The students perceived that one of the results of their participation in this alternative education program was they had more control over their lives. This perception was substantiated by pre and posttest scores on the Rotter I-E Scale given to program participants over a two year period. This scale measures a person's perception of locus of control. Internal control reflects a belief that an individual's own actions, to a large degree, determine what happens to him or her. External control suggests that the individual has a view of his or her own life as largely controlled by external forces such as luck, fate, or chance (McBride, 1982). The students' postscores moved in the direction of internal control.

The students may, in fact, have gained more control over their lives as a result of participation in this program.

That would be in keeping with Thomas Huxley's view of education, "Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not" (Educational USA, 1985). Another possibility is that the students' awareness of control was increased. At issue in this setting was not only control over daily lives but also control in the classroom. Several students expressed concern about their perception that the teacher was trying to control them. One of these students stated her feelings in the following journal entry she addressed to the teacher:

> You are not in control of my life. There is a poem that says,
>
> 'Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow.
> Don't walk behind me, I may not lead.
> Just walk beside me and be my friend.'
>
> (Excerpt from Student Journal)

Even though the teacher did exert control, the students perceived she cared about them. This was important because these students' lives had been disrupted as a result of their offenses, and they needed to feel support. While involved in the program, one of the students wrote a poem that reflects his initial feelings of anxiety and being alone but in time changing these feelings to being centered again and being healed.

A full moon
Or just a silhouette

It's reflection
Determined by the shadow

My shadow/The shadow
Those feelings, experiences
They cover and shade
Potential, darkened and turned inside

Covered up
Underneath and capped over
Inner turmoil bound by the greyness of The Shadow
Like a pinball
Feelings scatter and bounce
Clamoring for escape
Acting out
Hurt, anxious, alone
All this energy, yet exhausted

Grasping
To care for myself
To be centered again
To explore creation's beauty
To relax in new ideas
To be in touch with who I am
To create and heal.

(Written by a Project Intercept student)

As indicated by the last verse of the poem and by the researcher's interviews with the student, this individual perceived that the program helped him sort out his feelings, feel positively about himself again, learn from his mistake, and discover more about himself. A majority of the other students involved in the program also identified with these benefits.

Conclusions

A goal of this alternative education program was to motivate the students to engage in more conforming behaviors. The findings indicate that in all probability this did occur. In a follow-up survey of a sampling of the subjects one year after completion of the Project Intercept Program, all reported they had had no reinvolvement with the criminal

justice system. This follow-up survey constituted a very small sample because the researcher had difficulty contacting the program participants. One of the problems was some of the subjects had moved and there was no way to locate them. Another problem was the researcher had difficulty reaching the subjects by telephone. The researcher could not leave a message for a return call because she did not want to create an awkward situation for the subject if others in the household were not aware of the subject's participation in the program. A third problem was some of the subjects preferred not to talk with the researcher after completion of the program. For example, one day the researcher walked into a store and saw one of the subjects. The researcher approached the subject and exchanged greetings. Without hesitation the subject put down the merchandise she had in her hand, turned around, and walked out of the store. The researcher's presence seemed to increase the subject's level of anxiety.

A 1976 survey of students participating in a program similar to Project Intercept indicated a lower recidivism rate among program participants than among offenders who were non-participants. Court personnel who refer offenders to this alternative education program claim their referrals do not return through the criminal justice system's revolving door. It appears the criminal justice system and the educational system in working together are more effective in their roles as the gatekeepers of conformity.

According to Erikson in Social Psychology through Symbolic Interaction (1970), "deviance can be defined as conduct which is generally thought to require the attention of social control agencies--that is conduct about which 'something should be done'" (p. 710). This "something that should be done" usually involves a "sharp rite of transition," moving the individual out of his or her normal position in society and transferring him or her into a distant deviant role. Erikson stated the ceremonies which accomplish this change of status have three related phases--they provide a formal confrontation between the deviant suspect and representatives of his or her community (the criminal justice system); they announce some judgment about the nature of the individual's deviance (a sentence); and they perform an act of social placement, assigning the individual to a special role (as that of participant in the Project Intercept Program). Most provisional roles that are conferred by society include some kind of final ceremony to mark the individual's movement out of the role. However, the roles allotted to the deviant seldom make allowance for this type of passage. As a result, the deviant often returns home with no proper license to resume a normal life in the community. There has been no ceremony to cancel out the stigmas imposed upon him or her by the earlier ceremonies (Erikson, 1970).

Theoretically, the Project Intercept Program had a two-fold purpose. It served as a part of the initial ceremony in

that the program was the social placement for the individual in his or her provisional role. However, the Project Intercept Program also provided a final ceremony for cancelling out the stigmas of the deviant role and restoring the individual's license to resume a normal life in the community. Without this ceremony of cancellation and restoration the individual was left to wonder if she or he had graduated from the deviant role and consequently, might respond to this uncertainty by resuming deviant activity.

Initially the program provided a social structure in which belonging involved the members' accepting responsibility for their deviant acts. Over a period of time through group interaction wounded egos were healed, identities were restored, and conforming behaviors were adopted. Thus, the Project Intercept Program provided a means of permitting "re-entry into normal social life for persons who have spent a period of time in the deviant ranks and no longer have any special need to remain there" (Erikson, 1970, p. 716).

To more specifically examine this process, an individual's attention can vacillate back and forth between the self and the environment. Controlling this vacillation involves what Wicklund (1980) labeled self-awareness-engendering manipulation. Because the thrust of the Project Intercept Program was to focus the offenders'/students' attention on self-awareness, the researcher feels this program was a means of controlling attention. According to

Wicklund, the intent of such control is to increase the amount of time spent in self-directed attention. Thus, the Project Intercept Program focused on bringing forth a general state of self-orientation.

Given, people tend to attribute responsibility in terms of whatever lies at the center of their attention, then a self-oriented person will see himself or herself as the source or cause of whatever is to be explained. Therefore, an outcome of self-directed attention is an individual will assume responsibility for his or her own behavior.

One of the purposes of this self-focused attention was to encourage the Project Intercept program participants to realize the discrepancies in their lives. For example, when a person is faced with a highly salient personal discrepancy, such as shoplifting, research studies indicate the person will realize the discrepancy and this realization will prompt an unfavorable self-evaluation, creating discomfort. In order to reduce this discomfort, the individual will either avoid thinking about this within-self discrepancy or seek to reduce the discrepancy. According to Wicklund (1980), "...when the person remains self-aware without the possibility of avoidance the primary route to reduction of the discomfort is to cope directly with the salient discrepancy...In short, discrepancy reduction means an effort to bring the present condition of oneself into line with an aspiration or ideal--an 'end point' for behavior. More

generally it means the attempt to make different parts of the self consistent with one another" (p. 193).

For those first offender adult shoplifters who did not participate in the Project Intercept Program the assumption is these shoplifters reduced their discomfort by avoidance. By participating in the program, the offenders were able to cope directly with their act of shoplifting through an examination of their discrepancy in a supportive atmosphere and through self-awareness that focused on engaging in more consistent, conforming behaviors. Studies cited in Psychology of Group Influence (1980) indicated that conformity does increase with self-awareness (Duval, 1972, 1976; Wicklund and Duval, 1971). This research supports the self-awareness theory that when a person behaves in a way that falls short of his or her rules or goals, this individual through self-awareness will try to bring these behaviors into line with the rules or goals (Wicklund, 1980).

Using group influence to increase self-awareness is a common practice. In the Project Intercept Program group interaction, particularly interaction between the students and the teacher, was used to direct the individual's attention to self. Theoretically, this self-awareness within the context of the group will influence the group members to steer their behaviors in the direction of acceptable societal standards (Wicklund, 1980). These societal standards should then serve as a deterrent for group members engaging in further deviant acts. In summary, the Project Intercept

Program provided an environment in which the participating members could reduce their discrepancy discomfort by examining their behaviors and through self-awareness work toward engaging in more consistent, conforming behaviors.

A final observation about the discrepant cases in this study is that these cases constituted a subgroup whose energies seemed to be directed toward distracting attention from self. In order to accomplish this, these individuals often would not participate in the class sessions but when they did, they exhibited defensive behaviors. The resulting consequence was the teacher did not frequently interact with them. It was difficult for the researcher to determine the motivation for these students' behavior. A theory is this subgroup chose Wicklund's (1980) first alternative for discrepancy reduction--that of avoidance. If this theory is valid, then it is understandable that because the nature of the interaction in the class sessions was evaluative and focused on self, most of the students in this subgroup accepted the role of passive spectator. The researcher's observation is this subgroup was successful in accomplishing their goal--the avoidance of a focus on their own self-awareness.

Implications for Further Research

One of the fascinating, but also frustrating, qualities of ethnographic research is it never ends. This method of research produces findings that often generate more questions

for additional research than provide answers. Some of the areas identified by the researcher as a result of this study that need additional research are as follows:

Additional ethnographic studies that focus on students' behavior outside of the alternative education classroom to test if there is a relationship between conformity in the classroom and social conformity outside the classroom;

Additional quantitative studies that measure recidivism among offenders who have been involved in alternative education programs;

Additional ethnographic studies that focus on why adults do not conform in alternative educational classrooms;

Additional ethnographic studies that focus on why adults do not conform in regular educational classrooms;

Additional ethnographic studies that focus on the use and retention of learning after completion of alternative education programs;

Additional quantitative studies using a pre and post measurement of dependent variables, such as attitudes, self-control, and self-concept for offenders who participate in an alternative education program as compared with a control group comprised of offenders who are not diverted out of the criminal justice system.

This additional research should contribute to a better understanding of alternative education programs for special adult populations.

Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations which she hopes will be helpful for future planning:

The Project Intercept Program should be a model for addressing common problems of particular target groups. As proposed by Egan (1982), similar problems held in common by large numbers of people can be addressed by similar resources. It is practical and economically feasible to create common programs for common problems.

An important part of this program should be a discussion of the problem or "traumatizing event and the provision of whatever cathartic or desensitization is necessary" (Guerney, Stollack, and Guerney, 1971).

The skills training educational model is an effective model for achieving change through educational intervention. This skills training should focus on specific behaviors which the individual can apply to solve present and future problems.

An important part of this skills training should be the practice and demonstration of these skills in the classroom. According to Cash in Teaching Psychological Skills, homework assignments or outside practice activities that correlate with the training skills can contribute to the learning of these skills. Successes and failures should be discussed in a supportive classroom atmosphere.

Key inspirational phrases, such as "If it's to be, it's up to me" and "Inch by inch, life's a cinch; yard by yard, it's very hard" should be included in the curriculum. These are easily remembered by the students and serve as motivational supports.

Specific benefits for participants who successfully complete the program should be included in the program design as positive motivators. For example, participants who successfully completed the program of this study often had their criminal charges dismissed.

The teachers in this program should be carefully selected and trained to work with this special adult population. These teachers should be able to relate to the diversified student population, to set standards, to impose sanctions, and to confront in a way that is beneficial rather than harmful.

The goal of this program should be to motivate and train students to perform in roles that are beneficial to themselves and to society.

The complementary relationship between the criminal justice system and the educational system should be continued. By working together the two systems have a better chance of accomplishing their mutual goals.

Reflections

Becoming an ethnographer is a process that evolves slowly and sometimes painfully. When this researcher began the ethnographic series of study, she did not really

understand what this type of research entailed. When her first course assignment was returned, she had scored fifth from the bottom in a class of approximately fifty students. To her chagrin she didn't even understand what she had done wrong in spite of the professor's efforts to explain. Unaccustomed to being "at the bottom," the researcher telephoned her son who at the time was a student at a college in Texas. In retrospect the researcher feels she sought solace from her son because she thought he, as a student also, would better understand what she was experiencing. The role reversal was spontaneous; her son became the nurturer, the supporter, the encourager; the researcher was the novice. "Now, mother," the son explained, "this can happen to anyone. You have to examine your resources, decide what needs to be done, and do it. The main thing is you will just have to work harder."

Every spare minute was spent reading Erickson, McDermott, Bogdan and Biklen, Mehan, in addition to other authors, in an attempt to understand this thing called ethnography. When the researcher began her preliminary study, she entered the setting collecting data based on the broad, general questions as suggested by Erickson, Florio, and Bushman (1980). The researcher found it difficult to make discriminations between what was important and what was unimportant in the observations and the descriptions of the

setting. The researcher's fieldnotes reflect this frustration:

> "It is difficult to know what to observe and what to describe in my notes. I feel like I am taking in too much, not taking in enough, missing everything, trying to be too specific, and trying to be too general all at the same time" (Fieldnotes, 1-11-84).

After several observations the researcher felt she had enough data to reformulate the questions into more specific ones and to formulate some hypotheses, thus beginning the process of narrowing the focus of the study. By analyzing and coding the data, the researcher was able to identify discernible categories. These categories then provided a general frame of reference for the study. The researcher continued to move from the general to the specific by discovering questions from the analysis of the data which served as guides for further data collection and then repeating the cycle of analysis of data, formulation of questions, and data collection. Hypotheses were tested, patterns emerged, and these patterns were translated into concepts.

At all times the researcher kept "one foot in the data and one foot in the literature." This posture enabled the researcher to identify the pieces of the puzzle and then to fit these puzzle pieces together. In assessing the value of this experience the researcher takes liberties with a quote from Peter Druker's Managing for Results and modifies this quote to read:

> No research will ever make a wise person out of a donkey or a genius out of an incompetent...But it

> can lengthen the person's reach by hoisting him or her on the shoulders of his or her predecessors.

Part of the frustration but at the same time the fascination with ethnography is the continuous nature of the process. The researcher can always find new data because of new questions and new insights. At some point, however, the researcher must bring closure to his or her study by deciding, "This too must come to an end."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CONSENT LETTER AND FORM

APPENDIX A
CONSENT LETTER

Dear

I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University completing work for my doctoral dissertation. This dissertation is a study of Project Intercept, an alternative education program for first offender shoplifters. You are one of the participants I have identified as important to this study. Your participation in this study, however, is voluntary. Indeed, you may elect to participate in all or part of the study, or not at all. Should you consent to be part of the study, you may withdraw your consent or participation in the study at any time without any recrimination.

I am using a human science research method which involves qualitative study, focusing on life-world experiences of the partiicpant. This approach involves observing and telling about the participant's experiences from the participant's perceptions of his or her involvement in this alternative education program. Any data collected in this study will be treated confidentially. The data will be coded and kept locked so that only I know the source of the material. Both the subjects and the site will be anonymous in any printed results of this study.

Research on alternative education programs, particularly for this population, is scarce. There is a need to understand what is occurring in this setting from the participants' perceptions. Your participation in the study is important in presenting this perspective.

If you are willing to participate in the study, I am requesting you sign the attached consent form and return it to me as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Patricia Oldt

APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

I have read the explanatory letter about the study of Project Intercept, an alternative education program for first offender shoplifters, being conducted by Patricia Oldt, a doctoral student at Michigan State University.

I understand that my participation in this study is totally voluntary and that I may elect to participate in all or part of the study. Moreover, I understand I may withdraw my consent at any time without any recrimination. I understand that all results of this study will be treated with strict confidence and I, as a subject, will remain anonymous. I understand that on request and within these restrictions the results will be made available to me.

_____
Signature

_____
Date

APPENDIX B
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH INVOLVING
HUMAN SUBJECTS (UCRIHS)
238 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
(517) 355-2186

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1046

July 8, 1986

Ms. Patricia Oldt
1427 Pinecrest, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Dear Ms. Oldt:

Subject: Proposal Entitled, "An Ethnographic Study of an Alternative Education Program for First Offender Shoplifters"

UCRIHS' review of the above referenced project has now been completed. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and the Committee, therefore, approved this project at its meeting on July 7, 1986.

You are reminded that UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year. If you plan to continue this project beyond one year, please make provisions for obtaining appropriate UCRIHS approval prior to July 7, 1987.

Any changes in procedures involving human subjects must be reviewed by the UCRIHS prior to initiation of the change. UCRIHS must also be notified promptly of any problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects during the course of the work.

Thank you for bringing this project to our attention. If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,

Henry E. Bredeck
Chairman, UCRIHS

HEB/jms

cc: Dr. Howard Hickey

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE SURVEY

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE SURVEY

What did you think this class was going to be like before you started class?

How would you describe the class now that you have been in it for awhile?

What did you think the other students would be like?

How would you describe the other students now?

How would you describe your feelings about coming to this class?

What do you think you're supposed to do in class?

How do you know that's what you are supposed to do?

What is your perception of the teacher?

How would you describe the way the teacher talks to you in class?

How does that make you feel?

How would you describe your feelings about going to Court?

What are you supposed to do when you go to Court?

How do you know that's what you're supposed to do?

What are some of the consequences of being involved in this program?

How would you describe this program to someone else?

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION FORM
COMPLETED BY STUDENT

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION FORM
COMPLETED BY STUDENT

PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET
AN EVALUATION OF YOUR GROUP EXPERIENCE

1. In your opinion which of the following program goals set for this course have been achieved:

___a. My awareness of the seriousness of the offense has been increased.
___b. I have learned more about myself.
___c. I have developed skills for growth and change.
___d. The class provided a setting for trust and support.
___e. I have been encouraged to try new behaviors.

2. The following are areas that were covered in the group. In each area how much do you feel your awareness and/or behavior have changed in a positive direction?

	Very Much	Some	Not at All
a. Understand reason(s) for involvement in program?	____	____	____
b. Understand your values and how you express them?	____	____	____
c. Recognize your feelings and how you express them?	____	____	____
d. Recognize your own strengths?	____	____	____
e. Feel o.k. about who you are?	____	____	____
f. Accept consequences for your own behavior?	____	____	____
g. Deal with problems and/or conflict?	____	____	____
h. Relate to other people?	____	____	____

PLEASE ANSWER:	Always	Some-times	Seldom	Never
3. Were group sessions organized?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Did the group leaders seem to know the information presented	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Was the information clear and understandable?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Did the group leaders respect you and show willingness to help you?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Were the sessions interesting to you?	_____	_____	_____	_____

8. Were the group leaders helpful in getting you involved? _____Yes _____No

If no, how could this be improved?

9. Overall, how would you evaluate the group leaders?
_____Excellent _____Good _____Fair _____Poor

10. What was the best part of this class for you?

11. What was the worst part of this class for you?

12. What would you change if you could change something about the group?

13. How do you feel you benefitted from this class?

14. Specifically, what things discussed were of help to you?

15. What things would you have liked to discuss but were not able to?

16. Please feel free to make any additional comments.

APPENDIX E
EVALUATION FORM
COMPLETED BY TEACHER

APPENDIX E
EVALUATION FORM
COMPLETED BY TEACHER

CLASS EVALUATION

Date Sent:_____

_____Modern Problems . Enrollment Forms
_____Project Intercept . Bridging

Name: _____ Referred by:
Address: _____ Court _____
_____ Agency _____
Phone: _____

ATTENDANCE

	Wk. 1	Wk. 2	Wk. 3	Wk. 4	Wk. 5	Wk. 6	Wk. 7	Wk. 8	Wk. 9	WK. 10
Present:										
Absent:										

OFFICE USE ONLY
J.C. Fee Paid
____Yes
____No Still Owes $_____

Does client assume responsibility for behavior?
____Yes _____No

Explain any unique observations and discuss class participation.

Recommendation. Check one.
____Maximum Benefits Recommended
____Minimum Benefits Recommended. Please Explain.

____Did Make-Up Class
Suggested Referral(s):_____ COMMENTS

____Not Appropriate
For Court Contact Use:
____Employment Skills
____Drug/Alcohol Abuse Program
____Other: _____

For Leader Referral:
____High School/GED/ABE
____Life Inventory
____Other: _____

_____
Teacher

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