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ABSTRACT

The desegregation decision by a local school system sometimes is perceived as the result of pressure, and at other times as unrelated to overt pressure for desegregation. Contrary to both of these views, this exploratory study suggests that a positive desegregation decision may stem from the personal values of school board members. These values may change under the impact of dissent over desegregation. Such change, however, seems to be relatively unaffected by political factors and often appears as the result of an individual identity conflict and a "secular conversion." Models of change as the result of forced compliance, political accommodation, and secular conversion are examined, and several significant elements of secular conversion tentatively are identified. This study focuses on seven board members during desegregation decisions in three California school districts. Six board members, two in each district, were selected for the study; they changed from a public position opposing desegregation to one of support; all voted for the desegregation plan. One eventually proved unavailable for the study, while two other board members from these districts were added, one who never changed in opposition to desegregation and one who never changed in support for desegregation. (Author/JM)

THE SCHOOL DESEGREGATION DECISION:

Behavior and Value Change under Conditions of Uncertainty

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U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

THE SCHOOL DESEGREGATION DECISION:

Behavior and Value Change under Conditions of Uncertainty

Controversy continues to surround not only school desegregation, but also the study of school desegregation. The desegregation decision by a local school system sometimes is perceived as the result of pressure, conflict, even violence; it is accommodation to the magnitude of a protest or to a court order. Other students of desegregation, however, report that there is no correlation between overt pressure for desegregation and a positive desegregation decision; when not responsive to majority group views, school board members make subjective decisions based on unchanging personal prejudice, and in fact a change in board membership precedes a change in position on desegregation.

Contrary to both of these interpretations, this exploratory study of the desegregation decision in three California school districts suggests another possibility: a positive desegregation decision may stem from the personal values of school board members, but these values may change under

the impact of dissent over desegregation. Such change, however, seems to be relatively unaffected by political factors and often appears as the result of an individual identity conflict and a "secular conversion." Models of change as the result of forced compliance, political accommodation, and secular conversion are examined, and several significant elements of secular conversion tentatively are identified.

CONDITIONS OF UNCERTAINTY

The school desegregation decision is a decision made under "conditions of uncertainty," in that it cannot be made on the basis of past experience or objective evidence (Bailey, 1969: 59, 69). Desegregation is "associated with conflict of the most virulent kind in American schools" and is widely feared as a disruptive issue by school administrators and school board members (Stout, 1971: 29; Stout, 1967: 12-13). Increasingly, desegregation has become a focus of controversy in Northern communities (see, for example, Edwards and Wirt, 1967; Hill and Feeley, 1968; Mack, 1968), and it seems obvious that the majority of American citizens, given a choice, still would prefer segregated schools (Holland, 1971: 13; Stout, 1967: 9).

Although proponents of school desegregation often have received court support for their position (Colley, 1971; Real, 1970), legal requirements regarding many aspects of racial balance, busing, school district boundaries, and resegregation have not yet been resolved. Northern school systems continue to question both the constitutional mandate for elimination of what they describe as de facto segregation, and the feasibility of large-scale desegregation should it be required. Available evidence on

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the academic effects of desegregation likewise does not appear to reduce the controversy, and research data supportive of desegregation have been criticized by some writers who do not question the value of desegregation itself (Guthrie and Morelli, 1971: 27; Crain, 1968: 129).

Surrounded by controversy, without clear and unqualified support in public opinion, law, or research, desegregation inevitably represents a value decision, a moral choice. Commitment to desegregation indeed involves the "core values" of desegregation proponents and is "more a statement of faith than of fact" (Stout, 1971: 25; Stout, 1967: 10). Uncertainty outweighs all attempts at objectivity and rationality, and a desegregation decision often is made only "in response to dire necessity" (Bailey, 1969: 69). Yet, even a court order may not represent dire necessity, in that a board member may vote to appeal the order, vote against specific desegregation plans and force a court-imposed plan, or simply resign. The board member is left to act arbitrarily, on the basis of his conscience.

THE DESEGREGATION PROCESS

The politics and processes of the desegregation decision still are rather unclear and poorly understood, to some extent because desegregation lacks an extensive history, theoretical and empirical study, a research literature. What literature does exist, when it does not consist of case studies with minimum generalization, is contradictory.

The desegregation decision frequently has been described as "an accommodation of conflicting views of what is most desirable" (Mack, 1968:

449). It is a decision requiring an external impetus, such as civil rights protest, systematized demands, a "trigger event," and continual pressure (see Mercer, 1968). In this view, change occurs because citizens organize and protest, and in its most extreme form it involves a belief that violence as a tactic by black Americans "seems to produce results" (Mack, 1968: 38) In general, it suggests that school boards take action "when the magnitude of the protest is greater than the magnitude of the problem" (Edwards and Wirt, 1967: 290-291).

A contrary argument, however, suggests that school boards seek to avoid conflict altogether or "take actions which they perceive will satisfy the majority, and potentially most disruptive, community" (Stout, 1971: 7). Desegregation often is viewed publicly as a "surrender to Negro political power," and protests therefore have "relatively little influence on the degree to which the school systems meets the demands made" (Crain, 1968: 128, 149). There is no correlation between civil rights activity and school board behavior (Crain, 1968: 147), and it is the value which individual board members attach to desegregation which is "the single most important factor" in the desegregation decision (Stout, 1971: 11). As a result, board members demonstrate little change on the desegregation issue, from the time when the issue is first presented to the time when the process has run its course, and thus a change in board membership necessarily is required for a positive desegregation decision (Stout, 1971: 27).

BEHAVIOR AND VALUE CHANGE

The most immediate problem in any discussion of behavior and value

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change is that relevant research is virtually nonexistent. The few studies which analyze the effect of changes in thought or emotion on behavior demonstrate an absence of relationship, and the experimental literature primarily seems to describe changes in expressed opinion (Rokeach, 1969: 140-158). Dissonance theory, "the single most popular theory" in the field (Insko, 1967: 281), is inappropriate for a number of reasons: it deals only in expressed opinion and cognitive changes; the relationships among comprehension, acceptance, and behavior are rarely discussed; experiments are divorced from real life settings and consequences; actions which reduce dissonance run contrary to those observed in a desegregation decision; dissonance theory may be used to explain opposing outcomes of the same situation.

Under these circumstances, alternatives to present experimental theories need to be developed, alternatives suited to evaluation within the actual context of school board decision making. A behavior change from public opposition to public support for desegregation, reflected in a vote by a school board member for a comprehensive desegregation plan, logically may be attributed to external pressure or to subjective value change. External pressure, in fact, may result in a "forced compliance" to the wishes of those exerting pressure or in a "political accommodation" to the more significant of contending pressures. Subjective value change, where a decision under conditions of uncertainty is expected to derive from reliance on core values, may be described as "secular conversion." Each of these terms requires further definition.

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A forced compliance is a response to overt or public pressure without an accompanying change in attitude or values. It may result from a manipulative approach by those who are able to control the decision maker's perception of reality; the decision maker acts on the basis of what he perceives, but he is permitted to perceive only that which the control agent believes will result in the desired decision (Jones, 1969: 115). A forced compliance also may be achieved through charisma, influence on the decision maker by the personality of an unusual leader who exudes a "magical aura" and provides a "means whereby people abdicate responsibility for any consistent, tough-minded evaluation of the outcomes of specific policies" (Katz and Kahn, 1966).

A political accommodation occurs where the decision maker believes that any public decision is achieved through a process of compromise and negotiated settlement, believes that "in the final analysis, decisions in organizational life are based on political exigencies" (Jones, 1969: 13). This often involves the concept of leadership as a continual "adjustment of ends and means to new environmental pressures" and a subordination of personal attitudes and values to institutional survival (Selznick, 1957: 36, 62-68). The decision is based on a rational balance of conflicting forces.

A secular conversion, comparable to a religious conversion but in a secular context, is a change of values which is motivated by strong internal pressures. Although the change may appear to the observer as instantaneous, this is but a specific moment in a gradual development with periods of incubation and preparation (Furgeson, 1965: 10-11). It is a change with

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profound significance to the individual, "an attempt, usually by especially gifted, sensitive, and basically decent people, to solve a problem of great magnitude in their lives" (Salzman, 1966: 19). It involves a change in a person's conception of himself, a change in values so intense that "he can no longer be satisfied with his identity as it was, but feels compelled to repudiate it in favor of a new one" more in keeping with his ideals (Goodenough, 1963: 219). There often is a substantial emotional component, yet there also is a need for awareness and credible explanation.

MODELS OF CHANGE

Using these alternatives to experimental change theory, three models of change in connection with the desegregation decision may be developed. Three basic values, in turn, are involved in the change models, values which are defined as "individual freedom," "social equality," and "compromise."

A school board member guided by the value of individual freedom, believing in limited governmental activity and maximum individual initiative and choice, stresses equality of educational opportunity rather than equality of output, the elimination of social goals from educational policy, and local autonomy in educational affairs. A board member guided by the value of social equality, believing in the use of governmental power to achieve socially desirable ends which otherwise might not be attainable, stresses equality of educational output, deliberate compensation for previous social injustice, and the supremacy of state and national priorities over local priorities. A board member guided by the value of

compromise stresses the need for determining educational policy through negotiation, accommodation, a balance of pressures; compromise to promote institutional survival takes precedence over personal preferences in regard to education in general and desegregation in particular.

The characteristics of behavior and value change resulting in a positive desegregation decision thus might be anticipated, as indicated in Table 1.

(insert Table 1)

In a forced compliance, the board member sees no alternative to the desegregation decision, due to misperception of punishments and rewards or emotional response to a charismatic personality; the change in his behavior has little personal meaning, but there is substantial discomfort, perhaps even cognitive dissonance, because of unchanged values and opposition of social peers. In a political accommodation, the board member realistically assesses the balance of pressures in the school system, attaches little personal meaning to his action because of belief in accommodation as a necessity of political life, and feels comfortable with the change as the appropriate response to the given situation. In a secular conversion, there is a "value dissonance," a conflict under the impact of the desegregation issue between values centrally located within the board member's value system; the change represents a major life experience, and although perception of evidence may be realistic or distorted, there is a tendency to stress selected data based on the new values.

TABLE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE BY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

	Forced Compliance	Political Accommodation	Secular Conversion
Indicator of Behavior Change	Vote for Desegregation	Vote for Desegregation	Vote for Desegregation
Dynamic of Change	Manipulation, Charisma	Civil Rights Activity, Court Order	Value Dissonance
Expressed Reason for Change	No Alternative Possible	Balance of Pressures	Change in Values
Prior Signals of Change Possibility	None	Prior Accommodation	Prior Signals of Value Change
Perception of Objective Evidence	Distorted	Realistic	Realistic or Distorted
Personal Meaning of Change	Negligible	Negligible	Significant
Comfort with Change	Uncomfortable	Comfortable	Very Comfortable
Attitude of Social Group	Oppose Desegregation	Oppose Desegregation	Oppose Desegregation

The models overlap, however, and hardly are so dichotomous.

METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on seven board members during desegregation decisions in three California school districts. Each of these districts implemented a comprehensive desegregation plan in 1970. Six board members, two in each of the districts, initially were selected for the study, the total number of those who changed from a public position opposing desegregation to public support and a vote for the desegregation plan. One of the six board members eventually proved unavailable for the study, while two other board members from these districts were added, one who never changed in opposition to desegregation and one who never changed in support for desegregation.

Although the districts were selected because behavior change by board members resulted in desegregation, access to the districts and board members also was critical. However, only one other California school district fully desegregated in 1970, fewer than five districts had fully desegregated in the previous five years, and the number of board members whose change on this issue significantly affected the outcome is correspondingly small. The districts and board members selected thus are representative, although no "random sample" is being suggested.

Identification of the board members who changed, availability of recorded and unrecorded data, and access to the board members, superintendents, school staff, and other persons who could provide access or data, were the result of more than 2000 hours of participant observation the districts. Undoubtedly a key element in the study is this access,

limited in varying degrees, under conditions where reasons for distortion of events, and perception of behavior and value change, are at a minimum. It seems likely that such conditions are most ideal where there is the most knowledge of the researcher and most trust of him in his use of the data being provided: "A person becomes accepted...more because of the person he turns out to be in the eyes of field contacts than because of what the research represents to them" (see Cicourel, 1964: 42).

The field research techniques subsequently employed, with the participant observer or "native" now returning to the school communities as a researcher, essentially were anthropological field techniques, although disciplinary distinctions seem unnecessary. Interview procedures, cross-validation of statements and perceptions (based on written materials, observations, and interviews), ethnographic reporting, and the previously developed behavior and value change models were utilized. However, even abbreviated descriptions of lengthy personal interviews, as well as supportive historical data, necessarily have been deleted from this report, which essentially represents a summary of the study. Much of the evidence from which the conclusions are drawn, therefore, has been omitted here.

Each board member actually was involved in a full exploration of changes in his position on desegregation, his beliefs and attitudes on related issues, the meaning of board membership to him, the impact of community pressures, his family background and personal history, his political and religious values, his perceptions of other board members, and the relationships, if any, which he could find in all of this. Each board member eventually was asked to compare his own change on desegregation with the change models. Superintendents, other persons designated by the board members or superintendents as influential in the change, and

undesignated persons who had been active in the desegregation effort also were interviewed.

The entire field research process centers on a concept of "disciplined subjectivity" by the researcher, substantially issuing from training, experience, and "free floating attention and judgment"; the objective is an empirical method aimed at providing "intersubjectivity," data which can be verified by others under similar conditions and often is more critical critical than exactness. (See Erikson, 1968: 685; Erikson, 1964: 62-63; also see Vidich and Bensman, 1968; Kaplan, 1964.) Elaboration of this exploratory work, however, undoubtedly should focus on more precisely defined categories within the change models, even if measurement is not presently attainable, or even a goal. It also should focus on an expanded sample of school board members, including careful examination of those who did not change, a group relatively neglected in this effort to identify characteristics of change.

The theoretical framework of the study is grounded basically on adaptation of a psycho-historical approach which attempts to establish the nexus of personal lives and political events. "No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history, and of their intersections within society has completed its intellectual journey" (Mills, 1959: 6; also see Erikson, 1968, 1969). If behavior and value change by school board members indeed result in school desegregation, then here are such intersections. The study of individual change perhaps illuminates social change, in this case critical policy decisions within educational systems.

All names are pseudonyms in the report which follows.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The three school districts which provide the setting for this study present diversity in all major features with the exception of organizational structure, as indicated in Table 2.

(insert Table 2)

All three districts have declining total enrollment, Valley Crown to the greatest extent, and both Valley Crown and Centinela reflect increasing minority enrollment, Centinela at the most rapid rate. Growth of minority enrollment in Valley Crown and Centinela has accelerated since desegregation, with significant white flight indicated, while in Foothill minority enrollment has remained relatively stable and even declined slightly since desegregation.

All three districts fully desegregated in September 1970, Valley Crown and Centinela under court order, Foothill under a local board decision without external impetus, as indicated in Table 3.

(insert Table 3)

Valley Crown previously had adopted several limited desegregation programs, including an attendance boundary revision which gave rise to legal action when it was rescinded by a new, hostile school board. In Centinela, no significant desegregation occurred until a judicial decision was rendered, and in Foothill a comprehensive racial balance plan was

TABLE 2

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ON THREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	Valley Crown	Foothill	Centinela
Type of District	Unified K-12	Unified K-12	Unified K-12
Size of District	52 sq. miles	13 sq. miles	9 sq. miles
Annual Budget	$38 million	$6.5 million	$14.6 million
Number of Schools	36	9	17
Total Pupil Population	27,000	7,000	13,000
Total Minority Pupil Population (1970)	46.3 percent	23.1 percent	38.0 percent
Negro Pupil Population (1970)	32.8 percent	13.0 percent	24.8 percent
Type of School Board	5 members elected district-wide	5 members elected district-wide	5 members elected district-wide

TABLE 3

DESEGREGATION IN THREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	Valley Crown	Foothill	Centinela
Date Desegregation Plan Implemented	September 1970	September 1970	September 1970
Court Order	Yes	No	Yes
Prior Desegregation Efforts	Open Enrollment, Boundary Revision	None	Desegregated Summer Schools
Desegregation Policy Statement Adopted	December 1969	December 1969	February 1969 (Negated)
Number of Formal Desegregation Studies	1	1	5
Racial Conflict in Schools	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Minority Imbalanced Schools (1969)*	9	1	4
Type of Desegregation Plan Implemented	Grade Pattern Change, Two-Way Busing	Changed School Use, New Middle Schools, Minimum Busing	Grade Pattern Change, Two-Way Busing
Total Pupils Bused	14,000	1,500	3,000
Cost of Desegregation	$1,000,000	($38,000 savings)	$51,000
Historical Opposition to Desegregation	Majority Community	Majority Community	Majority Community
Historical Support for Desegregation	NAACP, Human Relations Committee	Individuals, Human Relations Committee	Individuals, Human Relations Committee
Primary Pressures	Board Initiative, Private Legal Action, Federal Government	Board Initiative	Private Legal Action
Superintendent's Position on Desegregation	Supportive	Supportive (Moderate)	Uncertain

*Minority percentage in each school exceeds minority percentage in district by more than 15, per 1970 California Administrative Code regulations.

implemented, without prior effort, less than one year after unanimous commitment by the board. In Valley Crown and Centinela, despite a court order, desegregation was approved by a split vote of the board.

Formal desegregation policy statements were adopted in all three districts, yet in Valley Crown and Foothill the policy merely ratified a prior informal agreement, while in Centinela the policy was disregarded by the board which approved it until a court order was issued. This would tend to support findings that school systems which make no public statement of policy do as well, or better, than those which do make such a statement (see Dodson, 1967: 4, 75). In Centinela, five desegregation studies were conducted over a period of five years, while in Valley Crown and Foothill one such study was conducted. None of these studies resulted in desegregation, however, and the plans actually implemented were developed by district staff on later occasions. This apparently would confirm the view that formal publicized studies do not shield school systems from controversy and, in fact, may contribute to it (Dodson, 1967).

The desegregation plans adopted by the three districts varied considerably: Valley Crown went beyond the court order to bus half the pupil population, at a cost of $1,000,000, to achieve almost uniform racial balance in all schools. Foothill also achieved almost uniform racial balance, but transportation was not increased substantially for this purpose and a savings of $38,000 was realized. Centinela, geographically the smallest district, achieved a wide variety in racial balance with a moderate increase in busing and district expense.

Racial conflict occurred in the schools of all three districts prior desegregation, although the extent and intensity of such conflict also varied considerably. Desegregation in all districts followed the height of

civil rights controversy by several years, and even the civil rights thrust appeared to depend on the energy and skills of a few individuals rather than on a substantial movement of any kind. (To explain the desegregation decision in terms of context fails to account for the lack of a decision in the many districts with similar circumstances.) A school board recall campaign failed to unseat the incumbent proponents of desegregation in Valley Crown, while in both Valley Crown and Centinela both proponents and opponents of desegregation subsequently have been elected to the board, apparently confirming the "legitimating effect of the governmental decision" on school board elections (Stout, 1971: 14; Stout, 1967: 20-21).

ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS

There are those who see the superintendent as "the key figure" in the desegregation decision (Dodson, 1967: 4, 45-46), and it is reported that few school boards have adopted desegregation plans not originally proposed by the superintendent (Stout, 1967: 18). This study, however, generally seems to confirm the view that racial policy almost always is taken out of the hands of the superintendent by the school board, and that the board consequently is more important in the decision than the superintendent (Crain, 1968: 124, 358).

Only one superintendent in this study expressed the complete conviction that "integration was a proper and important goal for the public schools" (Stout, 1967: 18), but he was unable to achieve desegregation and accepted a position elsewhere. This superintendent, in Valley Crown, did develop an intense personal commitment to him, and the views he espoused, on the part of two board members, and he indirectly developed their hostility to the opponents of desegregation who attacked him. His replacement, selected by

a board majority opposed to desegregation, reversed his position on the issue and subsequently became a strong proponent of desegregation, reflecting a change similar to that of the board members. The superintendent in Foothill was a moderate proponent of desegregation, but only for certain districts and under particular circumstances; his approach was pragmatic and flexible, based on the possibility of a simple, rational desegregation plan. In Centinela, working in an atmosphere of intense controversy, the superintendent conveyed an uncertain response to the desegregation issue, undoubtedly reflecting majority sentiment in the district, and he attempted to resolve the problem through continued study and community discussion.

In all three districts, prior to the desegregation decision, activities by the superintendent primarily involved working with the board and staff to define positions on desegregation and evaluate the feasibility of specific desegregation plans. There was little effort to develop support in the community, both because of the way in which the superintendent perceived his task and because, under any circumstances, a positive board decision would depend on a willingness to move against community opinion and pressure. Yet, each superintendent except one appeared to view himself in a rather circumscribed role with the board, apparently conceding desegregation to be as much a moral and political issue as an educational issue, and therefore conceding the board's right to determine policy with minimum professional guidance. This undoubtedly reflected a realistic perception of the board's position and his own relative inability to exert influence, thus making it unnecessary for the board to openly take the issue out of his hands. In such a situation, this may be the only effective strategy for maintaining any influence; on the other hand, this may simply demonstrate uncertainty and fear.

Each of the superintendents may be described as an "enabler" rather than

a "prime mover" in the desegregation decision (see Stout, 1967: 14). Without a school board committed to desegregation, the superintendent finds it difficult to bring about change, and in developing such commitment the superintendent's influence is limited and essentially less critical than other factors. Each superintendent in this study was responsible for the desegregation plan finally implemented, with the variations in values which are reflected in these plans and extend beyond geographical, physical, and financial resources. However, ultimately it seems likely that the superintendent may be relatively more influential, given his own doubts, problems, or opposition, in slowing or preventing desegregation than in speeding or forcing it.

THE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

The seven school board members involved in this study, including the five who provide its central concern because of their changed position on desegregation, present personal diversity combined with similarity in a number of critical respects, as indicated in Table 4

(insert Table 4)

Three of the seven are housewives, and each changed her position on desegregation. (The husbands of these women are a retired branch manager for a large national retail chain, a retired architectural designer, and a local sales manager for a large national manufacturing company.) All seven board members may be described as middle class, although two are viewed as members of the "social elite" in their community. Five of the seven are college graduates, while six of the seven are Protestant, one a convert from Catholicism. The six Protestant board members are Republicans, although one was a Democrat before adopting the political affiliation of her husband, and one changed his affiliation from Democratic

TABLE 4

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ON SEVEN SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

	Gregory (Centinela)	Lambert (Valley Crown)	Enright (Valley Crown)	Miller (Foothill)	Holden (Foothill)	Banks (Centinela)	Holmes (Valley Crown)
Occupation	Educator	Housewife	Dentist	Housewife	Businessman	Housewife	Engineer
Age (1970)	33	58	68	43	46	66	42
Education	Graduate School	College Graduate	Graduate School	College Graduate	Some High School	Some College	Graduate School
Religion	Roman Catholic	Presbyterian	Lutheran	Church of Christ	Episcopalian (formerly Baptist)	Lutheran (formerly Catholic)	Presbyterian
Politics	Democratic	Republican (Conservative)	Republican (Conservative)	Republican (Conservative)	Republican (Conservative)	Republican (often votes Democratic)	Republican (Moderate)
Length of Board Membership (1970)	1 year	13 years	5 years	1 year	4 years	15 years	3 years
Date of Change on Desegregation	No Change (Support)	1967	1967	1969	1969	1970	No Change (Oppose)
Perceived Results of Desegregation	Social Integration	Improved Education	Improved Understanding	Community Harmony	Reduced Tension	Political Solution	Poor Education, Loss in Freedom, White Flight

to Republican after moving to California from the South. All but one Republican describe themselves as conservative, identifying this with the views of Senator Barry Goldwater. All of the board members are white.

Each of the board members anticipates very different results from desegregation. Gregory, a consistent supporter of desegregation, perceives it as an opportunity to create a democratic society in the schools, allowing pupils to learn about each other, beyond racial differences, as human beings; he does not view it in terms of academic achievement. Lambert perceives desegregation as a requirement for quality education and academic achievement; she also looks toward improved racial understanding, but she describes this within the context of quality education. Enright shares Lambert's views but stresses improved racial understanding more than educational outcomes.

Miller views desegregation as a means to community harmony, a sense of fairness and trust between people, as well as improved intergroup relations and lack of conflict; she hopes for increased academic achievement but does not believe that desegregation is essential for this. Holden shares Miller's position, although on a somewhat less clearly defined and less intellectual level, and he places more emphasis on reduced tension in the schools. Banks perceives desegregation primarily as a political solution to vexing social conflicts in the community. Holmes, still an opponent of desegregation, believes that it results in a declining quality of education, loss in individual control over education, and consequent white flight.

All five board members at the center of this study demonstrate the behavior change previously reported, as indicated in Table 5.

(insert Table 5)

Each board member initially took a public position in opposition to desegregation: in election campaigns, public statements, or board voting. The religious, political, and economic groups which each reflects generally are opposed to desegregation, as are friends and acquaintances constituting a closer social group. Nevertheless, each board member later voted for a comprehensive desegregation plan which was implemented as a result of his action.

Lambert and Enright had exhibited increasing support for desegregation over a period of several years, after election to the school board as supporters of the "neighborhood school" and opponents of "forced cross-town busing," finally voting not to appeal the court order, voting to adopt a two-way busing plan which extended beyond the court order, and campaigning against a recall as desegregation advocates. Miller and Holden demonstrated no change on desegregation prior to their votes for a uniform racial balance policy statement, adoption of a desegregation plan in principle, and approval of the final plan; Miller, in fact, had taken office only six months before, after campaigning against desegregation. Banks generally acted on the basis of balancing interests and pressures in the community, though never on an issue of this magnitude.

Lambert describes her change on desegregation as the most significant change in her life and views it as part of a more extensive character change with important rational and emotional consequences; she emphasizes her readings on desegregation, but she also describes value conflict and

TABLE 5

BEHAVIOR AND VALUE CHANGE BY FIVE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

	Lambert	Enright	Miller	Holden	Banks
Expressed Opposition to Desegregation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Group Opposition to Desegregation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Desegregation Vote	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prior Signals of Change	Increasing Support for Desegregation	Increasing Support for Desegregation	None	None	Prior Balancing of Pressures
Personal Meaning of Change	Very Significant	Denial of Change	Significant	Negligible	Negligible
Comfort with Change	Very Comfortable	Very Comfortable	Very Comfortable	Some Comfort	Uncomfortable
Described Dynamics of Change	Rational Change, Personal Incidents, Value Conflict	Denial of Change, Religious Values, Changed Situation	Board Election, Personal Incidents, Value Conflict	Personal Influences, Value Conflict	Pressures, Value Conflict, Court Order
Perception of Change by Others	Significant, Changed Values, Personal Influences	Significant, Conversion, Deaths in Family	Significant, Changed Values, Rational Plan	Uncertain, Board Unanimity, Rational Plan	Political Act, Error
Primary Value Prior to Change	Individual Freedom	Individual Freedom	Individual Freedom	Mixed	Compromise
Primary Value After Change	Social Equality	Social Equality	Social Justice	Mixed	Compromise
Preferred Model	Secular Conversion	Secular Conversion	Secular Conversion	Secular Conversion (Tentative)	Political Accommodation

Secular Conversion <.....> Political Accommodation

various personal incidents as critical in the change. Enright views his behavior only as an extension of previous commitment, but he also stresses his religious values and describes a variety of personal events, including deaths in his family, with significant emotional impact; a "post hoc reconstruction of his biography," common in religious conversion, seems likely. Miller views her change on desegregation as significant, encompassing value change beyond this one issue; she describes a new sense of responsibility following board election, as well as a variety of personal incidents. Lambert, Enright, and Miller all emphasize internal rather than external pressure, and this is supported by perceptions of them in the community.

Holden's change is perhaps the most difficult to define, and he mentions only a moderate value conflict; occupationally the most vulnerable of the group, in background and social relationships he also seems the most incompatible with a desegregation decision; he stresses personal influence and morality, although the desirability of a unanimous board decision also is mentioned. The development of a simple "rational" plan for desegregation in Foothill also is suggested by observers as influential in the change by both Miller and Holden. Banks admits to the effect of various community pressures and the court order, combined with a political approach to her role, on an existing value conflict.

The change experienced by Lambert, Enright, and Miller is described as a secular conversion, based on the models suggested. A primary value change from individual freedom to social equality seems applicable to the three, although for Miller the term "social justice" is perhaps preferable

in view of her denial of the educational benefits of desegregation, emphasis on the rights of the majority as well as the minority community, and continued distrust of government. All three stress the role of individual responsibility for their actions as part of their basic, conservative, political philosophy.

Elements of both secular conversion and political accommodation apply to Holden; however, he continues to justify his position in the face of hostility from his associates, and he stresses values and individual responsibility as part of his political philosophy; his change is tentatively described as secular conversion. Banks clearly fits the political accommodation model, although there also is a value conflict involved. The forced compliance model seems inapplicable in any case.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHANGE

Since behavior and value change by the five board members appears congruent with two of the change models, further development of these models, as proposed previously, now may seem more appropriate and justifiable. Such development would involve more precise specification of the context in which change occurs, as well as more intensive focus on interpersonal and intrapersonal processes. Secular conversion, in particular, requires more definition than has been derived from the literature or from this study. At this point, however, several preliminary statements may be offered, as much to suggest areas where attention might be useful as to indicate tentative, general, and disparate findings.

Definition of the Problem

None of the board members in this study ever described himself as a segregationist, and initial opposition to desegregation by all who changed was expressed in terms of support for the neighborhood school, as well as opposition to busing and mandated programs for racial balance. Since desegregation is unlikely to be achieved voluntarily, this essentially represented opposition to desegregation per se despite preferred terminology, and eventually was recognized as such by the board members.

The extent of segregation, and the means required to eliminate it, differed in each of the districts. In Valley Crown, Lambert and Enright came to support an extensive plan after more limited measures had failed, yet in Centinela even limited programs were rejected for this geographically small district, with full awareness of a growing problem. In Foothill, a modest plan was adequate to achieve racial balance, and even resulted in a financial savings for the district.

Lacking evidence to the contrary, a commitment by board members to the values congruent with a positive desegregation decision appears to be more critical than the extent of the problem or solution.

External Pressure

In all three districts, extensive discrimination against minority groups, particularly black Americans, has been present and even now is not absent. Racial conflict in the schools also has been present, although the extent and intensity of this conflict varied considerably. In all districts, desegregation occurred well after the height of public desegregation activity, and majority group sentiment everywhere was significant its opposition to desegregation. In Valley Crown, a court order was

insufficient to change the behavior or values of two board members, one of whom resigned while the other continued to vote against specific desegregation plans. Foothill, however, desegregated voluntarily, without a long history of conflict or population change, problems increasingly evident in Centinela.

As previously suggested, there appears to be no correlation between public pressure for desegregation and a positive desegregation decision; it appears that board members are unaffected by such pressures, unless they choose to be affected, and may develop resources for desegregation support or opposition (see Crain, 1968: 127; Stout, 1971: 27).

Personal Influence and Incidents

Support for desegregation from a small number of close friends and associates, generally of the same conservative political persuasion, seems evident in the secular conversions. In two cases, a "critical incident" may have become the impetus for value and identity conflict, if not change: deaths in Enright's immediate family and Miller's election to the school board. (On the other hand, several comparable incidents were reported by the board members who did not change, and the impact of such incidents is difficult to interpret; they must be considered within the individual's life history and immediate situation.) In all three cases, the negative effects of desegregation opponents also is mentioned, including attacks on a trusted superintendent and support for continued segregation by black militants. It is significant, however, that examples of personal influence, and incidents with personal meaning for the board members, are noted more frequently given more emotional attention than the more typical forms of pressure.

The Role of Beliefs

There appears to be no correlation between beliefs on issues related to desegregation and change in behavior or values. Increased academic achievement following desegregation, for example, is not perceived as critical by five of the board members studied, while for two it is central to their rational explanation of change. The same evidence on the academic effects of desegregation is intelligently interpreted in conflicting ways by two board members, and there seems to be little relationship between beliefs and level of educational attainment. For five board members there is little indication of change in beliefs. Reduced racial tension following desegregation appears to be more a hope than an expectation, and discomfort based on race continues to be evident in the feelings of three desegregation proponents.

In all cases, it would seem that values determine the beliefs accepted, deriving from personal interest and character, rather than the other way around. "The rule of belief follows the rule of prayer": experience comes first, understanding afterward.

Ideology and Personality

Five of the seven board members, including the two who did not change and the three who most clearly experienced a secular conversion, reflect what might be termed an "ideological personality." Not only do they exhibit a strong sense of self, a belief in acting on the basis of commitment, and an intellectual alertness, but they also exhibit an interest in philosophy and morality, ideas generally, a coherent [illegible]ght and value system. (For Enright a religious ideology substitutes

for academic precision to some extent.) These five are the most educated of the group.

The three who most clearly experienced a secular conversion are practicing Protestants and Republicans, and all describe themselves as quite conservative politically; they are firmly attached to both church and party. Two of the three are women, and these two appear to have exerted an unusual influence on their fellow board members; the third woman in the group changed in behavior but not in values. (Response to an opportunity for further personal and professional definition is likely in all cases.)

Combined with ideology, these three board members exhibit a concern for people, and a concern with particular instances of fairness and unfairness, which seems to transcend abstract principle. There appears to be both a personal security and flexibility involved, which enables them, given various personal influences, incidents, and conflicts, to incorporate new experience in order to build a new sense of self. The new identity provides a subjective value context in which theory is developed, beliefs are formed, and decisions are made.

CONCLUSION

Contrary to the most extensive empirical desegregation research, this study has confirmed that there are school board members who have changed from public opposition to public support of school desegregation, as reflected in critical votes for adoption of comprehensive desegregation plans. Contrary to much of the remaining desegregation literature, it tentatively has been confirmed that

board members generally are unaffected by external pressure and that a change in values generally accompanies a change in behavior. It has provided three models of change under conditions of uncertainty, two of these models appear to have proved useful, and a start has been made toward definition of the more complex and significant model, secular conversion. The use of a field research methodology to explore behavior and value change in the actual context of school board decision making, on the basis of a limited population, now may lead to more extensive application of these models and more extensive study of the issues which have been identified.

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