DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 109 104   95   SP 009 353

TITLE   A Multidisciplinary Study of Planned Educational
                   Change.
INSTITUTION   Abt Associates, Inc. Cambridge, Mass.
SPONS AGENCY   National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE   1 Apr 75
CONTRACT   OEC-0-72-5245
NOTE   64p.; For related document, see SP 009 174; Papers
                   prepared for Presentation at the Annual Meeting of
                   the American Educational Research Association
                   (Washington, D. C., April 1, 1975)
AVAILABLE FROM   Abt Associates Inc., 55 Wheeler Street, Cambridge,
                   Massachusetts 02138 (No price quoted)

EDRS PRICE   MF-$0.76 HC-$3.32 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS   Community Involvement; Decision Making; *Educational
                   Change; Educational Planning; Program Descriptions;
                   *Rural Education; *Rural School Systems

ABSTRACT
       The symposium papers presented in this publication
are based on a continuing program of research in ten rural school
districts. The program, "Project Rural," is part of the Experimental
Schools program, which emphasizes a holistic approach to educational
change--one requiring simultaneous change in curriculum, staff
development, community participation, use of time, space and
facilities, administration, organization, governance, and ongoing
evaluation. At present, "Project Rural" consists of eight major
studies of two basic types. Some of these studies are designed to
compare and contrast the ten school districts. These are "cross-site
studies." Others focus more deeply and holistically on a single
school district: "site case studies." Part 1 of the publication is an
overview. Part 2, "The Cross-Site Studies," contains the following
papers: (a) "A Conceptualization of Planned Educational Change;" and
(b) "A Conceptualization of 'Treatment' as a Complex Phenomenon."
Part 3, "The Case Studies," contains the following essays: "The
Development of Ethnographies on Educational Change;" "The Work
Adjustment of Recent Graduates;" "Indirect Communication in the
Decision Making Process;" "Cultural Ecology and a School System;" and
"The Symbolic Place of Time in a Small School District."
(Author/JA)

A Multidisciplinary Study

of

Planned Educational Change

A Compendium of Symposium Papers

prepared for presentation at

1975 Annual Meeting

American Educational Research Association

Washington, D. C.

April 1, 1975

PREFACE

----The papers presented in this symposium are based on a continuing program of research in ten rural school districts. At present, this research program consists of eight major studies of two basic types. Some of the studies are designed to compare and contrast the ten school districts. These are referred to as <u>cross-site studies</u>. Others focus more deeply and holistically on a single school district: the <u>site case studies</u>.

Because each presentation in this symposium was limited to ten minutes, the authors did not attempt to discuss the full conceptual, methodological, and substantive details of their studies. Instead they chose to briefly illustrate some theoretical, methodological, and substantive issue. These papers, thus, are merely illustrative of approaches being used within this longitudinal study of educational change in rural America and do not necessarily present aspects of what will be the formal reports of the project.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

AN OVERVIEW OF "PROJECT RURAL"

Robert E. Herriott

In March of 1972, the U.S. Office of Education announced a nation-
wide competition to select a limited number of school districts serving
rural areas that were willing to design and implement locally determined
projects of comprehensive educational change.[1] The Experimental Schools
(ES) program of the U.S. Office of Education (which in August, 1972 became
a part of the new National Institute of Education) had been established
in 1971 by the Congress on the assumption that past federal efforts to
stimulate change in American schools and schooling had been severely con-
strained by piecemeal efforts. The Experimental Schools program, in con-
trast, chose to emphasize a holistic approach to educational change--one
requiring simultaneous changes in curriculum; staff development; community
participation; use of time, space and facilities; administration, organi-
zation, and governance; and ongoing evaluation. Small rural school dis-
tricts willing to commit themselves to such a program over a five-year
period were invited to submit to USOE a brief letter of interest. From
the approximately 320 school districts which expressed an interest, the
Experimental Schools program eventually selected ten as showing sufficient
capability to warrant substantial federal funding (on the average, approxi-

_____

[1]The program for small rural school districts is only one part of
the overall Experimental Schools program. Projects for comprehensive edu-
cational change are also being planned and implemented in the Franklin
Pierce School District of the State of Washington; Minneapolis, Minnesota;
Berkeley, California; the Edgewood School District (San Antonio area), Texas;
and the Greer School District (Greenville area), South Carolina. In addi-
tion to these 15 projects being conducted through public school districts,
three street academies (in Washington, D.C.; South Bend, Indiana; and Oak-
land, California) are under the administration responsibility of the National
Urban League.

mately 10% above their present budgets) over a five-year period.[2] The
announcement to the school districts emphasized that the Experimental
Schools program had been designed to learn about the process of planned
comprehensive change from a limited number of school districts so that
other school districts could benefit from their experience.

Simultaneous with the selection of the various rural school districts
a competition was held to select a research organization to study them. In
the spring of 1972, USOE issued a "request for proposals" to document and
evaluate the experiment.[3] Abt Associates was one of several research organi-
zations who submitted proposals. The winning Abt Associates design called
for eight separate, coordinated research studies within a single broad
effort called "Project Rural." Two of these studies are being conducted
independently within each of the ten school districts. They are tailored
to the unique characteristics of these communities, their school systems,
and their self-initiated plans for comprehensive change. These "site-
specific" studies include:

1. A general history of the community and its school system prior to
   its selection as an experimental schools project, which has just
   been completed.

2. An ethnographic case study of each community and its school system
   during the period in which it is designing and implementing its
   project, which is still under way.

Three additional studies are under way using uniform research designs
across the ten school districts during the entire time span of their pro-
jects. These "cross-site" studies are :

3. A study of pupil change, focusing on family background, peer
   relationships, cognitive and non-cognitive attributes, educational
   and occupational aspirations, and post-secondary school careers as
   they influence and are influenced by the experimental project.

---

[2]The announcement anticipated only five rural experimental projects.
In June, 1972, six districts were given a five-year "commitment" by USOE and
a one-year planning grant to evaluate more systematically their needs and
to prepare a plan for meeting them. At that time, six additional districts
were given one-year planning grants, but not a five-year commitment. In
June, 1973, three-year contracts to implement and institutionalize their
plan were signed with all the six districts who had earlier been given the
five-year commitments and with four of the six districts which had not.

[3]RFP 72-56. Evaluation and Documentation of Experimental Schools
Projects in Small Schools Serving Rural Areas.

4. A study of <u>organizationa</u> change, focusing on both schools and school districts as complex organizations and on how their organizational properties both influence and are influenced by the experimental project.

5. A study of <u>community</u> change, focusing on 15 community sectors and how these both influence and are influenced by the school system and its experimental project.

Because of the special nature of the Experimental Schools program, some attention must be paid to distinguishing among alternate explanations for change within the pupils, organizations, and communities. Some changes are attributable to the intervention of the Experimental Schools program, while others are attributable to antecedent factors at these ten sites or to more macroscopic social, economic, and cultural forces affecting all school districts during this time period. Therefore we have proposed, but not yet implemented,

6. An Experimental Schools <u>impact</u> study, through which these ten school districts can be compared with the other 320 applicant school districts and with a large sample of other small, rural school districts not subject to direct stimulation by the Experimental Schools program of the federal government.

Two additional studies will be implemented late in the relevant time span and will be based primarily upon a synthesis of findings from the six studies noted above. These include:

7. A "summative" <u>evaluation</u> of the experiment in terms of the achievement of overall program objectives and those of the ten individual projects.

8. An <u>assessment</u> of major findings in terms of their applicability to important issues of public policy, educational reform, and social research.

In order to implement this multi-study design, Abt Associates assembled a multi-disciplinary team of sociologists, social-psychologists, anthropologists, and educators. The cross-site studies are directed by persons trained in analytic survey research who work in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The site-specific studies are directed and conducted by trained field workers who reside full-time at each of the ten sites. In addition to serving as the principal investigator for a site history and a site case study, each on-site researcher serves as an expert informant for portions of the cross-site studies and arranges for the administration of some of the survey instruments. Thus, our approach to cross-site data collection draws heavily upon a relatively novel blend of survey and field methods, and considerable autonomy is given to the field workers to apply their professional training and skill uniquely at each site.

PART TWO: THE CROSS-SITE STUDIES

THE COMMUNITY CHANGE STUDY:

A Conceptualization of the Role of Community

in Educational Change

Stephen J. Fitzsimmons

The purpose of my presentation is to describe briefly a systematic approach to education research which takes as its perspective the rural community. The study is designed to tell us about the role Experimental Schools play in community life. This concern is examined from three perspectives: educational practice, public policy, and social research.

At the outset of the Experimental Schools program, the government made an important decision: that documentation of the ES program should consider the local political, social, and cultural aspects of the community as these interact with the school. We assumed that rural schools might be especially important institutions in the rural context and might differ from urban schools in their objectives, functions, and effects.

We formulated a general study goal: to determine the nature of rural community influences upon the school and its Experimental Schools project, and the extent of the project's relative contribution to the community. The study goal motivated three separate approaches to community with respect to the Experimental Schools.

1. The community may be defined as an <u>independent variable</u>. Community factors may account for significant differences in the character- istics of Experimental Schools.

2. The community may be defined as a <u>dependent variable</u>. The ES projects may have various effects upon the characteristics of a rural community.

3. The community may be defined as a <u>mediating variable</u>. Community variables and ES outcomes lead to combined effects within a complex social system.

Let's look at an example of one of these approaches, the concept of a mediating variable. Two ES programs may both significantly improve the preparation of students for the world of work. In one community, there is

a parallel expansion in the diversity of the economic base, and better pre-
pared students are more frequently hired. In this case, the two phenomena--
better training and more jobs--combine to enhance ES impacts on the community.
In a second community, jobs remain scarce and better prepared students in-
creasingly migrate out of the community. In this case, the two phenomena--
better training and no change in the local labor market--combine to result
in a "net loss" to the community. Generally, our orientation was concerned
with whether ES developed pupil changes and school system changes are shaped
by the community and/or have any significant impacts upon the community.

While these three approaches made sense, just what should be asked,
how to design such an experiment, and what ultimately can be learned re-
mained to be specified. We turned to various areas of literature to refine
our questions and to develop a study design; sociological studies of com-
munities, public policy research on rural development, and social-economic
indicator studies, systems analysis research, and educational studies.
Much of the research had not examined community concerns with respect to school-
ing; it underestimated their importance or failed to perceive the school as an
institution serving the community, or was simply uncertain about how to
go about studying such questions. Notably, public policy literature stressed
the importance of understanding how investments in education helped to
achieve larger objectives of rural community development.

We defined the community as a social system and set forth an opera-
tional definition which included 15 sectors:

Education	Law and Justice	Housing
Economic Base	Environment	Transportation
Employment	Health	Communications
Welfare	Social Services	Religious Life
Government Operation and Services	Recreation	Family Life

We then set forth five basic study questions:

1. Do the ES plans respond to important needs of the school system and
   the community?

2. Does the ES program interact with the community over the life of
   the project?

3. Do important changes occur over the life of the project both in
   the school system and in the community?

4. Do community/ES interactions relate to these changes, and do certain
   forces constrain or enhance change?

5. What impact, ultimately, do the ES projects have upon the communities in terms of enhancing or detracting from their general viability?

These questions were then organized into a logical paradigm. The paradigm was designed to organize data on complex social systems operating in communities over time in order to learn what is happening and how. We specified necessary data and incorporated the idea of theory development. The analysis was designed to focus more precisely on ES/school/community interactions and change as the project advanced. In all, four sets of data were called for.

1. Historical Data, concerning the social, economic, political, and educational characteristics of each site in years prior to the experiment.

2. Resident Survey Data, concerning attitudes of citizens toward their school and community, collected before and after the ES experiments.

3. Social and Economic Secondary Data, concerning the educational, economic, governmental and other sector characteristics of each community, before and after the experiment.

4. Interaction Analysis Data, concerning important interactions taking place between the ES project, the school, and in the community (i.e., exchanges of resources, personnel, interorganizational cooperation and conflicts) collected on an annual basis.

Throughout the project, much of these data are gathered by On-Site Researchers who, by virtue of their thorough knowledge of their respective communities, play a critical role in documenting important interactions and changes taking place.

A variety of data analysis techniques are employed, varying from simple content analysis of data to rank order correlation coefficients and various multivariate analyses. Data are analyzed both within and across communities, and also over time. Ultimately, the analysis will derive a systematic statement--a descriptive model--of the role of community in the rural school ES investment. The model which evolves will:

1. Identify key parameters, processes, and outcomes associated with ES investment in these communities.

2. Indicate how they work together in a social system.

3. Indicate how various forces such as history, population, political geography, and external influences mediate ES changes.

4. Assess the ultimate meaning and worth of such projects from the larger community perspective.

This information will address a variety of issues for different users. As illustrated in Figure 1, community can be a significant independent

8

variable which influences the implementation of these projects, suggesting different implications for policy makers, educators, and researchers. Likewise (hypothetically), direct impacts of the ES projects on communities can be documented. Finally, the outputs of educational experiments are, in fact, mediated by community characteristics which determine their ultimate impact upon the community.

In sum, this study should result in a much clearer picture of the nature of education as a change force in the rural community. A summary of this presentation, the schedule associated with the research, and the data devices are provided in Figures 2 and 3.

Community as a Variable	Finding	Implications for Users

Independent Variable	To date, progress in implementation of ES projects relates to:
	    Diverse economy
	    Concentrated population
	    Homogenous population
	    Access to SMSA
	    Higher income
	    Larger population
		Educators:
		    Much greater effort level is required to achieve start-up in rural centers without such features.
		
		Policy Makers:
		    Rural growth centers may be significantly better prospects for innovation.
		
		Researchers:
		    Community theories which fail to take into account locality characteristics seem questionable.

Dependent Variable	(Hypothetical)
	Experimental Schools programs significantly improved the health-related knowledge of students, expanded their work skills, and provided a locus for larger community efforts in these communities.
		Educators:
		    Consider curricular changes specifically designed to have defined objectives to overcome local community problems.
		
		Policy Makers:
		    Recalculate the benefit/cost ratios for educational investments to account for indirect benefits attributable to such investments.
		
		Researchers:
		    Set up community/social indicator system to study interactions among various community/social changes in different sectors.

Mediating Variable	The characteristics of economic base in community have major influence on the community; the ultimate impact of changes in schools, and their ES projects, seem very dependent on economic factors.	Educators:
		    Innovations which fail to relate to community economic needs may fall flat.
		
		Policy Makers:
		    Achievements of educational benefits may require ancillary investment programs in communities where the economic base is weak.
		
		Researchers:
		    Look more closely at ties between community employment and curriculum.

FIGURE 1   THE COMMUNITY, THE SCHOOL, AND ES: SOME SAMPLE FINDINGS

FIGURE 2   OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY CHANGE STUDY

Audience:
Educational practitioners
Public policy makers
Social and educational researchers

General Goal:
Determine the nature of rural community influences upon the school and its Experimental Schools program, and the extent of the project's relative contribution to the community.

Community/ES Experimental Relationships:
Community as an independent variable to ES
Community as a dependent variable to ES
Community as a mediating variable to ES

Research Orientations:
Sociological studies of community
Public policy and socio-economic indicators studies
Systems analysis research on complex social structures
Educational program evaluation vis à vis community

Community Definition:
A social system composed of institutions interacting over time, within a variety of life areas, including:

Education	Transportation
Economic Base	Health
Employment	Social Services
Welfare	Recreation
Government Operations and Services	Housing
	Communications
Law and Justice	Religious Life
Environment	Family Life

Basic Questions:
Do ES plans correspond to important needs in the community and school?

Do ES and school interact with the community over the life of the project?

Do changes occur in the community and school over the life of the project?

Do ES/school/community interactions relate to these changes, and do certain forces constrain or enhance change?

Do ES projects have impacts on general community viability?

Types of Data:
Pre-project community historical data
Pre- and post-project resident attitude data
Pre- and post-project secondary economic & social data
Annual data on ES/school/community interactions

Study Project:
A descriptive model of the community which:

- identifies parameters, processes and outcomes of ES investments in rural communities;
- shows them in a social system;
- identifies historical, demographic, geographic and external influences; and
- assesses ultimate ES role in community viability.

12
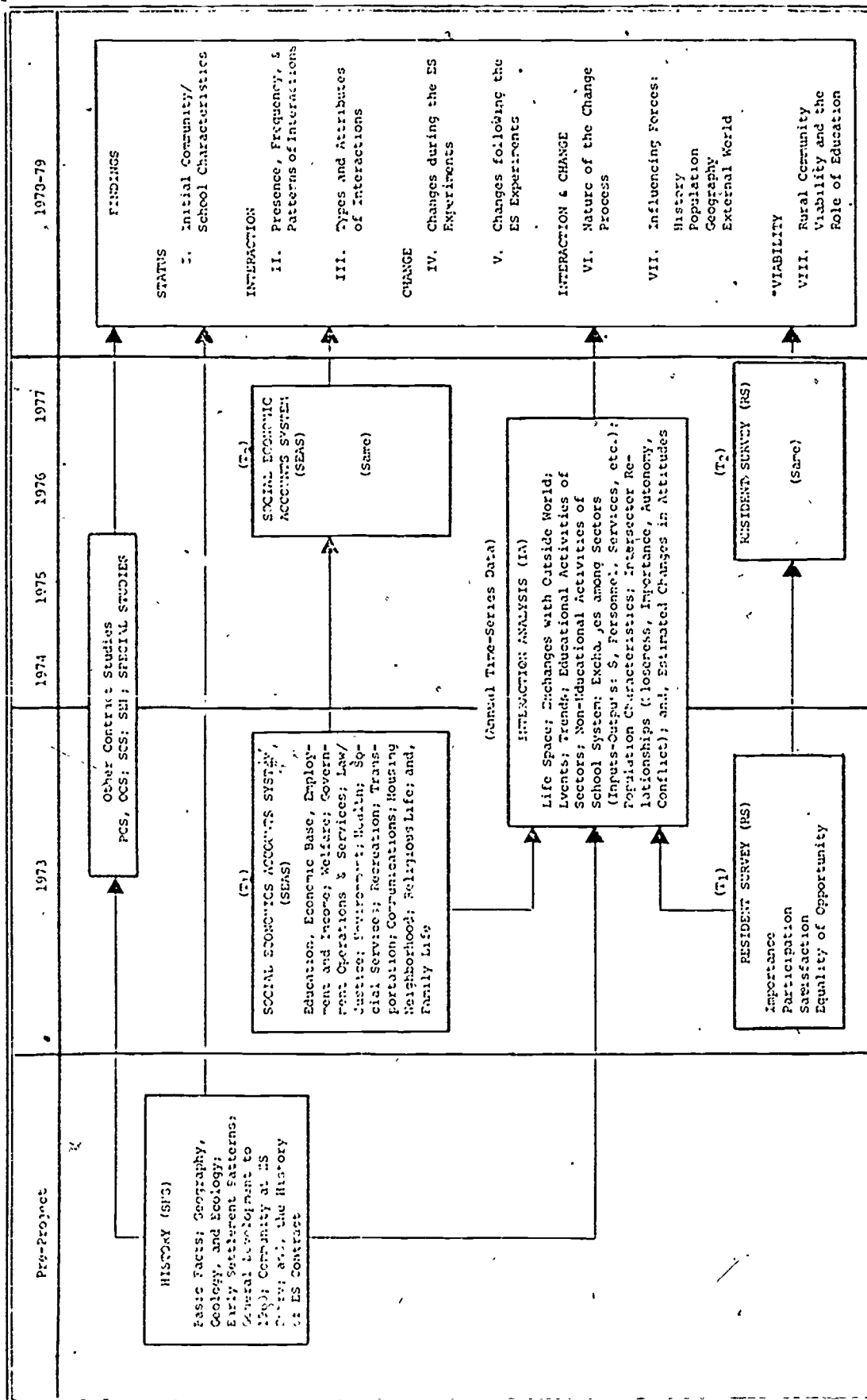
FIGURE 3   OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION AND TIME FRAME FOR THE COMMUNITY CHANGE STUDY

Time frame columns: Pre-Project | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1973-79

HISTORY (SHS)
Basic Facts; Geography, Geology, and Ecology; Early Settlement Patterns; General Development to High Community at ES Entry; and, the History of ES Contract

Other Contract Studies
PCS, OCS; SCS; SHS; SPECIAL STUDIES

SOCIAL ECONOMIC ACCOUNTS SYSTEM (SEAS)
Education, Economic Base, Employment and Income; Welfare; Government Operations & Services; Law/Justice; Environment; Health; Social Service; Recreation; Transportation; Communications; Housing Neighborhood; Religious Life; and, Family Life

SOCIAL ECONOMIC ACCOUNTS SYSTEM (SEAS)
(Same)

INTERACTION ANALYSIS (IA)
(Annual Time-Series Data)
Life Space; Exchanges with Outside World; Events; Trends; Educational Activities of Sectors; Non-Educational Activities of School System: Exchanges among Sectors (Inputs-Outputs: $, Personnel, Services, etc.); Population Characteristics; Intersector Relationships (Closeness, Importance, Autonomy, Conflict); and, Estimated Changes in Attitudes

RESIDENT SURVEY (RS) (T_1)
Importance
Participation
Satisfaction
Equality of Opportunity

RESIDENT SURVEY (RS) (T_2)
(Same)

FINDINGS

STATUS
I.   Initial Community/ School Characteristics

INTERACTION
II. Presence, Frequency, & Patterns of Interactions
III. Types and Attributes of Interactions

CHANGE
IV. Changes during the ES Experiments
V.   Changes following the ES Experiments

INTERACTION & CHANGE
VI. Nature of the Change Process
VII. Influencing Forces: History Population Geography External World

VIABILITY
VIII. Rural Community Viability and the Role of Education

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE STUDY:

A Conceptualization of Planned Organizational Change

Sheila Rosenblum

A major feature of the Experimental Schools program is that it calls for "holistic" rather than "piecemeal" change. Changing a school district is a complex operation, especially when the changes are to be comprehensive, as the ES program intends.

Through the Organizational Change Study, we attempt to describe and explain what happens organizationally as ten rural school districts participate in a program of planned comprehensive educational change. We view these school district organizations as social systems undergoing a process of change. A good deal of knowledge and experience exists in studying educational organizations as social systems; while there have been studies of planned educational change, they have rarely examined comprehensive programs on a scale such as Experimental Schools. When we sought to understand just what is planned comprehensive change, we found no readily available answer. We knew that many elements were involved and that they needed to be understood, measured, and accurately portrayed. We therefore found it necessary to be novel in conceptualizing what "comprehensive" change means.

Organizational change can be of two types: unplanned or planned. Unplanned change occurs naturally, growing out of the informal activities of interest groups, new inputs, or unintentional expansion and environmental pressures. Planned change, on the other hand, is deliberate, brought about through planned programs of innovation by establishing goals, objectives, and the means for accomplishing them.

In several of the ten rural school districts under study, planned programs of change other than the NIE/Experimental Schools program are being undertaken concurrently with the ES projects. Although not all change that is occurring in these ten school districts during the course of

the study is attributable to Experimental Schools, there are discrete and
identifiable components of the ES projects which generate measurable, or-
ganizational effects. These are the changes that we are emphasizing as
we develop our conceptualization of planned comprehensive change.

The current-state of our conceptualization of planned comprehen-
sive change involves two major concepts: comprehensiveness and scope.

- The <u>comprehensiveness</u> of change focuses on the "facets" of the
  educational system where change is occurring.

- The <u>scope</u> of change focuses on the abstract dimensions of change
  which describe "how much" is changing and "how" or in what way
  the system is changing.

Comprehensiveness has been defined by the staff of the Experimen-
tal Schools program as consisting of at least the following six "facets":

- Curriculum

- Instruction/Staffing

- Community Participation

- Use of Time, Space and Facilities

- Organization, Administration and Governance

- Ongoing Formative Evaluation (a research facet)

The Experimental Schools projects in the ten school districts are comprised
of many components which can be categorized into curriculum, staffing,
community participation and the other "facets" outlined above. Thus, the
"facets" of comprehensiveness refer to <u>where</u> in the educational system
change is taking place.

The second concept, scope, has dimensions which are both quan-
titative and qualitative. Not all change is of equal importance or
consequence to the organization. One can ask <u>how much</u> change is taking
place: is it in all or parts of the facets? Is it in some or all units
and levels of the organization? One can also ask <u>how</u> or in what way
the organization has changed. For example, additions, substitutions, or
simply a switch in emphasis or priorities can all change the facets of
an organization. Changes can be in content or in form through new tech-
niques, a new structure, or new functions. Thus, the scope of planned
change consists of four dimensions. Two measure the quantity or "how
much" change, what we call extent and pervasiveness, and two measure
quality, the "how" or "in what way" of change, what we call systemic type
and degree of difference (Figure 4).

14

FIGURE 4   DIMENSIONS OF THE SCOPE OF CHANGE

"How Much"		"How"	
Extent	Pervasiveness	Systemic Type	Degree of Difference

1. Extent of Change

Extent is a measure of the coverage of the change. It represents the proportion of the totality of a facet that is affected by the change and may vary from one facet to another. The extent of change in the curriculum facet refers to the proportion of the total curriculum which is affected by the changes. For example, since schools generally devote more time and energy to reading than to art, a change in the reading curriculum will be of greater extent for a school than a change in the art curriculum. In the staffing facet, extent refers to the proportion of the teacher role that is being affected; i.e., does the change affect all of what the teacher does or only part?

Extent is most frequently measured in terms of expenditure of time. Although change in individual components of the Experimental Schools projects may be of limited extent, the overall extent of change for a school district is additive. Thus, one may look at both the extent of change implemented in each facet or in all facets together.

2. Pervasiveness of Change

Pervasiveness of change attempts to answer the question, "Is it a limited or widespread change?" Pervasiveness refers to the degree of diffusion of change throughout the organization. In educational organizations, for example, pervasiveness of change may range from low, when a single classroom is affected, to high, when all administrative units of a school district are affected. Both extent and pervasiveness, the quantitative dimensions, describe how much change is occurring within a school district without describing how it is a change or how great a difference the change makes.

15

3. Systemic Type of Change

The systemic type of change occurring is a qualitative dimension which asks the following questions. What aspect of the organization as a system is changing? What is the difference? Is it in content or in form? Do the changes involve new people, new techniques, a new structure, or new functions in the system? It is assumed that underlying the various types of possible changes, there is a continuum from simple changes which are easy to implement to complex changes which are more difficult to implement. Alterations to the structure and function of an organization are more wrenching to the system than mere changes in instructional material, for instance, and are therefore more difficult to achieve.

4. Degree of Difference

Degree of difference asks the question, "How different is the innovation from what existed previously?" Thus, it is related to the ease or difficulty of implementing and/or institutionalizing the change but is not a measure of these.

Degree of difference is a subjective assessment of the change. It refers to the greatness of differences in whatever type of change is occurring. Is the new technique or function very different or not very different from what existed previously? For example, a new reading program may be introduced which differs very little from the previous reading series. On the other hand, a new counseling role may be instituted which is very different from what had existed earlier.

Our conceptualization of planned comprehensive change merges concepts of comprehensiveness and the dimensions of scope of change to form a composite matrix (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5   A CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PLANNED COMPREHENSIVE CHANGE

Facets of Comprehensive Change	Dimensions of Scope of Change			
	Extent	Pervasiveness	Systemic Type	Degree of Difference
Curriculum				
Instruction/Staffing				
Community Participation				
Use of Time, Space and Facilities				
Organization, Administration and Governance				
Ongoing Formative Evaluation				

We know that not all the school districts are emphasizing change in the same way. By using this approach we can describe for each district the extent (or coverage), the pervasiveness (or diffusion), the systemic type, and the degree of difference of changes in each of the facets of comprehensive change. We can also determine the overall scope of change and compare the scope of planned organizational change between these ten districts.

17

THE PUPIL CHANGE STUDY:

A Conceptualization of "Treatment"

As a Complex Phenomenon

Donald N. Muse

The Pupil Change Study has been designed as a comprehensive study
of the changes that occur in pupils as a consequence of the Experimental
Schools program. The purpose of my presentation is to outline only a por-
tion of the study, that which is associated with the concept of "treatment."

The concept of treatment has a long history in educational research
(Rosenshine & Furst, 1973). Most frequently, it refers to some action,
innovation, or change at the classroom level. At this level, the concept
has a clear and precise referent. One teacher, a team of teachers, or a
teaching machine "treats" a discrete number of pupils for a fixed amount of
time. However, during the 1960s and early 1970s, large-scale programs
such as Experimental Schools, which encompassed diversified change in hun-
dreds of classrooms, came into existence. Within such a study, the concept
of treatment does not have a clear meaning. For example, because of the
emphasis on locally initiated comprehensive change, there are more than
250 identifiable classroom level treatments in these ten rural school dis-
tricts. Such a situation does not lend itself to the traditional defini-
tion of treatment.

When confronted with the problem of complex treatments within a
large experimental program, most previous studies have focused on aggregate
change at either the district, school, or grade level (White, et. al.,
1972). The problem with this approach is clear in the literature; i.e.,
when the distribution of the effects of any program is substantial, the
aggregation can completely mask the effects of specific innovations (Light
& Smith, 1970).

Faced with this problem, we developed what we believe to be a
novel solution in the Pupil Change Study, one which has broad potential

18   23

application in large-scale educational research. Our solution centers on the creation of a generalized treatment index, constructed to measure the exposure of teachers to program activities. Information is collected from teachers on their involvement with program activities, such as seminars, workshops, training sessions, new materials, and program literature. Measuring each of these dimensions requires a slightly different approach. For example, school personnel can be asked directly whether they have attended workshops or training sessions. However, exposure to materials and program literature requires obtaining data from the program personnel and the formulation of specific questions for each program setting. The separate dimensions can be aggregated into an overall measure that represents total exposure of each teacher to the program and its activities.

The basic distributions that result represent the association of teachers with the program. The shapes of these distributions are presented in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6   EXPOSURE OF TEACHERS TO THE ES PROGRAM
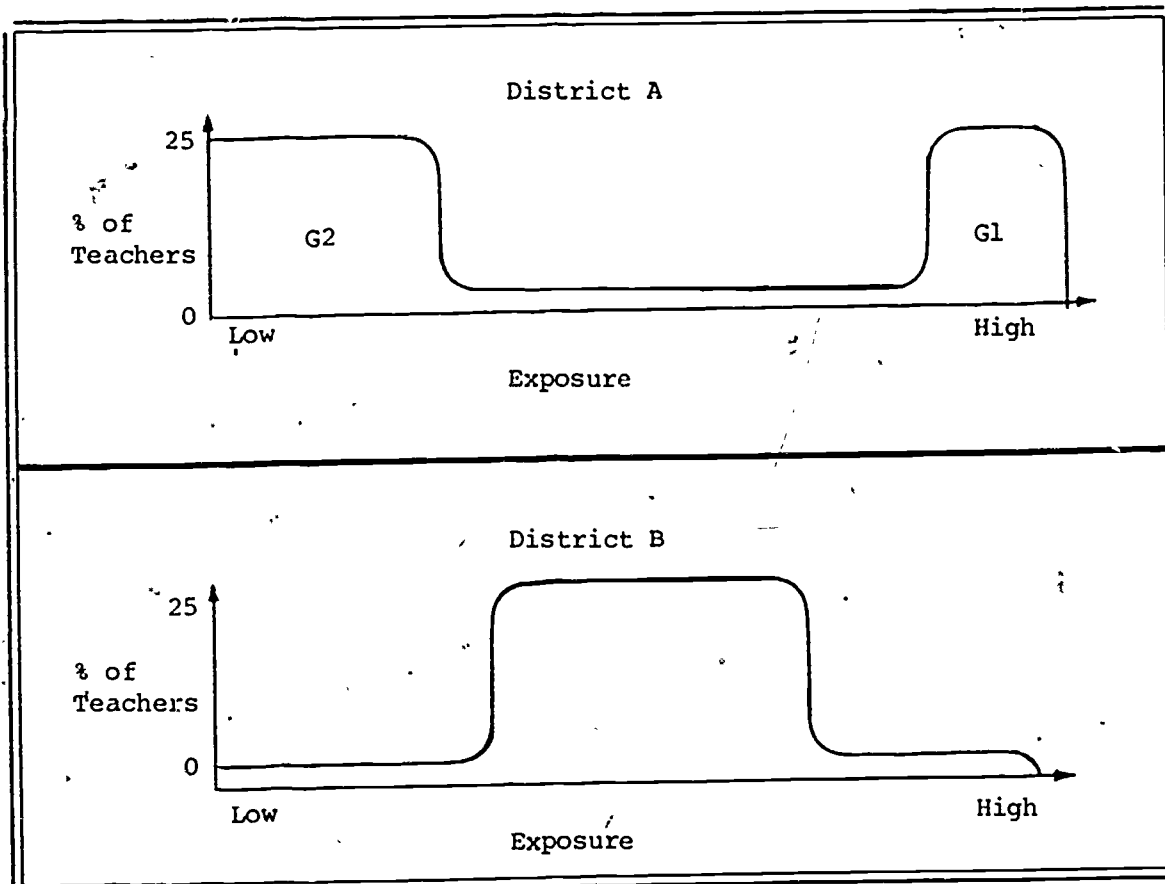
For example, here we have two hypothetical districts that vary considerably in terms of the distribution of the effects of the program. In District A, a few teachers have received a great deal of exposure to the program, but the majority of the teachers have received little. In District B, the majority of the teachers have received some exposure, but some personnel have received either a great deal or little exposure. This information is useful both in the evaluation of the effects of the program and in its implementation. For example, from the evaluation perspective, the teachers in District A would probably best be divided into Group 1 (G1), the treatment teachers, and Group 2 (G2), the non-treatment teachers. Clearly, a look at mean scores at the grade, school, or district level in School District A could disguise significant program effects. However, mean scores in District B might be of considerable value. The utility of the index is not limited to the simple question of how much treatment. For example, who is doing the treating is also of interest; i.e., what are the characteristics of the teachers in Group 1 in District A who received exposure to the program? Are they primarily young teachers in the first year or two of service? Or, for example, are they primarily elementary teachers or math teachers?

The utility of the overall index is not limited to questions of its distribution and the characteristics of the affected teacher groups. A second major use of the index is in assigning treatment values to particular pupils. Specifically, one could, at the aggregate index level or a particular subdimension of the index, assign treatment values of the teachers to whom individual pupils are exposed. Pupils could then be subdivided into groups who had high and low exposure to the program, even in cases where the treatment might cut across several portions of their school day. These pupil groups could then be compared on a number of outcome variable dimensions, given suitable multivariate controls for extraneous variables.

The Pupil Change Study is now at a point where sufficient data are becoming available for making such comparisons. To date, the data necessary for empirical verification of the efficacy of this particular concept of treatment have not been available. However, it appears to be a viable conceptualization of treatment in large-scale program evaluations where a variety of innovative approaches are being introduced simultaneously and vary in the degree to which they are, in fact, being implemented in classrooms.

References

Light, R. J. & Smith, P. V. Choosing a future: Strategies for designing
     and evaluating new programs. Harvard Educational Review, 1970,
     Vol. 40, No. 2, 1-29.

Rosenshine, B. & Furst, N. The use of direct observation to study teaching,
     In R. M. Travis (Ed.), Second handbook of research on teaching.
     Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973.

White, B. F., et. al. The Atlanta project. Washington, D.C.: Urban
     Institute, 1972.

PART THREE: THE CASE STUDIES

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHNOGRAPHIES ON EDUCATIONAL CHANGE--
TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF RURAL SCHOOLS

Stephen J. Fitzsimmons

Introduction

A variety of methodologies have been used to evaluate educational programs in America--achievement studies, demographic analyses, surveys, econometric analyses, etc. Despite this diversity, educators, Congress, and in many cases, the public at large are expressing growing concern that these approaches are not, by themselves, sufficient for such evaluation. In some cases, the concern is that we focus on the wrong questions, while in others, the problem is not with what we are learning (which is considerable) but rather with what we are not learning.

Perhaps most notable about the traditional approaches is that method tends to predetermine what questions we can ask. Seldom can a school district be understood on its own terms; i.e., as an institution affecting and affected by people and groups with the diverse values, aspirations, and constraints which they bring to the process of schooling. Given that our study is, in part, concerned with just such matters, it was appropriate to turn to the fields of anthropology and sociology, where ethnographic and case study approaches have been developed over many years. After careful assessment of these approaches, the decision was made to conduct ten separate case studies which would complement and link with more traditional methods of assessing the processes and impacts of educational innovations in rural school systems.

The application of ethnographic methods to questions of public policy is still relatively new. However, social scientists are increasingly being called upon to apply ethnographic method to matters of public concern; educational research and evaluation is one such application. We developed a variety of guidelines necessary to effectively apply this method concerning researcher role, theoretical approaches, substantive development, data collection and recording, coordination with other research activities, and

reports preparation strategy. Both the project and the government staff worked through several iterations in developing a set of guidelines.[1]

This approach was not viewed as replacing other research but rather as adding a new dimension to our understanding of educational change. In essence, this approach is tailored to the individual school districts under study and is based upon the premise that much of what happens in the schools is influenced by a combination of cultural, social, political and psychological factors that make up its context. There is an inherent complementarity between the site-specific case studies and the cross-site research efforts. The case study tends to emphasize the local conditions and values which shaped what happened and better explain why it happened, while the cross-site studies tend to emphasize either those features which are characteristic of the sites in general or patterns among groups of sites.

Objectives

As their fundamental objective, these case studies use ethnography to understand how the community and school context affect the Experimental Schools project's implementation and impacts. The studies will communicate important knowledge about life in the community and school system during the period of the ES projects, so that the reader can sense what it would have been like to be there. The studies are designed to inform and place in perspective the <u>meaning of the project from the perspective of the local</u> setting.

Three types of variability among the case studies are to be expected:

- Variability as a function of the uniqueness of the community and school system.
- Variability as a function of the disciplinary orientation applied (e.g., anthropological, sociological).
- Variability as a function of the particular professional orientation of the OSR.

A variety of "first principles" guided the On-Site Researchers in their case study preparations:

- OSRs have <u>responsibility</u> for development of their own individual designs.

---

[1]For further information, see Fitzsimmons, 1975.

- The case studies build directly upon the <u>physical presence</u> of the OSRs at the site, over time.

- Case studies attend to the <u>meaning</u> of the ES projects to the individual communities and their school system.

- The specific details on how best to orient case studies have been <u>developed on a site by site basis</u>, rather than in general.

The role of the OSRs is a multiple one involving authorship, initiator of study, researcher, coordinator, writer, editor, and chief responsible party for the effort.

Some General Observations

In preparing the case studies, the OSRs considered various matters. The following are examples:

- <u>Special Disciplinary Concerns</u>. The OSRs were free to choose from among a number of disciplinary approaches (or combinations thereof); for example, anthropology, sociology, education, public policy, social psychology.

- <u>Development of Case Study Plans</u>. In developing plans for the study, OSRs gave consideration to matters of theory, method, procedure, researcher role, units of analysis, and so forth, as appropriate to the study orientation selected.

- <u>Scope of Effort</u>. The OSRs were free to vary the area of study. Examples of variations in scope include: holistic vs. particularistic, community emphasis vs. school emphasis, historical vs. contemporary explanatory constructs, external vs. internal concerns, and developmental vs. existential orientation. The assumption underlying this flexibility was that no single orientation is best; each has its merits and shortcomings. The range of Case Studies will, in the aggregate, cover a fairly broad scope.

- <u>Research Aspects</u>. Similar to the diversity in the scope of effort, various methodologies and data approaches are acceptable, including: standard research design vs. ethnography, use of both primary and secondary data, and inductive vs. deductive study logic.

OSRs were also responsible for diverse research activities including:

- <u>Data Collection</u> (primary and secondary) whether by self or by assistant.

- <u>Data Recording and Storage Activities</u> (which are handled according to study needs).

- <u>Data Analysis</u> of any type appropriate to the design.

- <u>Memos/Interim Reports</u>.

- <u>Final Case Study</u>.

Each of these activities is generally coordinated on the site, with staff in Cambridge, and with the government project officer, as appropriate. During the course of the past year, there have been a variety of meetings,,exchanges of memos, and other forms of communication designed to help in the preparation of the ethnographies. Progress reports have been submitted periodically. OSRs have been free to work with specialists with interest in their chosen topic and approach. In addition, a panel of anthropologists, sociologists, and educators review the case studies period- ically in order to offer criticism and make suggestions. Various types of suggestions are sought. For example:

- Matters of substance and research process are reviewed.
- Possible findings which appear to relate to the cross-site studies, or to general findings across the case studies (i.e., synthesis) are considered.
- Ways of "transporting" these findings to educational practitioners, schools of education, and the larger research community are con- sidered.

Periodically we meet with officials of NIE to review matters of con- tent, procedure, and applicability of what we are learning. All in all, it is a new, but promising, research experience in this context. This is not to say that ethnographies in education are new. What is new to the field of educational research is the application of a variety of ethno- graphic approaches to the longitudinal study of planned change in rural school districts. Equally exciting is the fact that the ethnographic findings can be related to the findings of more traditional research tech- niques as part of this overall project.

Reference

Fitzsimmons, S. J. The anthropologist in a strange land--The ethnography
in public policy research. In Human Organization, summer, 1975
(in press).

THE WORK ADJUSTMENT OF RECENT GRADUATES

William L. Donnelly

Introduction

This is a brief report on some research in progress[1] on the nature

of changes which affect youth as they move from student status to that of

worker and wage earner. It is focused on youth[2] between 19 and 25 years

of age who are employed in blue collar and white collar occupations and

live in a small rural community. It emphasizes the patterns of situational

adjustment[3] of young people who graduate from high school and go directly

---

[1] One requirement of the contract with the National Institute of
Education requires that research findings which influence behavior or might
influence behavior related to the community's educational program will not
be made public until the completion of the five-year funding period. The
research reported in this paper deals only with youth who graduated prior
to actual implementation of the Experimental Schools program in this com-
munity.

[2] My definition of youth is based on Berger (1971), Matza (1964),
Gottlieb (1965), and Flacks (1971).

[3] Becker (1970, pp. 275-287) discusses some concepts used to ex-
plain the way people move through youth and adulthood. He describes
"situational adjustment" as an explanation for changes in persons during
adulthood. "The person, as he moves in and out of a variety of social
situations, learns the requirements of continuing in each situation and of
success in it. If he has a strong desire to continue, the ability to as-
sess accurately what is required, and can deliver the required performance,
the individual turns himself into the kind of person the situation demands."
Becker admits the concept is not well defined, but it does permit a flexible
focus on the adaptability required of adults as they move from situation
to situation.

In this paper the concept is applied to the situation where young
adults move from a position within a school organization to the new status
as worker. The adjustments include the halting of various school-defined
requirements for success, especially grades and behavior conformity. Prob-
ably most important, however, is the ending of the inferior status and
required subordination defined by student status. Moving into the work world
is highly anticipated, as the graduate is eager to experience the sense of
independence and responsibility as a worker which he or she was never able
to achieve while in school.

3.

into the work force of the community. The report is based on over two years of participant observation and direct contact with more than 70 young men and women; it consists of three parts: 1) a brief description of the rural community which is the location of the study; 2) an analysis of two years of observation of young workers; and 3) a summary and conclusion which indicates the importance of this research to a comprehensive review of the rural community school.

The Setting

Located midway between Chicago and Detroit is the rural community of Constantine, which has long served as the economic trade center for the nearby farming area. Since consolidation of the schools in the 1950s and '60s, Constantine has also served as the educational center for the area. Production of mobile homes and recreational vehicles is important in this area, and the local factories offer relatively high wages for unskilled labor. In recent years, this employment situation has been tempting to high school graduates, who could step directly into an assembly line job at a starting wage higher than their parents have been receiving in some other employment following years of experience and training. At the same time, the ways of urban life have been spreading into the local community; this has had its most important effect on the youth of the area, who have been more willing to accept new values and ideas than have their elders.

Though located in an area which demographers have predicted will some day be a megalopolis stretching from Chicago to Detroit, the community still projects an image of a small, rural farming community somewhat isolated from the urgency of the urban world. In fact, the community is an amalgam of the old and new. Modern factories compete with the traditional farm service operations geared to grain, livestock, and dairy production. The young are offered a range of occupational choice from farm operation and services to assembly line production of twentieth century products. On another level, there is also competition between traditional rural values and life style with recently emerging patterns emanating from urban areas which are most acceptable among the young of this community. The school, as a primary agent of socialization and learning, is forced to provide an educational context which can bridge this gap.

Peer Groups Among the Young Workers

The most important focus of life among young workers in Constantine revolves around informal recreational activities rather than work, formal dating arrangements, organized parties, self-improvement activities or civic service. The young adults are preoccupied with having a good time and earning enough money at work to sustain their life style.[4] There is no strong peer pressure to conform to a limited set of behaviors, though in fact, there is very little deviance among the members. The expression of individuality is supported by the group members, in principle, but non-conformity to the accepted patterns of the group is seldom effected.

Membership in the peer group[5] is based primarily on age and on friendships formed as schoolmates. Sons and daughters of long-time resident families mix equally with the children of recent arrivals to the community. Young workers who have moved into the community because of employment are equally acceptable in the peer group. Older co-workers also occasionally become part of the group, but the primary determinant appears to be age and its related group identity.

The young workers' attitudes appear to mirror the concerns held nationally and may be an indication of the influences of national media more than local opinion. There is a tendency to describe young people generally as having less work motivation than earlier generations and less satisfaction with working conditions. These young workers reflect a widespread view in describing their peers as less responsible in holding down a job and concerned only with having enough money to live on. Yet, when pressed to describe their own behavior in a work situation, they value steady, responsible work habits, backed by a sense of planning for the future.

---

[4]I define life style as a group phenomenon in which an individual's behavior is influenced by his or her participation in various social groups and in relationships with significant others.

[5]Gans (1962) has described the peer group as based in the kinship network and familarity of the families within a neighborhood of a large city. In this rural community of my study, the kinship network is not nearly as influential and of course, the community is not at all like an urban neighborhood. Yet, there are many similarities with Gans' concept in that the peer group includes many neighbors and friends and is focused around informal sociability networks which relate more to recreational patterns of the members than to occupational criteria.

some, especially males, have long-range goals to purchase a small farm which can be worked part-time or to learn a particular business or trade so that such experience might later aid in gaining ownership of a small business. Females more often view the job as something to do until marriage, though many conclude that working after marriage is a strong possibility, primarily because they recognize the need for two incomes to support a family. And, more often for females, the job offers a means for self-expression that is frequently missing in the dull, monotonous, factory work available to most young males. There is, then, a continuing reflection of some traditional values regarding work and independence, as individual youth continue to favor maintaining occupational and residential independence through frequently expressed goals of owning small businesses. and homes.

Among this youth group, opinions about the nature of work and about preparation through education for joining the work force indicate that most young workers give little credit to the school system and see little need for specialized occupational training. Again and again, they recall having had only the slightest interest in the courses offered in high school. Males, especially, tend to conclude that the only thing of importance gained through 12 years of school was the graduate's diploma which can now be used to obtain a job. Females recognize that courses dealing with business practices, typing, and bookkeeping were of merit for those who have obtained secretarial jobs. Otherwise, they too, look back on their education as lacking in utility for adult life. However, many also recognize that the school also functioned to inculcate a set of values about society and for the purposes of behavior training. For example, the school is remembered as having supported the value of timeliness, which they now regard as a necessary habit in order to perform satisfactorily in their work.

Family background stands out as a very important element in the personality development of these youth. Many respondents have indicated that family values and training have contributed to the ability to make the transition from school to work. The family is regarded as the primary teacher of an ethical system which influences the individual's definition of personal responsibility to others. This family ethical training appears to have a strong bearing also on the views of sexual behavior, family life plans, planning for children, and child-rearing practices.

There is nearly unanimous recognition that life is more enjoyable
since leaving school. Several have described that first year after gradu-
ation from high school as a period of uncertainty, when a return to school
might have been appealing. However, upon pursuing this point, I usually
found that those who wished to return were thinking mostly in terms of the
"good times" and not of curriculum-related activities, and even they ad-
mitted that after having been away from school for two or more years, they,
too, no longer wished to return to school.

The most prominent remembrance of the change from student to adult
comes from the recognition of a sense of newly gained freedom and respon-
sibility for one's own actions. Most had waited anxiously for graduation
from school and the change to a regular job. Going to work every day began
a new pattern of personal relationships, working with older people and
making new friends. Even though, for most, the job signified only a means
for gaining regular wages through unskilled occupations, there is a new-
found sense of ultimate responsibility for one's own actions. No longer
dependent on parents for money and no longer required to submit to the regu-
lations of school, a new sense of independence is born which all have been
taught is of ultimate importance.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper has described some patterns of situational adjustment
which young people make when they leave school and become workers. For
a large proportion of the youth, graduation signifies release from a
restrictive and authoritarian school system. Among this group, the evi-
dence strongly indicates the importance of the arrival of adulthood, which
is signified by escape from school. Graduation represents the beginning
of a new period in life when independence and responsibility for one's own
actions are gained. Believing that they were denied self-responsibility
and freedom while in school, these young workers look on the acquiring of
a job as the means of gaining responsibility and independence.

What graduates ultimately take with them is often much at variance
with the intended objectives of the school system, which includes the
preparation of youth for the responsibilities of adulthood. For those who
go directly from school to a job in the community, there is a distinct
change in status and, in the expectations for behavior. In American society,
this process is not often referred to as a "rite of passage" because, other

36

than the graduation ceremony, there is no distinct, ritualized stepping
over into the adult world. In fact, much of the nature of schooling and
family socialization during the adolescent years is aimed at a gradual
introduction to the mysteries of adulthood, to reduce the impact of the
change brought on by graduation.

One of the most important functions of schools is to provide the
means for individual mobility. There is the expectation in our society
that the process of education is the primary mechanism for recruiting
lower class individuals into the middle class--to permit the "common"
person to better him or her self.[6] For those people who desire upward
mobility, the school offers, through its curriculum and socialization
mechanisms, a means to an end. To a large segment of the nation, however,
there is no definition of future goals, or at least of goals which involve
education as a basic requirement for specialized occupational training and
advancement. To many, schooling is only something to be endured for 12
years before graduating to adulthood, a job, and marriage. To this large
group, school does not offer much of value, and the adjustment to school
life is usually less comfortable than for those who focus on upward mobility
career aspirations. For the rural school system, struggling to adjust to
the ever increasing influences of our urbanized society, the challenge to
provide a meaningful educational experience to this large group must be a
major goal. For researchers studying rural school systems, there is an
absolute need to consider the long-range effects of schooling on rural youth;
presently, the school system appears to provide little in the way of useful
education for many youth. This is not only a problem of the schools, but
of the entire community, and can only be solved through a comprehensive
understanding of the basic societal changes which spell out the available
life choices for rural youth.

_____

[6]Kahl (1953) ably points out the differences in academic orientation
among school boys in that not all youngsters accept the achievement orien-
tation.

References

Becker, H. S. Personal change in adult life. In Becker, H. S., Socio-
   logical work: Method and substance. Chicago: Aldine Press, 1970.

Berger, B. Looking for America. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971.

Flacks, R. Youth and social change. Chicago: Markham, 1971.

Gans, H. J. The urban villagers. New York: Free Press, 1962.

Gottlieb, D. Youth culture: Variations on a general theme. In Sherif, M.
   & Sherif, C. (Eds.), Problems of youth. Chicago: Aldine, 1965.

Kahl, J. A. Education and occupational aspirations of "common-man" boys.
   Harvard Educational Review, summer, 1953.

Matza, D. Position and behavior patterns of youth. In Faris, R. E. (Ed.),
   Handbook of modern sociology. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964.

INDIRECT COMMUNICATION IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:

An Anthropological Look at the Uses of Humor and Time

in the Administration of a Rural School District

Donald A. Messerschmidt

Introduction

Not long after I began studying change in a rural school district,
a staff person remarked to me: "If you don't have a sense of humor in
this school district, you don't survive." It was already apparent that
humor played a significant role in the smooth functioning of interper-
sonal and administrative interrelationships in the district. Humor, it
is clear, is highly valued in the culture of my research, and furthermore,
it functions to create and maintain other things of value such as good
rapport and group consensus. But it is also apparent that humor does not
necessarily function alone or in isolation. Other forms of indirection
are also important. The use of time is an example, and it is my intent
in this paper to discuss humor (primarily) and the use of time (in its
place) in their roles of helping to create rapport and consensus in the
process of decision-making.

Social scientists have long been interested in the social and
cultural relevancy of humor. They have looked everywhere from primitive
societies (see bibliography in Howell, 1973) to modern industrial and
organizational settings (e.g., Bradney, 1957; Emerson, 1969; Goffman, 1959;
Hammond, 1959; Sykes, 1966). Sometimes humor is investigated as part and
parcel of avoidance and taboo. At other times, it is considered adjunct
to indirect communications more broadly conceived. It is the latter per-
spective that I take in this paper. I will examine a school district
administrative council from the point of view of the functions of humor
and of time as two examples of indirect communications.

This study is divided into three parts: 1) a brief overview of the school district administrative setting and organization, 2) an analysis of humor and indirection as observed in council meetings, and 3) some final remarks.

Before proceeding, two caveats must be taken into account:

1. This study of indirect communications is a very small part of a larger ethnographic case study of educational change in its cultural context. In our attempt to record and analyze social settings, anthropologists frequently seek to isolate the smaller structural and functional components of interaction which help us to understand and explain how and why certain cultural patterns occur. In this instance, high value is placed on humor, as well as on rapport and consensus which humor helps to create, both within the school system and in the wider cultural surroundings.

2. My focus on humor should not be construed to indicate that I perceive the administrative council as merely a joking group. Nothing could be farther from the truth; rather, laughing, joking, and teasing are part of the process of making administrative meetings less pedestrian and more enjoyable, hence more productive, than they might otherwise be. Humor in these settings is highly functional in helping the administrators to accomplish the very serious and important business of operating the school district. A focus on indirect communications only helps us to understand and appreciate the decision-making process; it is not intended to explicate that entire process.

Administrative Setting and Organization

School District "X" is rural and recently consolidated, comprised of five former autonomous districts. The administration includes a superintendent and his assistant, and four administrative principals who correspond roughly with former superintendents of the pre-existing districts, but with the difference that some of the former superintendents' duties have been centralized; i.e., assigned to the new superintendent and his assistant. The administration meets twice-monthly as a committee of six, which also includes, in addition, two project directors. Other principals, head teachers, and an evaluation person are often invited to attend for special discussions. To date, I, too, am present at most meetings in an observational and non-participatory role.

The recent reorganization of this school district represents an administrative consolidation as opposed to a physical consolidation. No schools were closed and no bus routes changed as a direct result of consolidation. Furthermore, consolidation was forced, not voluntary. A state-wide consolidation effort was initiated in 1969 and concluded early

in 1972. There was considerable local opposition. One outcome of the
new situation is what appears to be a conscious effort on the part of
school officials to allow the former districts, now called attendance
areas, to retain a certain amount of autonomy in planning and implementing
school programs, combined with unified (but not necessarily uniform) dis-
trict-wide planning, budgeting, and policy-making. It should be noted,
however, that not all administrative authority and responsibility at the
central and attendance area levels was immediately clear-cut or settled.
Much of the process of forming a workable operating balance between the
two administrative levels was left for the administrators themselves to
work out over time. That process is continuous. The importance of forced
unification, of the retention of some autonomous functions at the attendance
area level, and of the continuing decision-making dynamic will be shown
in the discussion of the functions of humor and indirection which follows.

The administrative council is a key organizational unit within
the school district. Its duties are essentially advising the school board
and planning and coordinating district-wide school operations. It also
provides an important forum for airing district-wide concerns and serves
as a link between the central office and the individual school staffs.
Extensive discussion and consensus are regular features of school adminis-
trative interaction. Awareness of the diversity of intra-district needs
as well as of recent unification seem to motivate a style of operation
consciously directed to avoid conflict.

Humor and Indirection in Administrative Council Meetings

Amid the lengthy and serious discussion of business, administra-
tive council meetings are laced with humor and joking; that is, with what
some observers of organizational relations call "institutionalized indirec-
tion" (Hammond, 1959). Humor in such settings takes countless forms and has
countless functions. Knop (1974) lists 14 functions, including humbling the
arrogant person, bringing the deviant to justice, providing opportunity
for exploratory behavior, allowing catharsis for the inhibited, easing
situational anxiety, establishing rapport, satirizing inconsistent or
inappropriate norms, demonstrating social acceptance, and reducing bore-
dom from routine. I wish to focus primarily on two functions of humor:
to establish rapport; that is, its socializing function; and (with the use
of time) to create consensus, its boundary-maintaining function.

41

Rapport: The Socialization Function of Humor

Council meetings invariably begin with a short period of informal backslapping, filling of coffee cups, munching on donuts, teasing and joking.   The types of jokes probably do not differ greatly from those heard in other institutional, industrial, business, or office staff settings. Here they focus on current problems in the domain of a particular adminis- trator, such as an athletic team upset or a patron complaint, or on a district-wide concern such as school bus vandalism.   The jokes usually include humorous naming: participants have funny nicknames, there are lighthearted references to the ethnicity of some surnames, and there is a loose use of appellations which point to a personal idiosyncracy such as weight, thinning hair, personal habits, or role relationships.   This observer, for example, is frequently called the "spy" or the "fed," references to my role as a documenter of a federal education project. To some, I am "the man with the blue notebook," and, in an allusion to both my observer role and my Germanic pa_rinym, I am called "Secret Agent ME-109" after the World War II Messerschmitt fighter plane.

Some administrators who take pride in their origins submit laugh- ingly in this setting to jokes which refer to their coming to the district from outside of the immediate locale, the "Oh, he's from Missouri," type of joke.   Pride in local origins is a strong value in the culture in which this school district is situated.

Women present at these meetings (usually one, sometimes others) take the brunt of mildly sexist joking as well as nicknaming.   My female co-researcher, a Ph.D. anthropologist, who sometimes substituted for me as the observer, came to be known fondly as "Doc" or "Doctor," to every- one's delight.

Several factors about this rapport-building and socialization period of joking may be isolated.   For example:

- Many of the naming jokes are initiated toward subordinates and outsiders (such as the observer), but overt hierarchical status affirmation is played down.   This is a reflection of the wider cultural context where relatively status-free interpersonal relationships are preferred over those laden with status-promoting or status-seeking behavior.

- Subordinate administrators who enter freely into joking are, intimately known by the others and consider themselves to be among peers.   This feeling of peer equality stems, in part, from the fact

that prior to unification, some of the administrators had been
superintendents themselves, and some have known each other in
educational circles for many years. Newcomers to the council
(e.g., new principals or other administrative staff persons such
as project directors) are generally subdued, at least at first.
Visitors and other outsiders usually remain outside of the pur-
view of the jokes unless or until they are well known to all or
most of the council members.

- The joking establishes a free and easy interpersonal context, a
congenial atmosphere of rapport and friendliness between council
members and a comaraderie among potential (and sometimes real)
rivals. Teasing is intended to channel rivalry off into innocuous
realms, or to circumvent or avoid conflict. When the newcomers or
outsiders are eventually included into the intimate teasing circle,
what is communicated in effect might be translated as "We all get
along just fine in this group; won't you join us?" Teasing eases
entry into a potentially anxiety-filled relationship. In short,
it is a form of socialization to the group and both builds and
maintains rapport.

- The initial teasing sets the tone for most meetings and lays the
groundwork for all that is to follow (particularly in terms of
consensus, which I discuss next). High value is placed on unanim-
ity of purpose and on work, but not at the expense of it being
unpleasurable. Wolcott (1973, p. 223). has touched upon this crit-
ical function of humorous exchange when he speaks of school ad-
ministrators who appreciate and encourage the efforts of those
among them who help "to keep school business from becoming unnec-
essarily serious and pedestrian."

Consensus: The Maintenance of Behavioral Boundaries

Consensus is highly valued in the administration of this school

district. It is a behavioral norm, the boundaries of which are established

and maintained in great measure by the style of interpersonal and profes-

sional relations within which the council operates. It is a common element

in the operating style of both the administration and the school board,.

and it works to alleviate a potential dilemma of who has ultimate respon-

sibility and authority in decision-making. The school board and the adminis-

tration closely approximate each other's operating styles: frequent meetings,

long hours, and thorough discussion of issues in an attempt to achieve con-

sensus. They both may be categorized as "status congruent" organizations,

after a model of school boards suggested by McCarty & Ramsey (1971, p. 19)

in which "discussion . . . is of utmost importance [and] members are equal in

status and treat each other as colleagues free to act as individuals."

Conceivably, one might expect to find rivalry and dissension among

the councilmen, especially given such factors as the former autonomy of

the attendance areas, their involuntary consolidation, the continuing

43

semi-autonomy of administrative principals, and a certain ambiguity of roles and statuses between the superintendents, principals, and project directors. To be sure, differences of opinion are frequently aired in meetings, but nonetheless, the corporate or public posture of this group is that of a unity of purpose, of a group of schoolmen who work well together. Their ability to work well together and their public image of corporate consensus seem in great measure to be facilitated through the use of joking about their differences in conjunction with other forms of institutionalized indirection and informality.

The use of time is an example of the latter. Time, as a form of institutionalized indirection, is employed to allow consensus to flow naturally from an extended discussion of different opinions in an issue. Critical decisions are sometimes put off for consideration at a future meeting to allow for a certain informality of communication among council members in a style that one has called "peer group pressure." Time allows the councilmen to have the opportunity to weigh their judgements against those of their peers, to discuss issues with their subordinate school staffs (where applicable), and to confer informally with one another outside of the bounds of the formal meeting context. If a member is adamant about his opinion, time allows him to prepare a persuasive case. Almost invariably, when the time is up and a final resolution of the issue is at hand, an informal polling or formal vote is taken, and consensus is the rule rather than the exception.

After the time element has been employed, joking and humor are frequently employed to ameliorate differences where someone in the group is forced to back down to go along with the majority. Everyone is cognizant that the most powerful gambit the council has when facing the district staff or the school board with a decision is unanimity, corporate consensus. One of the most common points of humor focuses on the superintendent's ultimate responsibility in the decision-making process, particularly as that responsibility encompasses the role of liaison, speaking for the board downward to subordinate staff, and from the council upward to the board. That responsibility is expected by the school staff, the trustees, and the patrons. By policy definition, the superintendent is the chief executive officer, appointed by the school board. Hence, he wields the latent power of veto in the administrative council. The superintendent casts the deciding votes (plural) in this sense: when a dissenting

44

council member capitulates to a group decision which represents something other than his own mind in the matter, and particularly to the superintendent's opinion when it is contrary to his own, he may do so without disgrace or discomfort by reducing the issue to a corporate joke. Not infrequently one hears: "The superintendent holds just one more vote than all members present." This is a caveat, or an "out," by which a council member may explain the action of changing his stance for corporate consensus.

Not only does each--the school board and the administrative council--prefer to present a public image of intra-group consensus, but they prefer to operate publicly as two groups who maintain a strong image of inter-group unity on important issues. Given the superintendent's role as the primary formal link, the broker, between the staff and the board of trustees and the public, he stands in the position of having to interpret their minds, so to speak.

In the final analysis, the superintendent holds the trump--"veto power," "majority of votes," or whatever other terms it may be jokingly called. But, rather than flaunt that trump, he employs time and/or reverts to humor in its application, maintaining both intra-group rapport and a posture of corporate consensus to audiences beyond the council.

Final Remarks

The anthropologist's goal in studying society and culture, or their minute sub-parts as in this instance, is to describe and analyze patterns. Ultimately, our goal is to explain and predict, based upon a wide, holistic, and contextual base of data.

Anthropologists frequently analyze joking and other forms of institutionalized indirect communications. From the data described here we have seen how humor alone and combined with the use of time help to effect rapport and consensus, respectively. Both are employed to maintain good working relationships among peers in the decision-making process, to socialize group members, and to establish and maintain an operating style which aims for ultimate unity and consensus. To a degree, this brief analysis of the school district administrative setting reflects in microcosm the particular rural cultural context being investigated on a macro scale through a wide-angle ethnographic lens.

References

Bradney, P. The joking relationship in industry. Human Relations, 1957, No. 10, pp. 170-187.

Emerson, J. P. Negotiating the serious import of humor. Sociometry, 1969, No. 32, pp. 169-181.

Goffman, E. The presentation of self in everyday life. Garden City: Doubleday, 1959.

Hammond, P. B. The functions of indirection in communication. In Thompson, J. D. et. al., Comparative studies in administration. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1959.

Howell, R. W. Teasing relationships. Addison-Wesley module in anthropology, No. 46. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1973.

Knop, E. Functions of frontier north woods humor. A paper presented at the Rural Sociological Society annual meeting, Montreal, 1974.

McCarty, D. J. & Ramsey, C. E. The school managers: Power and conflict in American public education. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Corporation, 1971.

Sykes, A. J. M. Joking relationships in an industrial setting. American Anthropologist, 1966, No. 68, pp. 188-193.

Wolcott, H. F. The man in the principal's office: An ethnography. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

47

CULTURAL ECOLOGY AND A SCHOOL SYSTEM

Charles A. Clinton

Ethnographers are being called upon by a number of interested
agencies to contribute their skills to the study of public education in
the United States. This is occurring because ethnographers are thought
to possess the skills helpful in portraying the hold life has on men.
The insights that the ethnographer can offer are seen as important by
agencies interested in understanding how and why change does or does
not occur.

One research strategy that has proven successful in gaining
insights into the hold life has on men is loosely called cultural ecology.
It proposes that every group of men must adapt to a set of contexts. The
ethnographer can discover these contexts by using the methodologies of
participation, observation, and various types of interviewing. This
paper uses this approach to explore some of the changes that have occurred
in one rural school district during the last four years.

The school district has undergone rapid industrialization in the
last decade. As a consequence, the population has grown rapidly. Still,
even with the ris in populati , 70% of the district's workers lived
elsewhere. Many of these workers commuted because of the poor educational
system; new workers said that the schools were substandard in every way
and refused to enroll their children in them. Long-time residents con-
curred with this assessment by labeling their schools "second-class."

There are data to support this view. An independent research
organization surveyed the schools in 1970 and made 19 recommendations
for change in five major areas: 1) school facilities should be modern-
ized; 2) curricula should be improved and made more flexible and individ-
ualized; 3) the teaching staff should be improved; 4) school accreditation
should be improved; and 5) the district should seek new ways of funding.

The school district began its program for change by imposing a utilities tax upon industry. Once the courts upheld the legality of this new revenue source, plans for using it began. In the midst of this planning, the superintendent of schools had a fatal heart attack.

The Board of Education began a search for a new superintendent who could meet the charges levied against their system. In searching for this kind of person to fill the position, the board was reacting to popular demand for change; the school system was being used as a negative symbol of the area by residents, teachers, pupils, and commuting workers. The key to developing the entire school district was thought to be found in improving the schools.

The board found their man and within months the superintendent recommended new changes: 1) a raise in beginning teachers' salaries so that he might recruit good younger teachers; 2) the renovation of two elementary schools; 3) the building of a new high school which featured a great deal of semi-open space in academic areas. The new high school would also allow the system to go from its traditional model of 1-8, 9-12 grade grouping to a newer tri-partite 1-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade structure. This was a major reorganization of the district's use of space.

In November, 1972, a paper serving the school district carried a front-page headline, "Our Schools . . . They're on Their Way." The story under this banner indicated that all 19 recommendations made by the independent research organization were either being met or that current planning would soon take care of them. In particular, the article pointed out that the school district had found a new way of financing change; a new federal program that would allow the district to improve curricula and upgrade the teaching staff had been secured. The federal program thus allowed the school district to meet three of the five recommendations made by the school survey. Nor was this accidental. As the superintendent later said, the new federal program, "allowed us to solidify our thinking."

That thinking focused on changing the system's use of space, time, and activities. The building program had reorganized space. Changes in time occurred through the replacement of traditional semester courses with nine-week short phase courses. To further ensure that changes in the uses of time and space took place, a set of curricular decisions were implemented.

The 1970 school survey had recommended that curricula should be improved and made more flexible and individualized. This recommendation held great portent for normal classroom activities; teachers in the district traditionally followed a teaching model of: 1) assign; 2) discuss; and 3) test. This was done by relying on textbooks for instructional units, group assignments, lectures supplemented by teacher-directed discussion, and various text-given tests. This teacher-centered approach to classroom activity was defined as the problem to overcome.

To do so, two major tactics were employed. The first was to import packaged, or "teacher proof," curricula in reading, math, and science. The basic organization of these packaged curricula featured a great variety of materials organized into units by a management system that led the student from easier to more complex tasks. The teacher, far from being the center of classroom activities, became a classroom manager and resource person as students individually mastered packaged cognitive units.

The second tactic relied on using teacher-made materials to achieve similar results. Teachers were provided paid in-service time to create learning continuum for all subject areas in grades 1-12. These cognitive outlines specified when a child should master cognitive units. To ensure that this occurred, teachers used paid in-service time to write learning activity packets. These featured precise behavioral objectives and a variety of learning aids, such as text, lecture, discussion, individual projects, and audio-visual materials, that encompassed the various learning strategies employed by students.

Both of these tactics were part of a strategy aimed at changing typical classroom performances. Teachers were to be weaned from textbook exercises, group assignments, and teacher dominated lecture-discussion. Students were to be directed by a management system that guided them through cognitive areas in a way that would allow individual students to progress in a manner congruent with individual needs, interests, and abilities. Classroom activities were to change from a traditional orientation to a more child-centered social organization.

In addition to these mechanistic change agents, the schools were to become more humanistic through the use of diagnostic instruction. Outside consultants were brought in to instruct the teaching staff on

diagnostic instruction. These consultants proposed to show teachers how
different teaching strategies could be targeted for particular students.
This allowed teachers to assess each student and to match individuals
with particular teaching strategies through a process of negotiation in
which each student played an active part in setting cognitive goals. To
ensure that this process took place, video tape recorders were focused
on classroom activities and the resulting tapes were reviewed by a teacher's
peers. Finally, a diagnostic center was maintained both to administer a
set of standardized tests which could pinpoint a child's learning problems
and to develop ways of overcoming them.

The validation of these changes in classroom activities was achieved
in a number of ways. Parents, teachers, building administrators, and
students were asked to evaluate the school system's programs on question-
naires provided by the administration. All ratings by adults indicated
that the district's plan for breaking the traditional teaching cycle had
been achieved. Moreover, in an effort to supplement this perceptual data,
outside consultants were asked to visit every classroom and record what
they witnessed; the administration professed satisfaction with the results
of their observations. But the greatest validation occurred when a regional
accreditation association team visited the new high school. They found
that the high school lacked only a few minor standards in order to improve
its accreditation. These were corrected, and the high school gained new,
prestigious status vis-à-vis other school districts in the surrounding area.

This, then, has been a brief account of a set of changes wrought
in one rural school district over the last four years. The processes
behind these changes stand out clearly. First, the district had a change
in its economic base. This attracted new residents who made new demands
on the schools. Their concerns were validated by a survey conducted by
an independent agency. When the superintendent died, a new leader was
recruited to meet the charges levied against the schools. The first set
of changes revolved around creating new kinds of space that would comple-
ment new kinds of classroom activities. Time in the system was also re-
organized to better fit student interests. Teacher performance and cur-
ricula were then altered through making use of a federal program which
paid for various packaged programs and afforded teachers paid in-service
time to standardize course offerings. To further insure that classroom

performances were altered, diagnostic instruction as a teaching strategy was explained to the teaching staff. Finally, both internal and external agencies have been used to validate the changes occurring within the classrooms.

This paper is designed to use the methods of cultural ecology to discuss the hold life has on men in one rural school district. It has done so by showing how space, time, and activities were reorganized. Whether or not these changes are sustained is a question for time and further research. For now, it is enough to point out that once the community and school system regarded the educational establishment as second class; now the schools are perceived differently. As one industrial spokesman said, the schools "have turned completely around in the last five years." As proof of this, he indicated that local plant managers were now willing to enroll their children in the local school system. Clearly, men have altered their behaviors to adapt to a new set of contexts, and ethnography has the skills to portray these changes.

THE SYMBOLIC PLACE OF TIME IN A SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICT[1]
Allan Burns

This presentation will relate some ideas about the symbolic use
of time in a small school system to the process of educational change.
The approach taken here is ethnographic, although this particular discus-
sion is more of an ethnographic vignette rather than a full blown ethno-
graphic study. I will draw upon 18 months of intensive fieldwork in
Willcox, Arizona, to describe the way educators there use time in the
schools. This description will go beyond a simple exploration into a
cultural category. The use of time in one small school district helps
explain the nature of educational change.

I stress that the approach of this research is ethnographic in
order to draw attention to the kind of contribution that anthropological
inquiry can make to education. This paper offers an illustration of how
a significant educational issue or problem arises from long-term field
experience, and how concepts derived from the discipline offer tools for
subsequent analysis. I have already mentioned that the problem I am
dealing with is educational change. To be more specific, I am interested
in change in school personnel, and how this relates to educational innova-
tion. Put simply, this paper examines why so many people come and go in
the Willcox school system, and how this case of extreme educational mobility
is related to a local project of planned change funded through NIE's
Experimental Schools program.

In a broader sense, this paper brings to surface the issue of
organizational continuity in schools. How do programs continue in the

face of rapid turnover òf those who run them? How separate are programs from people, given statements like that told to me by a Willcox educator, "There were a lot of personalities written into that 'Plan.'"[2]

The Setting and Evolution of the Problem

Willcox is a community located about 90 miles east of Tucson and about 70 miles north of the Mexican border. Some 8,000 people live within a 50-mile radius around the town of Willcox. Cattle ranching, irrigation farming, and support businesses in town dominate the economy and have traditionally provided a strong base for slow but steady growth through Willcox's history. The school district today serves the 3,000 people who live in town and another 2,000 who live in the surrounding areas. Fifteen hundred students attend the Willcox schools, equally divided between an elementary, a middle, and a high school. The district employs about 150 people, 75 of whom are certified. In June of 1973, Willcox was selected along with nine other small school systems to implement a five-year program of planned educational change.

In August of 1973, ethnographic research was begun in the community. The overall goal of the research was to understand the nature of change in this particular school system. As a broad working hypothesis, I came to the field with the notion that the planned educational change I would be documenting could be divided into two realms, the ideal and the actual. The ideal change at the start of the program was easy to determine. It existed as a single document, the "Plan for Comprehensive Change in the Willcox Public Schools." This document resulted in Willcox's contract with the National Institute of Education. The document was a carter, a summation of how a small school system could become more responsive to the community in which it resided, how the schools could expand their course offerings by bringing in new personnel, and how the district could upgrade the quality of education by coordinating the way in which the three schools operated. Without going into the plan in detail, let me say that the planned changes were fundamental to the system and extremely difficult to effect.

---

[2] This refers to the "Plan for Comprehensive Change in the Willcox Public Schools," a manuscript written in the spring of 1973 and submitted to NIE/ES.

Actual changes which have and are occurring are not explicit in the same way as the ideal changes. The actual changes are observable only as they arise from the day to day life of the school system. For example, during the first days of fieldwork, I learned that the middle school principal who had written the "Plan" had resigned from the system. So had the superintendent who had overseen the writing, the documentor who had logged the process, and the teacher who had been a half-time project director. All of these changes in personnel were said to have occurred as the result of combined community dissatisfaction with the administration and personal desires for career mobility. Of the core staff who had planned for comprehensive change, only the project secretary remained in the fall of 1973. During the next year, the "Plan for Comprehensive Change" was implemented by a new superintendent and nine people he brought in to fill the vacated and newly created positions. Before long, some of these people began to leave the system. The documentation carried out during that year seemed to indicate that there were two separate phenomena taking place: on one hand, the project was carrying out changes in curriculum, organization, and facility use as outlined in the "Plan." On the other hand, people came and went through project associated positions with surprising frequency. The conception of educational change in Willcox expanded from the hypothesis of an ideal/actual split to a second level where the actual changes consisted of 1) changes in the running of the schools, and 2) changes in personnel. Changes in personnel gained importance as time went on. During the past 18 months of the project, implementation of the planned goals has taken place, but over 25 changes in personnel have occurred. Positions created by the new ES-sponsored program seemed especially vulnerable to turnover. A short chronology of the history of the project illustrates the magnitude of these changes. The project began implementation in August of 1973, what I will call month one. It began, as has been noted, with a new staff of coordinators, two new principals, and a new superintendent. At the outset of month three, the bilingual coordinator resigned. During month four the evaluation coordinator resigned. As month five began, a new evaluation coordinator was hired, and during month seven a new bilingual coordinator was hired. At the close of the first school year (month 10), the super-

intendent resigned, as did an elementary counselor and the early child-
hood (pre-school) coordinator. During the summer (month 11), the adminis-
trative assistant in charge of the project moved to take over the elementary
principalship; the elementary principal took a newly created position of
business manager. As school began the second year (months 12 and 13), a new
superintendent and a new early childhood coordinator came to the district.
At the same time, the second bilingual coordinator resigned. During
month 13, a new administrative assistant came on board to help run the
project; a month later (month 14), the second evaluation coordinator
resigned. During month 16, the middle school principal left his post and
headed up an "evaluation committee" and later took a teaching position.
The middle school counselor became the principal in that school. The
trend continues. This chronology is not exhaustive of all of the changes
but serves to indicate the degree of turnover in the system since the incep-
tion of the Experimental Schools project. In contrast with this almost
monthly turnover, the classroom teaching staff of the system has remained
stable (23% turnover the first year, 12% the second). The turnover rate
in positions related to the ES program has been 178%. Willcox had become
a leader in educational change.

It could be argued that it does not take an anthropologist living
in the community for 18 months to stumble on this problem Project monitors
in Washington are surely aware of it, as are educators familiar with the
local systems in Arizona. The point here is that an ethnographic case
study approach allows this issue to be placed in the context of the life
history of educational change in Willcox. The paradigm used to look at
the Willcox schools allows for different kinds of educational change to
surface beyond those officially specified in a given plan.

The Explanation

The changes I have outlined here continue to take place in the
local project today. This, plus extensive formal and informal interviews,
suggests that the phenomenon is not an artifact of chance but rather
reflects something about the local ES project. The concept of "world
view," or the description of how people carve up the world of experience
into mental reality, is useful for understanding what has happened.

The project created positions which demanded simultaneous adherence to two separate patterns of world view held by Willcox educators. This ambiguity led to the movement described. Ambiguity in world view is more profound than the idea of "role conflicts" which social scientists often turn to in frustrating circumstances. People can easily handle many competing roles within their social persona, but they seem ill-equipped to handle two separate views of the nature of social reality. While role refers to the presentation of the self outward, world view refers to the incorporation of the world inward. The specific item of world view which is to be considered here is the use of time.

Time, for Willcox educators, and for that matter, educators in many other settings, is a central feature of school organization. School people create the "school year," the "school day," and the "class period" out of the continuous turn of the seasons, as we all know. The way people in schools use time amounts to a cutting up of the "existential pie" of life, in a way useful to their endeavor. Time can be thought of as a cultural focus or central theme of the world view of school people. At the local level of Willcox, Arizona, two ways of using time occur: people spend time with students or they spend time with adults. These two modes roughly correspond to the formal distinction in the system between teachers and administrators, but the fit is not exact. The pupil-centered mode of time use exists within a formal working day of 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., while the adult-centered mode is in effect 12 months of the year. The length of employee contracts in the system reflects this aspect of time use: administrators normally have 12-month contracts while teachers are hired for nine months. The pupil-centered mode is organized into discrete periods of "student class periods" signaled by bells or chimes. The adult-centered mode is organized according to meetings with other adults. Through previous experience, training, and career expectations, educators enter the system and choose to spend their time in one mode or the other. If they are required to use time both ways, the day is literally split into two parts: a part for pupil-centered activity and a part for adult-centered activity.

There are many examples of the way these two modes are manifest in the everyday running of the schools. The two modes are associated with ideological values. For instance, one educator may show his or her

56

disdain for another by saying, "I'm tired of all these people drawing
salaries and not spending any time with kids." A recent request for
a school board policy change by a teacher's organization spells out the
rationale of the pupil-centered mode:

> Teachers shall arrive in the morning before classes and may leave
> in the afternoon as soon after the last regularly scheduled class
> in their schools as will, within reason, permit them to fulfill
> professional obligations in connection with:
>
> 1. Availability to students who may be seeking assistance.
> 2. Availability to parents who may wish to discuss a school-
>   related problem.
> 3. Meeting with staff specialists . . .
> 4. Availability to administrative and supervisory personnel
>   for conferences.
> 5. Availability to colleagues . . .
> 6. The maintenance of classroom housekeeping and organization.

The ideology of the adult-centered mode was described by an
administrator as follows: "People ask why I make more money than a
teacher, and I tell them that a teacher only works part of a day. I'm
here from eight in the morning until five at night all year long."

It was into this two-part system of school time use that the local
variant of the Experimental Schools program was launched. The positions
created by the program were not properly administrative in that they
often involved teaching students and working closely with other teachers
at a peer level. An asymetrical authority relationship between the ES-
created positions and the teaching staff was consciously avoided. On
the other hand, the positions had characteristics of administrative posts
in that they carried 12-month contracts, had a salary level comparable to
traditional administrative posts in the schools, and demanded close coor-
dination with the administration of the district. The nature of the posi-
tions was such that a clear-cut distinction between spending time with
students and spending time with adults could not easily be drawn. People
in the positions strove to mold them into one mode or another. For
example, some coordinators attempted to be "pupil-centered" by putting
up bulletin board displays more appropriate to a classroom in their adult-
centered offices. Others went the direction of the adult-centered world
by trying to insulate themselves from students and by dealing with teachers
in as much of a supervisory way as they could. But although the role
expectations of the positions were clear enough on paper (see Figure 7),

the conflicting world views inherent in the jobs left the coordinators wondering what they should do: "You can't expect (the teaching staff) to work with you if they don't know what you're doing, and if you don't know what you're doing, you can't tell them!" A further indication of the ambiguity of the positions is the label "coordinator" that was given them. "Coordinator" was a new lexical item which couldn't be easily sorted into the vocabulary of schooling in Willcox.

Faced with this ambiguity of how to spend their time, people in the Experimental Schools positions began to move. Those who had been brought in as coordinators but had a pupil-centered view often left and took teaching jobs in other districts. A more common strategy was to become a "full-fledged" administrator in the district. For example, one counselor hired as a part of the program became a middle school principal, another became the administrative assistant in charge of all federal programs (ES, Title I, etc.). These internal moves had ramifications throughout the network of administrative posts. For example, the dissatisfaction of one person with an ES-funded position led her to move to the elementary principalship. The elementary principal then became the business agent of the district, a newly created position.

Conclusions

Some tentative conclusions are in order as one surveys the events of personnel turnover in Willcox. First of all, the creation of new positions such as those detailed here is no easy task. People brought in to be change agents within the structure of schooling do not seem to be able to operate effectively without a tradition of either spending time with pupils or spending time with adults. Once they enter the system, they invariably pick one of the two ways of using time. Like a tree, a school system must have roots that give it nourishment. In grafting new positions onto the system, careful attention must be given to the ways of connecting to the roots.

The second conclusion that can be drawn so far in this research is that the adult-centered world of administrators seems more capable of incorporating new people into its structure than the pupil-centered world.[3]

_____

[3]One interesting fact not covered here is that turnover in janitorial and maintenance positions has also been very high during the time of the project. Perhaps this points to a more extended coverage of "adult-centered time" beyond teachers and administrators.

To date, in only two cases have coordinators successfully entered the pupil-centered world.[4]

These conclusions must remain highly tentative as they reflect the observation of a year and a half of a five-year program of educational change. Future activity will validate some of the statements and reject others.

---

[4]It is significant that one of these changed the term of reference for his position from "media coordinator" to "media specialist" as he moved into the pupil-centered world.

FIGURE 7   SAMPLE OF TWO JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR COORDINATORS

Position

The Media Coordinator for the Rural Schools Project in Willcox, Arizona will be responsible for:

1. Coordinating the media center programs in the elementary and middle schools.
2. Organizing and implementing comprehensive learning resource centers in the two existing library facilities.
3. Working with two certified librarians in implementing this program.
4. Working with teachers in planning the instructional activities which will help to achieve the objectives.
5. Training volunteers to work in the media centers.
6. Working with an advisory committee to develop objectives for the use of the media center.
7. Encouraging adults to use the media center regularly.
8. Produce a brief orientation to the media center suitable for presentation to civic clubs and the community.
9. Working closely with and under the direction of the school board and administration.

Qualifications

Graduation from an accredited college or university required with a Masters degree in Media or Library Science desired. Three years experience in media centers work is necessary. Awareness of the Mexican-American culture with fluency in English and Spanish is highly desirable for this position.

Position

The Early Childhood Teacher for the Rural Schools Project in Willcox, Arizona will be responsible for:

1. Outlining program objectives with the Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee prior to July, 1973.
2. Designing the curriculum for 3 and 4 year olds in the Early Childhood Education Program.
3. Designing and implementing with the assistance of the Bilingual Coordinator a bilingual program for the 3 and 4 year olds.
4. Planning with the Bilingual Coordinator the class for students grades 7-12 who will be working in the Early Childhood Program.
5. Training parent volunteers.
6. Coordinating the home visitation program conducted by parents.
7. Implementing and supervising the toy and book lending library.
8. Working closely with the Bilingual Coordinator and the elementary school principal.
9. Serving on an Early Childhood Advisory Committee.

Qualifications

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Masters degree in Early Childhood Education. An undergraduate degree in education is preferred. Candidates must have at least three years teaching experience as well as experience with 3 and 4 year olds. Awareness of the Mexican-American culture with fluency in English and Spanish is required for this position.

PART FOUR: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANTS

ALLAN F. BURNS completed his doctoral work in anthropology at the University of Washington. He has carried out extensive research in Yucatan, Mexico. His interests in socio-linguistics and ritual have provided the bases for papers delivered at regional and national anthropological conferences, as well as several publications.

CHARLES A. CLINTON completed his doctoral work in anthropology at Washington State University. He has taught at three colleges and universities, conducted field research in Alaska on two different occasions, and has contributed four papers in various regional meetings of the American Anthropological Association. His major interests are in the areas of theories of complex societies, culture of the United States, cultural ecology, and adaptations in complex societies.

WILLIAM L. DONNELLY is currently a doctoral candidate in sociology at the Pennsylvania State University with major interests in political sociology, comparative sociology, and the sociology of education. He has taught and been a researcher at Pennsylvania State University, and is also the author of "Public Welfare and Migration" (Social Science Quarterly).

STEPHEN J. FITZSIMMONS holds a doctorate in social psychology from the University of Houston. He serves as vice-president for social science research at Abt Associates. He specializes in the applications of social science research to various public policy contexts including community studies, human services, technology transfer, and national planning. Since joining Abt Associates in 1966, he has served as project director for 15 national research projects and collaborated on many others. He is the author of five major publications, the most recent of which is "A Study of Quality Day Care in the United States," which will appear in Evaluation of Federal Programs (Russell Sage, 1975).

ROBERT E. HERRIOTT holds a doctorate in the sociology of education from Harvard University. He has held teaching positions at Harvard University and Florida State University, where until recently he was professor of sociology and director of the Center for the Study of Education. He is a former chairman of the Section on the Sociology of Education of the American Sociological Association and is the author of Staff Leadership in Public Schools (Wiley, 1965), Social Class and the Urban School (Wiley, 1956), and The Environment of Schooling (Prentice-Hall, 1973).

DONALD A. MESSERSCHMIDT holds a doctoral degree in social and cultural anthropology from the University of Oregon. He has done field work in northern Maine and in Nepal, and is the author of several articles on his findings, including the forthcoming "Innovation in Adaptation: Tibetan Immigrants in the United States." One of his major interests is socio-cultural change and innovation.

DONALD N. MUSE has a doctorate in sociology at Florida State University. He has taught at the secondary and graduate levels. His most recent publication is "Some Methodological Issues in the Study of School Effects," which appeared in Review of Research in Education (Peacock, 1973).

SHEILA M. ROSENBLUM has an MA in sociology from Boston University, where she is also a doctoral candidate and a lecturer in research methods. She has been a research assistant at both Boston University and Harvard University Medical School.

CHARLES I. STANNARD holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University. He has taught at Northwestern University and the University of Illinois College of Nursing, and has experience in both survey and field research. He is the author of numerous works, including "The Impact of Faculty Expectations on Students' Academic Involvement," presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society in New York, April, 1973.