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ABSTRACT
        This handbook is a systematic guide for planning and
implementing a program of depth interviews either as part of a
school's community relations program or as an effort in policy
analysis. It includes all necessary information for understanding the
advantages and disadvantages of depth interviews, for preliminary
planning and preparation, for implementing the program, for
conducting the interviews, and for writing a report. The handbook
also contains examples of materials that are useful in developing a
program of depth interviews. The depth interview is an applied
research tool that interrelates people and issues, people and
sentiments, and sentiments and issues. It is simultaneously an
effective school-relations activity. Depth interviews differ from
traditional survey research and public opinion polls in that they are
used primarily to discover people, issues, and sentiments; are
unstructured; encourage working from the respondent's agenda; are
based on a purposeful sample; are designed to last one to two hours
in an informal setting; and are suited to reports that are
qualitative and descriptive and that pose questions and define
problems. (Author/IRT)

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Simformation 4
Depth interview handbook

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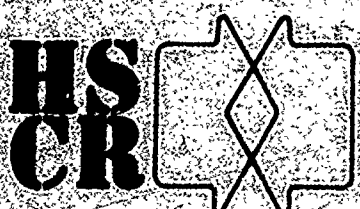
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HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

FOREWORD

Since 1973, the Home-School-Community Relations Project at the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling has been involved in research related to the establishment of a supportive, meaningful relationship among the home, school, and community. Support and cooperation, which lead to optimal child growth and development, can exist when two conditions are met:

1. the staff of a school is aware of and responsive to the educational expectations and available resources of the community; and

2. the community is aware of and responsive to the instructional expectations and the program being implemented at the school.

Schools become involved in many activities directed at creating good relationships among the home, school, and community. Unfortunately, these activities are often unrelated and unfocused. By establishing a home-school-community relations program, rather than simply participating in a set of relatively isolated activities, a school can begin to develop a mutually supportive relationship among the home, school, and community.

There are four steps to creating a good home-school-community relations program. First, an analysis of the present state of school-community relations must be conducted. This analysis involves determining the issues or problems which exist and identifying those groups in the community which are associated with the issues. Second, the school staff must plan a program which is based upon the issues and groups that have been identified. This step includes planning a coordinated set of activities appropriate to the school community, identifying the personnel who will be responsible for carrying out various aspects of these activities, and setting timelines and procedures for the implementation of the program. The third step consists of implementing the program, and the final step is its evaluation. The program is evaluated by determining whether the appropriate activities, responsible personnel, and correct timelines and procedures were identified. This evaluation occurs both during and following implementation of the plan.

SIMFORMATION 4

DEPTH INTERVIEW HANDBOOK

by

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and
Faculty Associate

Report from the Project on
Home-School-Community Relations

Wisconsin Research and Development
Center for Individualized Schooling
The University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

December 1978

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Wisconsin Research and Development Center
is to improve the quality of education by addressing the full
range of issues and problems related to individualized schooling.
Teaching, learning, and the problems of individualization are
given concurrent attention in the Center's efforts to discover
processes and develop strategies and materials for use in the
schools. The Center pursues its mission by

- conducting and synthesizing research to clarify the
  processes of school-age children's learning and
  development

- conducting and synthesizing research to clarify effective
  approaches to teaching students basic skills and concepts

- developing and demonstrating improved instructional strategies,
  processes, and materials for students, teachers, and school
  administrators

- providing assistance to educators which helps transfer the
  outcomes of research and development to improved practice
  in local schools and teacher education institutions

The Wisconsin Research and Development Center is supported
with funds from the National Institute of Education and the
University of Wisconsin.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a systematic guide for planning and implementing a program of depth interviews either as part of a school-community relations program or as an effort in policy analysis. It includes all necessary information for understanding the advantages and disadvantages of depth interviews, planning and preparing to conduct the interviews, implementing the program, actually conducting the interviews, and writing a report. The handbook also contains examples of materials which are useful in developing a program of depth interviews.

What is a Depth Interview?

The depth interview is an applied research tool which interrelates people and issues, people and sentiments, and sentiments and issues. It is simultaneously a research tool and an effective school-community relations activity.

It differs from traditional survey research and public opinion polls in several significant ways. First, depth interviews are used primarily to discover people, issues, and sentiments rather than to verify sentiments about specific issues with a random sample of a larger population. Second, depth interviews are unstructured--they do not use predetermined, focused questions but rather employ broad, open-ended

questions. Third, the sense of discovery and open-ended features of depth interviews encourage working from the respondent's rather than the interviewer's agenda of issues, problems, or concerns. Fourth, depth interviews are based on a purposeful rather than a random sample. More specifically, depth interviews are planned to identify and interview a selected sample of persons in official positions; individuals who are knowledgeable, informed, opinion leaders or influentials; and individuals referred by those in formal positions. Fifth, depth interviews are normally designed to last from 1 to 2 hours in an informal, unhurried setting as opposed to the typical, relatively brief and formal setting for the customary survey research or opinion polls. Finally, depth interviews are suited to reports which are qualitative, descriptive, and pose questions and define problems, whereas the usual survey research yields reports which are highly quantitative, infused with inferential statistics, and answer questions which are identified a priori.

In short, depth interviews are frequently 2-hour interviews which utilize general, open-ended questions, and stress working from the respondent's agenda with an aim to discover new people, issues, and sentiments and their interrelationships. Experience has shown that 30 well-selected interviews can yield a rather complete study of an elementary school and its attendance area, and 80 to 100 are frequently sufficient for a comprehensive study of a school system of about 2,500 students.

What are the Advantages and Disadvantages?

Depth interviews have proven to be quite successful as a technique for providing the school with genuine community input, and they are useful for analyzing the social and political context of a school community. They provide an opportunity for school personnel to make positive, initial contact with individuals and groups in the community in the absence of crises. On the other hand, depth interviews can be used effectively as a vehicle for resolving conflict or solving problems in times of crisis such as when a local school board referendum has failed. Advantages of depth interviews are that they:

1. identify heretofore unrecognized people, groups, and organizations in the school community.

2. identify heretofore unrecognized issues, problems, and concerns in the community.

3. relate the issues, problems, and concerns with the people, groups, and organizations, and determine the sentiments, beliefs, or values specific people may have on specific issues.

4. describe the dynamics and interrelationships among the people, issues, and sentiments in the school community.

5. possess the capability to answer the question "why?"

6. redefine old problems and concerns.

7. adjust to the infusion of new data, unanticipated circumstances, and discovered needs.

8. deal largely with the respondent's rather than the interviewer's agenda.

9. generate alternatives for solving problems and resolving conflicts.

10. discover the critical issues about which a practitioner may wish to intervene.

11. identify the key opinion leaders and channels of communication for subsequent action.

12. become a positive, effective school-community relations vehicle on its own merit.

Disadvantages of depth interviews are that they:

1. cannot be generalized to the larger population of a sample by using sampling theory and inferential statistics.

2. deal with perceptions, not reality.

3. are limited by the interviewer's skill and bias.

4. are time- and resource-consuming.

5. produce findings which are normally limited to the particular case or problem under study.

6. may not yield data needed or required by the practitioner for making decisions.

7. can only deal with a limited number of objectives at a time.

8. produce findings which are more subject to public criticism.

9. frequently result in sensitive and confidential data, and lack respondent anonymity which leads to ethical problems when reporting the findings.

10. are more difficult for a practitioner to conduct in his or her own school community.

WHEN TO INTERVIEW?

The depth interview technique can be employed either during "times of crisis" or "times of peace." When the technique is used during times of crisis, the objectives are customarily to determine:

1. the issues precipitating the crisis;

2. the people, groups, or organizations who have an interest in the outcome of the crisis;

3. the interrelationships between the people, groups, organizations, and the issues; and

4. possible alternative proposals or mechanisms for resolving the conflict.

Hence, when depth interviews are used for crisis management, the ultimate objective is to gain information which will contribute to resolving the particular problem. For example, if a local bond referendum has failed, depth interviews could discover the poeple, issues, and sentiments involved, and why they failed. Similarly, depth interviews would be useful in learning the reasons why the introduction of particular instructional programs were met with public hostility in local elementary schools.

On the other hand, when the depth interview technique is used during times of peace, the emphasis on resolution is a minor objective. In these cases, the objectives are generally those of:

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1. identifying any and all significant people, groups, or organizations rather than those associated with specific past events or controversies;

2. identifying a wide range of issues, problems, and concerns-- both past and present--and not focusing on a single contro- versy; and

3. associating the people and their sentiments with the issues.

It would be advisable to the uninitiated to avoid using depth inter- views for the first time if they are to be employed during a period of crisis. When depth interviews are used in times of relative peace, not only will the interviewers benefit from the practice, but the whole school community relations program will profit from the concerted effort at initial positive contacts.

Therefore, this simformation will be based on depth interviews conducted during times of peace rather than crisis. Let us assume that the topic of these depth interviews is the "school-community relations program." The objectives could be as broad as the "school" or as narrow as the "reading program." Experience has demonstrated, however, that relatively narrow, precise objectives prove to be less fruitful than more broadly defined objectives. Restrictive topics inevitably emerge as issues when the broad range objectives are explored, and the real problems or other issues remain submerged. Hence, a broad topic such as the school-community relations program will usually stimulate re- sponses associated with school-community relations as well as specific topics such as grading, reading, and discipline.

The topic of school-community relations is also a good one for the first venture into depth interviewing because it usually provides

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easy, justifiable access to people in the school community. It is often easier for a principal to explain an interest in gathering opinions from various people about the question of school-community relations than it is about reading.

The interviews can be spread out over a period of months or contracted into a 3-day period. The former approach allows for greater simultaneous analysis of the data, midcourse adjustments, and findings. The latter encourages close integration of the data and less chance for crises to contaminate the data over time.

III

ESTABLISHING THE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of a depth interview study can be stated in broad
terms. If the objective is to discover as much about the school and
school-community as possible, then the following open-ended questions
will suffice:

•Let's talk about _____ school.

•What can you tell me about _____ school?

•What are the strengths (weaknesses) of _____ school?

If the objectives are more specific, then they can be couched as
follows:

•Tell me about school-community relations at _____ school.

•Identify some of the effective and ineffective aspects of the
 school-community relations program at _____ school.

•Let's talk about school facilities or school buildings in the
 district. Compare the elementary school, middle school, and
 high school.

•Discuss the last referendum. Why did it fail (succeed) in
 your estimation?

Objectives which are any more specific than these probably should not
be used in a depth interview because many of the advantages of this
type of interview would be lost.

Frequently specific information is needed or would be of interest
to those who give depth interviews, but such specific questions begin

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to take the form of a focused, closed interview format. They can, how-
ever, be incorporated by putting such questions at the end of the
interview schedule under the heading "checklist" or "benchmarks." In
this way, the virtues and benefits of the depth interview approach
will not be contaminated. Examples of some relatively focused questions are:

- What are your sources of information?

- How effective is the newsletter?

- What problems are there with the school transportation?

- On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you rate the effectiveness of
  communication at _____ school?

Samples of checklists and focused questions can be found in Appendix E.

Who Should Do The Interviewing?

Before the question of who should interview can be answered, it
is important to determine how many interviews will be conducted and
over what period of time they will be completed. It can be roughly cal-
culated that each 2-hour interview will require a total time commitment
of about 6 hours. The 6 hours can be broken down as follows:

1 hour	• Mail contact or letter
	• Telephone arrangements
	• Travel to and return from interview
2 hours	• Interview time
1 hour	• Mail thank you note
	• Clarify notes and interview records
	• Telephone follow-up for clarification
2 hours	• Write a verbatim interview summary
6 hours	Total

This is, of course, only an estimate because circumstances will vary the amount of time required for planning purposes. For example, prior access to the respondents makes mail and telephone contacts go quickly, and if all the interviews are to be conducted in a rather compact geographical area as opposed to a less dense rural school district, the time commitments for travel will be less. The need for clarification and follow-up of interviews will vary according to their length, depth, and complexity. The time devoted to writing a verbatim summary can usually be calculated rather accurately using the following formula: Each hour of interview time normally requires one hour of writing time. Writing up the interviews can be avoided if three conditions prevail:

1. Each interviewer is doing five interviews or less.

2. All interviews in the study or project will be completed in 10 days or less.

3. The interviewer's notes and records are complete and clarified.

Note that all three conditions must be met. If not, the interview should be written up in a fashion suggested by Appendix D.

Time commitment has been discussed in this section because it is the critical determinant of personnel requirements. In short, determine both when the depth interview program must be finished and how many hours of work will be necessary to complete it. Then, the work force needs will become apparent.

Ideally, the time requirements for a properly designed and implemented program should also allow for:

1. a single, initial interview followed by a debriefing of the experience and critique of the quality of the interview;

2. time for analyzing the first one-third to one-half of the interviews in order to make the necessary decisions for altering the interview schedule; and

3. time for analyzing, determining some preliminary findings, and stating propositions based on about three-fourths of the interviews.

Typically, however, most programs can be satisfactorily completed without committing any time to analyses and preliminary findings.

Other important factors to consider in determining the time commitment are the objectives of the depth interview program. If the objectives are primarily concerned with community relations rather than policy research needs, then the time commitment could be spread out over several weeks or months. However, if policy research data is needed for an impending decision, then the demand for completion may be in terms of days or weeks.

The objectives of the program also affect "Who should interview?" in another fashion. If the program is directed at gathering general information about relatively nonsensitive issues, then less attention needs to be given to training, bias, parents vs. professionals or insiders vs. outsiders, etc. than would be the case if the program is based on critical or sensitive issues or conducted during a time of crisis. In addition, if the program aims only at issues (see Figure 1) and respondents' sentiments about those issues, less attention needs to be given to these factors than would be the case if the program was also aimed at discovering knowledgeables, influentials, and the social and political structure.

People
Communication
Interaction

WHO?

Social and
Political
System Analysis

General
Responses

INTERVIEWER'S
PROBE
TRIANGLE

Problem-Solving
and Conflict
Resolution
Analysis

Sentiments
Beliefs
Values

WHY?

Activities
Issues
Problem-concerns

WHAT?
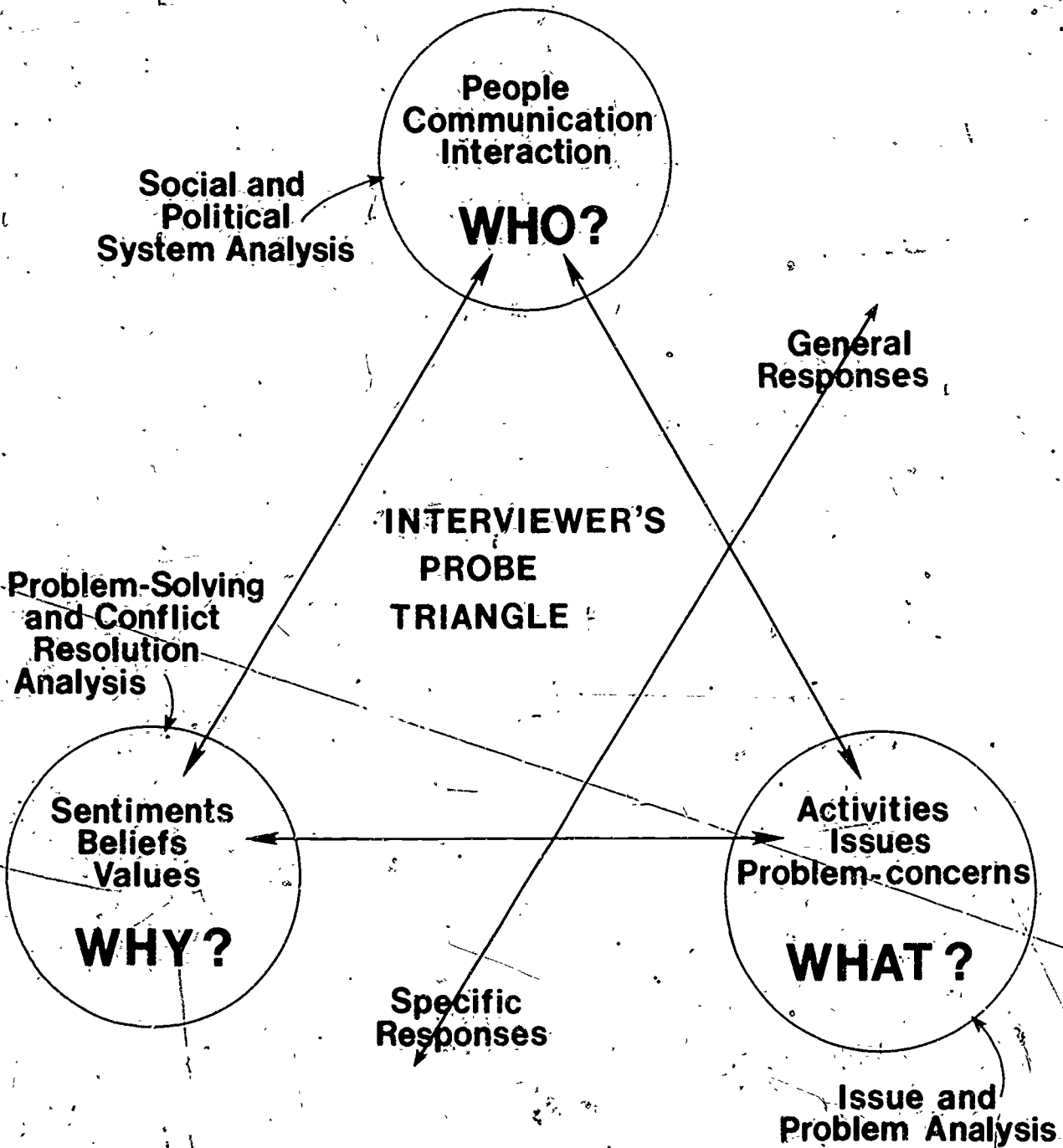
Specific
Responses

Issue and
Problem Analysis

Figure 1.   The interviewer's probe triangle.

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Should insiders or outsiders do the interviewing? What are the
advantages or disadvantages of each? An insider is one who has a
social or political relationship with the people in a community or
institution and a possible stake in the issues or outcome of the pro-
gram. An outsider is one who does not. Therefore, an insider may be
a teacher, a principal, or a parent in a particular school or community.
Yet, that same person could be an outsider in another school community
or even another attendance area in the same school system if different
relationships and stakes prevail in the other system. Consultants are
typically outsiders, but may not be in their own school community.

Insiders generally have the distinct advantages of "knowing the
territory" and "knowing the right questions." Outsiders generally must
spend considerable time learning the territory and these questions.
One disadvantage that insiders have, however, is the possibility of
considerable interviewer bias. Similarly, knowing the territory and
the questions might prevent insiders from discovering new, unantici-
pated people, issues, and values. Frequently, too, insiders do not
have access to some social or political systems of the school community
because of their role in that community. For example, the principal
who interviews parents may have trouble developing rapport when it
comes to asking them about programs in which the principal has con-
siderable stake. Or, the parent who has had a role on one side of a
volatile issue may have difficulty interviewing another parent who
has been active on the other side of the same issue. Depth interviews
frequently generate confidential information. This, too, creates some

ethical problems for insiders who must simultaneously use the information for the program, yet still live in the school community as the possessor of information they might not have in their normal social role.

Hence, except for the time required to know the territory and the right questions, the outsider has considerable advantage over the insider during depth interviews. However, the cost and logistics of outsiders may require that insiders be used. When this is the case, then the above discussion should be of paramount concern.

Can amateurs do depth interviewing as well as professionals? If an amateur is defined as one who has very little or no experience with depth interviews, and the professional as one who has had considerable experience under varying conditions, then the professional will probably do a better job. However, given the proper circumstances and training, the amateur will have little or no trouble with depth interviewing. But, don't expect the amateur to tackle the subtleties of a depth interview with a knowledgeable and influential person without some experience in conducting interviews and without knowing the particular issues in question. Similarly, the amateur should not attempt to look for the social and political structure while interviewing until they are experienced; yet, amateurs should have little problem discovering the issues and sentiments. Of course, the ability of the amateur to become an experienced professional depends on the opportunity to train and conduct depth interviews.

How Do You Train Depth Interviewers?

This section will outline a sample program for training people to do depth interviewing. However, this proposed training program must be adapted to meet the unique needs of individual school communities.

Orientation to Depth Interviewing

Time required: One hour.

Purpose: To provide the interviewer with the back-
                    ground and the advantages and disadvantages
                    of depth interviewing.

Method.   Lecture-discussion, question and answer.

Interview Objectives and Schedule

Time required: One and one-half hours.

Purpose: To translate the program objectives into
                    open-ended questions and to review the
                    customary parts of the interview schedule.

Method: Discussion, question and answer.

Demonstration or Videotape Interview

Time required: Three hours.

Purpose: To demonstrate or show a videotape of a
                    proper depth interview in the presence of
                    the potential interviewer using the inter-
                    view schedule established in the previous
                    session, and to critique the demonstration
                    or videotaped interview.

Method: Demonstration (actual or videotape) and
                    question and answer.

Field Interview

Time required: One hour in class, three hours in the field (approximately).

Purpose: To demonstrate the steps in obtaining access to the respondent and to actually contact, travel to, interview, follow-up, and thank the respondent for allowing the interview.

Method: Lecture (one-half hour), performance by student.

Interview Write-ups

Time required: One-half hour in class, two hours independently.

Purpose: To demonstrate performance in reconstructing the depth interview as verbatim as possible and in a form for data analysis.

Method: Lecture (one-half hour), performance by student.

Interview Critique

Time required: One-half hour per interviewer.

Purpose: To critique the quantity and quality of the depth interview performance based on the quality of the verbatim interview write-up and on the established criteria for an effective interview.

Method: Independent review and critique of each interviewer's write-up.

Data Analysis and Findings

Time required: Two hours.

Purpose: To demonstrate the methods of analysis of depth interview data using actual field interviews which were written up.

Method: Demonstration and small group work if interviewers number more than eight.

Report Writing

Time required: One hour.

Purpose: To demonstrate how the interview data and
                   findings will be incorporated into a final
                   report.

Method: Lecture.

Final Preparation for Interviews

Time required: One and one-half hours.

Purpose: To answer and prepare for actual interviewing
                   prior to going into the field.

Method: Question and answer.

The total time needed for training new interviewers will therefore
be approximately 11 hours of group instruction and about 5 hours of field
interviewing and independent work, plus the $\frac{1}{2}$ hour critique per interview.
Assuming that five interviewers require training, the total time commit-
ment would be about $16\frac{1}{2}$ hours on the part of each interviewer trainee.
The time arrangement or workshop format might appear as follows:

Day 1

9:00-10:00	Orientation to depth interviews
10:30-12:00	Interview schedules and objectives
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-3:00	Demonstration or videotape interviews
3:30-4:30	Critique of demonstration or videotape

Day 2

9:00-10:00	Preparation for field interview
10:00-	Interview in field

Day 3

9:00-9:30	Interview write-ups (in class)
10:00-12:00	Interview write-ups (individually)
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-4:30	Critique interviews (individually)

Day 4

9:00-11:00	Analyze data and findings
11:30-12:30	Report writing
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-3:00	Final preparation for interviews

Of course, this schedule can be compressed into a three-day work-shop or training session by:

1. Preparing for the interview (Day 2, 9:00-10:00) on Day 1.

2. Tightly scheduling interviews on the evening of Day 1 or the morning of Day 2.

3. Writing up interviews late on Day 2.

4. Finishing the activities of Day 3 and Day 4 on Day 3.

5. Generally beginning earlier and finishing later in the day.

The factors which require considerable time are the actual field interviews which should be genuine and not prearranged, and the individual interview critiques which should not be short-changed. If there are more than eight interviewers, the time required for analyzing data and writing reports should be doubled for each eight interviewers added to the training session. Of course, this would be in addition to the time required for individual critiques of interviews.

Additional training time would be required if certain conditions or interview objectives were paramount. For exa le, if the program required that the interviewer identify knowledgeable, influential

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persons and the social and political structure of the school community, then another 6 hours of instruction and training would be necessary. Similarly, if the program is studying sensitive social or political issues, then another 3 hours would be required for training. In short, the complexity and sensitivity of issues and the need to identify the social and political aspects of a community require more training time.

IV

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview schedule can be simply typed on 3" x 5" cards (see
Figure 2) which include the objective questions and stimulus words, or
it can be typed more elaborately on $8\frac{1}{2}$" x 11" sheet(s) of paper. In
both these instances, the responses would be made on a separate tablet
of paper. A sample interview schedule is provided below for the dis-
cussion which follows:

Name of Respondent(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

* * * * *

I. Introduction

Who are You (Interviewer)?

•Name

•Refer to letter of introduction and local schools

•Refer to study affiliation

•Indicate that 10-12 others are also interviewing

Purpose of the Study

•General purpose of the study

•Discuss the positive aspects and high points of public
education in the Green Valley School District

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•Discuss the concerns, problems, and issues of public
education in the Green Valley School District.

•Specific purpose of the study

•Identify the effective and ineffective aspects of the
school-community relations program.

•Discuss the kind of school facilities they have (de-
ficiencies and strengths).

•Discuss why the referendum dealing with the Marshall
School failed

Authorization

•Refer to study authorization and letter of introduction again.

•Refer to study affiliation and to whom you are responsible
for these interviews

Use of the Information

•Report by the study group to the Green Valley School District
Board of Education and copies to the report will be available
for public inspection at schools in the area

•Use of your name(s) and/or quotations

•Interview is part of a larger study involving a great
number of interviews (in excess of 100)

•No one will be identified by name or directly associated
with quotations

•Study may employ quotations to illustrate its observa-
tions, findings, or conclusions but names or direct
association will not be utilized

Why Are We Interviewing You--How We Got Your Name

•List of all public officials in the Green Valley School
District including school boards and municipal, county,
and town officials

•List of all administrators and teachers of elementary and
secondary schools

- List of persons who are knowledgeable and informed about public education in the area

- List of some parents selected at random from school attendance rosters to get broader representation

- List developed from interviews of persons who have been nominated as knowledgeable and informed by others whom we have interviewed

II. Biography

Educational History of Respondent

- School history of respondent

- Specific history of respondent in the Green Valley School District

- Differences noted

Children

- Names, grades, ages of children.

- School history of each child

- Specific history of each child in the Green Valley School District

- Differences--among children and places of school attendance

- Experience of children in the Green Valley School District

III. Central--Open-Ended Questions of the Green Valley Study

What are some of the strengths of the public schools in the Green Valley area? Weaknesses? Points of excellence? Places for improvement? Problems, concerns, issues? (From respondent's point of view.)

- Allow respondent to establish agenda--not interviewer

- Note language of the system

- Have respondent operationalize the responses

  - Definitions ("What do you mean by...?")

  - Examples ("Could you give me an example of what you mean by...?")

•Differences ("How does _____ differ from what you experienced in another school or place?")

•Changes (specific dates) ("Is it different before or after a certain event?")

•Is...should ("Now, what do you think it should be like?")

•Quotations

•Places

•Names ("Who are some others who would be knowledgeable or informed about _____?" or "What do you mean by 'they'?") (This is to infer social and political structure of the community.)

Identify some of the effective and ineffective aspects of the School-community relations of the Green Valley schools.

Compare and strengths and weaknesses of the high school, middle school, and elementary school facilities in general.

•Compare the strengths and weakness of the facilities among the elementary schools (Greenleaf, Muir Woods, Rose, Marshall, Dunnell)

•What new school construction would you (others) support? Oppose? At the High School? Middle School? Greenleaf? Muir Woods? Rose? Marshall? Dunnell?

Discuss the Marshall Referendum: Why it failed, why you opposed or supported?

IV. Checklist--Focused Questions

•Sources of information

•Reliability of information

•School contacts

•Reporting system

•Newsletter

•Facilities

•Transportation

•Growth

•Neighborhood schools

•Attendance boundaries

•Curriculum

•Use of tax dollars

•Discipline

V. Referrals

Who are some other knowledgeable and informed persons who would
be willing to assist in this study and perhaps be interviewed?

Would you be willing to serve as a reference for me to that person
by either writing, calling, or allowing me to use your name on
introduction? (Note other names used in the body of the inter-
view)

VI. Come-back or telephone contact for additional data needs or for
information and clarification

VII. Follow-up letter of thanks

The reason for having the respondent fill in his or her correct

name, spelling, address, and telephone number is obvious. This in-

formation is necessary for sending a letter of thanks and for obtain-

ing any follow-up data or verification.

Part I, the Introduction section, is perhaps least important in

terms of the interviewer's substantive objectives, but it is perhaps

the most important in terms of the respondent. This part of the

schedule is critical for building rapport and confidence, putting the

respondent at ease, and anticipating problems or questions prior to

asking the substantive, objective questions. Charles Backstrom and

Gerald Hursch, in a book entitled Survey Research, give some helpful

Card 1   Card 2   Card 3

Card 1

BEFORE-AFTER   DIFFERENCES

PLACES

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Tel. _____

I.   Introduction
     - Who?
     - Purpose?
     - Authorization?
     - Use of Information
     - Copy of Results
     - How We Got Name?

II. Biographical
     - Children
     - Tenure in Comm.
     - Education History

III. Open Ended
     Dual Principalship

     What would an ideal
     principal be doing
     compared to what he
     does do?

DATES   NAMES   CHANGES   IS-SHOULD

QUOTES   EXAMPLES

Card 2

BEFORE-AFTER   DIFFERENCES

PLACES

IV. Checklist

     - Instruction (Sp. Tchr.)
     - Supervision & Curric.
       Development
     - Pupil Personnel
     - S/C Relations
     - Staff Personnel
     - Organization &
       Management
     - Finance & Business
       Management
     - Facility and Manage-
       ment
     - School Lunch
     - Crisis Management
     - Discipline
     - Prof. Obligation
     - Rel. W/CO
     - Rel. W/AO
     - Other

DATES   NAMES   CHANGES   IS-SHOULD

QUOTES   EXAMPLES

Card 3

BEFORE-AFTER   DIFFERENCES

PLACES

V.   Referral

     - Who are other knowl-
       edgeable and in-
       formed persons?
     - Reference
       (1) Call
       (2) Write
       (3) Use Name

VI. Come Back for Future
     Information

     (Thank-you Letter)

DATES   NAMES   CHANGES   IS-SHOULD

QUOTES   EXAMPLES

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Figure 2.   Vest pocket version (3" x 5" cards) of interview schedule.

suggestions about establishing and maintaining field relations (Appendix A). They elaborate on the "how to" of interviewing, i.e., the interviewer's code, technicalities of interviewing, tactics, cautions, and stock answers to respondents.

While respondents probably phoned or wrote letters of introduction, do not assume that they know who you are--even by name. Consequently, tell them, and even spell your name if necessary. Refer to any letters of introduction or authorization which may have been sent again. (See Appendix B for a sample letter of introduction.) Also indicate what your relationship is to others (if any) involved in similar interviewing, and the general and specific purposes of the study.

An absolutely critical part of this section is stating how the information will be used and explaining the respondent's access to any published report. People are not likely to give 2 hours of their time if either nothing will come of the interview or the respondent may not obtain a copy of the results. An understanding of the format and distribution of any report should be agreed upon in advance with the authorizing person or board. More specifically, respondents will be concerned about how "my name will be used" or how "I might be identified" either by name, indirect reference, or quotation. These questions must be answered satisfactorily or the necessary confidence and rapport will be lacking from the beginning.

Of almost equal importance is the question: "How did we get your name?" Both this question and the previous one on use of information may go unasked by the respondent, but, rest assured, if it goes

unasked or unanswered, it will affect the quality of the later inter-
view data. This question, like the others in Part I, needs to be
answered honestly, but not so elaborately that the answers raise addi-
tional areas of concern for the respondent.

Part II, the Biography section, is an invaluable component for
the depth interview schedule for four reasons. First, it provides an
easy opportunity to build rapport with the respondents by asking ques-
tions about themselves and their children's experience with school.
Second, the biographical information establishes a time and place
frame of reference for both the interviewer and respondents by pro-
viding the dates of experience with the school(s) and the specific
schools with which they have had experience. Third, by learning the
names of the respondents' children, a difficult or arduous interview
can be salvaged later on by asking the respondents to reply in terms
of their personal or their children's experience. Fourth, the time
and place references can assist the interpretation of the data by
providing evidence that either the respondents acutally experienced
the events reported, or that the respondent is reporting a communicated
sentiment or norm of an event which the respondent did not experience
but which is shared by their reference group.

The questions which constitute the objectives of the depth inter-
view effort are found in Part III, Central Objectives. These ques-
tions normally proceed from the broadest and most general in scope to
those which are more specific. Since most depth interviews are
directed toward discovery and policy research, the questions should

be as open-ended as possible while still not encouraging the respondent to miss the objectives entirely. Usually the questions are phrased in such a manner that the interviewer provides multiple stimuli for response. For example, rather than just saying, "What are the strengths of the school?", the interviewer might also add such synonymous stimuli as "What are the points of excellence?", "What is done well?", or "What are the high points?". However, the interviewer must neither focus the question nor suggest the right or preferred response. If that happens, the principal value of depth interviewing is lost.

The interview schedule shown above is an excellent example. The interviewer's questions move from the more general to the more specific and they provide multiple stimuli for response. This interview schedule closes with a rather specific question, "Discuss the Marshall referendum?", about a critical incident. This helps make a transition from the broad, open-ended questions asked in Part III to the more specific, focused questions in Part IV.

Part IV, the Checklist or Benchmarks section of the interview schedule, provides a sudden and marked contrast to the open-ended questions which preceded. This section also compromises many of the principles which govern the depth interview to this point. At this point in the interview, the interviewer switches from the respondent's agenda to his or her own, from open-ended questions to much more focused questions, from multiple stimuli to specific stimuli, and from strict discovery based on the respondent's replies to quasi-verification based on the interviewer's a priori ideas.

Part V, the Referrals section, is a critical aspect of the depth interview. Many of the respondents have been selected from purposeful samples of people in formal positions, and lists of persons with a reputation for being knowledgeable and informed. Obtaining additional names of other, potential respondents by reference broadens and expands the potential pool for interviews. Moreover, these referred respondents are typically informed about the issues and events explored in the open-ended portion of the depth interview schedule. Referrals also can assist in obtaining access to potential respondents who otherwise might be difficult to contact or might not agree to an interview. Indeed, even those interviews which were easy to obtain often run more smoothly and productively if the interviewer comes to the session referenced by a previous repsondent who is a friend. Referral links also provide some added evidence of the social and political connections between people and groups in the school community.

The importance of both Parts VI and VII is self-evident. The need to "cover" oneself in case additional data is required or in order to clarify information obtained during the interview is obvious. And, of course, anyone who grants the interviewer 2 hours of their time deserves a short letter of thanks (see Appendix G).

There is no hard and fixed rule about the time to be allotted, for each of the above sections. However, the following guidelines are suggested for a 2 hour interview:

Part	Minimum (minutes)	Maximum (minutes)	Suggested (minutes)
Introduction	5	20	10
Biography	10	30	20
Central Objectives	30	90	60
Checklist	10	30	20
Referrals	5	30	10
Total	60	200	120

The effective interviewer will find that the time devoted to each section will vary from interview to interview (see Appendix D). For example, with good access and prior references, a respondent may not require all of the background of the study, i.e., its purposes, how their name was obtained, and how the data will be used. They will be able to proceed to the central objectives section of the schedule with little delay. Similarly, once the biography section has been covered, the interviewer might not have to ask another direct question until they get to the checklist section. In these instances all the answers and information bearing on the objectives flow directly from the respondents' personal lives and experiences and those of their children. Indeed, many of the best interviews and certainly those which are most productive frequently flow from the biographical section. Sometimes the checklist section can be obviated if the respondent covers all of the issues in the central objectives section, while other, less verbally profuse respondents will require this crutch to generate a productive interview. The former is typically the case with knowledgeable and informed respondents; the latter with those randomly selected.

In summary, Appendix E provides an overview of "The Art of Interviewing," which was taken from a discussion by Paul Sheatsley (1951).

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Appendix I also includes a guideline for depth interviewing, examples
of checklist items, and evaluation criteria for depth interviewing.

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WHO AND HOW MANY TO INTERVIEW?

It is important to obtain a good cross-section of the community when selecting respondents so that a valid sample of community opinion can be obtained with a minimum number of interviews. Table 1 provides some general guidelines on who and how many to interview. The table is organized by the approximate size of the area to be studied and by the category of respondents. The matrixes shown in Appendix F are helpful in identifying who the community influentials are.

Officials

The first group from which respondents are obtained is community officials and others in formal positions. Officials include the mayor, president of the Chamber of Commerce, members of the city council, school board members, officers of formal organizations, and union officials. The names can be obtained from lists of current and past rosters and lists of membership. These people should be chosen simply because they are officials and not for other reasons such as whether they are reputed to be knowledgeable and informed.

Knowledgeable and Informed

This group grows from nominations by officials and other people in the community. These nominations are obtained by simply asking

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people questions such as: "Who do you believe is knowledgeable or in-
formed about community (school) affairs? Would you give me the names
(and addresses and telephone numbers) of 10 such persons?" Other
stimuli could be added such as "influential," "powerful," or "opinion
leader"; however, these terms can provoke concern because they might
conjure up "political" and "controversial" images when the interviewer
is trying to build rapport.

Names can also be obtained from local news accounts of people who
have been active in public affairs or from the social pages which cite
people who are prominent in the community. Similarly, service clubs,
social groups, and organizations which have the greatest impact on
community (school) affairs could help identify knowledgeable and in-
formed officials to interview. None of these sources is foolproof,
but they constitute a beginning point when other sources might not be
available.

Since names and rosters of officials are readily available, it
is normally the practice to ask 10 to 20 officials to nominate 10
persons and 5 groups whom they think are knowledgeable and informed
about school issues. These nominations are then tabulated. Usually
about 100 people will be identified; some will be nominated several
times, others only once.

The researcher can stop here if he or she believes that a good
cross-section has been obtained. If not, a brief letter can be sent
to the 50 to 100 most frequently nominated people, asking them to
nominate 5 to 10 people they think are knowledgeable and informed.

Table 1

Who and How Many to Interview?

Category (size of area)	Officials	Knowledgeable and Informed	Random	Referrals	Total Interviews
Classroom (30 students)	0	4	3	3	10
Unit (120 students)	0	7	6	7	20
Attendance area (500 students)	4	9	8	9	30
Attendance area or district (1,000 students)	6	12	10	12	40
Attendance area or district (2,500 students)	8	25	22	25	80
District (5,000 students)	12	38	32	38	120

Again, the results are tabulated by frequency count, and the frequencies
are either cross-checked or cumulated with the initial effort. Those
names listed most frequently should be considered for the respondents,
however, care should be taken to avoid persons on the officials list
and those nominated repeatedly on the second list, but not on the first
list. Of course, the process of obtaining additional nominations from
those on the second list can go on ad infinitum. Experience has shown
that the initial nomination and one follow-up are sufficient in most
school communities. However, the larger, less homogeneous, and greater
political complexity the community has, the greater the effort will be
required in obtaining an appropriate list of the knowledgeable and in-
formed to assure a proper cross-section of the community.

<center>Random</center>

Random interviews are generally less productive and less personally
rewarding to the interviewer than interviews with officials, knowledge-
able and informed people, and referrals simply because they are "random"
and not necessarily informed. However, it is necessary to include
random names for two reasons. First, it provides another check on
avoiding getting "caught" in a single social or political clique. This
is possible if the community is split and one obtains all the knowledge-
able and informed respondents from a single, initial nomination process.
Second, it provides the interviewer with some sense of the breadth of
public opinion about certain issues and some idea of the depth of knowledge
about those same issues. For example, the issues surrounding a school

community have a different sort of complexity if they are only discussed
and resolved by a relatively small group of officials and knowledgeables
than if the same opinions, intensity of feeling, depth of knowledge, and
involvement are found in randomly chosen people.

In choosing random names, strict adherence to the rules which
govern sampling theory are not necessary because one is not concerned
with either the composition of the general population or with general-
izing to it. Randomness is required only because of the necessity to
"get out" of any social or political traps which may result from the
selection of the officials or knowledgeables. Hence, random names can
be taken from school attendance files if parent names are desired, or,
from local phone books, voter registration lists, community directories,
or other sources if a broader group is needed. For example, one might
draw the name of a parent(s) from each grade level and three or four
names of parents with children in special education (if that is impor-
tant in the interviews). Similarly, one-half could be drawn randomly
from school attendance files and one-half from another, general source.
After the random names are selected, care should be taken to cross-
check them with the officials list and the knowledgeable and informed
list. Those who are on those lists should be discarded and other
random names should be used instead.

Frequently, it is more difficult to obtain interviews from randomly
chosen people than it is from the others. These interviews are normally
less productive, the data sometimes deviates from the central tendency

of the other interviews, and the responses tend to be more strained and based more on hearsay than on experience. Still, the random interview in the context of the overall purposeful sample selected provides a valuable and useful check on the validity and reliability of the data and should not be eliminated. In short, the same reasons which make random interviews less useful are those which make them indispensable.

Referrals

The fourth group of respondents is obtained by referral from re-spondents in other interviews. Part VI, the Referrals section, includes this question, but the careful interviewer notes persons who are potential referrals during the course of the entire interview and might suggest someone for referral whom the respondent has not thought of when asked the question directly. When asked to nominate persons who are knowledgeable and informed, and who they think would be worthwhile to interview, care should be taken to "fit" the potential referral into the interview plan and to fulfill needs for information or access to certain groups or organizations. In short, the referrals give the interviewers freedom and flexibility in meeting the objectives of the interviews.

Number of Interviews

The number of interviews needed vary and only general guidelines are given here. The social, political, and governmental complexity of a community will increase the requirements. Communities which are socially and politically homogeneous and in one governmental

jurisdiction, or whose issues are resolved in only one jurisdiction, may
require less interviews. For example, a high school attendance area
serving about 2,500 pupils which is relatively homogeneous socially
and politically, and the anticipated issues are resolved administra-
tively or by the school board, may require 50 to 60 interviews. How-
ever, a community with 2,500 pupils which is socially complex (includes
various income levels, social status, old-timers and newcomers, and
rural and urban members) and covers several governmental jurisdictions
(town boards, cities, counties, and school boards), may require 110 to
130 interviews to achieve the same reliability and validity.

WRITING A REPORT

In order to get an indication of how well the objectives of the depth interview program were met, it is necessary to write a report. The report should include a brief statement of the principal questions asked during the depth interviews, how and where respondents were selected, and what the findings were. The findings can be organized roughly into sections which correspond to the objectives of the study.

As mentioned previously, depth interviews are unstructured and use broad, open-ended questions; therefore, the findings will probably represent opinions and perceptions of the respondents. It is unnecessary to count the frequency of responses. Rather, an attempt should be made to state the dominant and prevailing opinions, the degree of consensus about particular issues, whether substantial differences exist in the community, and why those differences seem to occur. A sample report is included in Appendix G.

APPENDIX A

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING FIELD RELATIONS

from

SURVEY Research, by Charles H. Backstrom and
Gerald D. Hursch. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern
University Press, 1963), Chapter 5.

with adaptations by

B. Dean Bowles
Professor of Educational Administration
University of Wisconsin-Madison

INTERVIEWER'S CODE

You Must Be:

1. Honest in your work.

2. Reliable and conscientious.

3. Objective in your manner of asking questions.

4. Faithful and neutral in recording answers.

5. Willing to write answers fully and legibly.

6. Interested in people; understanding.

7. Able to inspire people's confidence and put them at ease.

8. Inconspicuously, but neatly dressed.

Be Sure To:

1. Study all questions until you know what they mean and are familiar enough with them so you can really ask the questions instead of just reading them.

2. Interview yourself by answering each question thoughtfully.

3. Plan to interview at various times of day between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m., since different kinds of people are home at different hours.

4. Re-read your instructions between interviews--you may pick up points you missed before or correct errors you have begun to make.

Your Attitude Should Be:

1. NEUTRAL

Your job is to record information, regardless of whether you think it good, bad, indifferent, boring, or exciting.

Do not--by word, action, or gesture--indicate surprise, pleasure, or disapproval at any answer.

Do not attempt to influence responses in any way. The truth is all that counts--what a person really thinks or feels about the subject. Thus:

a. Never suggest an answer, and do not give your own opinions on a question.

   b. Ask the questions exactly as they are worded and in
      the same order every time, so that the response will
      not be influenced by you in any way.

   c. If the respondent does not understand a question,
      repeat it exactly as written rather than explain it.
      Occasionally, a neutral explanation may be employed
      to help the respondent understand the intent of the
      question.

2. IMPARTIAL

   Whatever you may think of an individual or his or her opinions,
   keep it to yourself. Each interview you are asked to get, and
   each person you speak to is equally important.

   You should be adaptable to anyone and gracious to everyone.
   The important thing is to inspire the confidence of every
   respondent regardless of age, sex, race, etc.

3. CASUAL

   You are not a spy. If you become too grim in the pursuit of
   your assignment, the respondent may become defensive.

   Don't make this a matter of life and death. Take it easy.
   Approach the interview pleasurably and let the respondent enjoy
   it, too.

   Assume that they want to express their opinions and want to be
   interviewed. You are merely giving them the chance to express
   themselves on matters that may be important to them.

4. CONVERSATIONAL

   Use an informal manner of speaking, natural to you, and aimed
   at putting the individual at ease.

   Although you are conversational, never lose control of the
   interview. From the moment the correct respondent appears at
   the door, talk him or her through the introduction and right
   into the body of the questionnaire before he or she reacts
   negatively.

   Be ready with stock answers to handle interruptions or objections.
   Give these answers in an offhand tone of voice as though you've
   heard the objection a hundred times, and proceed with the questions.

5. FRIENDLY

   If the respondent is not relaxed, you cannot make him or her
   talk. The respondent must not be made to feel ashamed of his
   or her lack of information or participation. Your attitude

must be sympathetic and understanding. Emphasize that there are no correct answers. The respondent must be made to realize that what he or she thinks really is what counts.

If the individual remains confused by a question, even after repetition and perhaps some neutral explanation of intent, record an "undecided" or "don't know" response.

If an individual feels that he or she does not know enough about a matter to make a decision, record an "undecided" or "don't know" response.

Or if the respondent objects to a question, say, "I don't know why, but that's the way my office has the question worded."

Remember: The object is to secure the honest, uninfluenced opinion of each individual interviewed.

Some Technicalities of Interviewing Include:

1. Ask for the designated individual.

2. If the respondent is not at home, make an appointment to interview him or her or arrange to contact the individual to make an appointment. Always keep this appointment yourself. If no one is home, you must make every reasonable attempt to call back as many as three or four times to try to complete the interview.

3. Be sure that you fill in the information required of the interviewer at the top of page 1. Fill in your NAME, the SAMPLE NUMBER of the respondent, the DATE, and the TIME STARTED. When you have completed the interview, place in TIME COMPLETED.

4. DO NOT PLACE ANY NUMBERS OR ANSWERS IN THE BOXES. You must circle the number of the appropriate response when such choices are provided. Several of the "Background Data" questions are "open-ended;" this means that you should simply write the respondent's words in the space(s) provided. If remarks are lengthy, don't hesitate to use the back of the page, if necessary.

5. For open-ended questions such as #11, 16, and 17, you may wish to probe for further information--especially if the response has been vague or brief. You might ask, "Is there anything else?" Are there any other (groups, questions, ways for providing information) which you can think of?

6. Any time a respondent seems to have difficulty understanding a question, please circle the number of that question. This will help us later when we try to assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

Note. Never feel embarrassed about asking any of the questions: Such
questions are being asked of thousands of people every year. For
some of the respondent's time, you are trading them a chance to
be more influential in public affairs. Just have a business-like
attitude that shows you are there to complete the interview.

INTERVIEWING TACTICS

1. Usually the first meaningful reaction to a question is the important or true one. Don't record any changes in an answer to a past question if you have already gone on to other items. Note at the point the respondent indicates he or she would say something else.

2. Do not record a "don't know" response too quickly. This response is often used to stall for time while the respondent arranges his thoughts.

3. If you get a "Yes, but..." or a "No, but..." try to record the comment, even if space has not been provided. These comments may reveal important facts about the question which were not anticipated.

4. Try to record comments or remarks as they are given.

5. Try to get specific comments.

6. Keep talking as you write. Ask the second question as you record the response to the first. Start the respondent thinking about a question. If you let a silence grow, he or she has time to become distracted, bored, resentful. Keep eye contact with the respondent.

7. Focus the respondent's attention on the questions. But this must be done gently; sometimes the "price" exacted for a respondent's efforts is that the interviewer must listen to the respondent's feelings on some unrelated matters. Be patient, but try to lead the respondent back to the subject at hand.

8. Record all the answers yourself. Never allow the respondent to do so.

9. Get all the information you are asked to get. Serious omissions may cause the questionnaire to be discarded. Therefore, check over the questionnaire at the end of each interview before you leave the respondent's presence. You can't supply answers after you leave.

   Say, "Now, let's see if we've got everything," to allow you to look over each question. If time is running short, you may wish to say, "If we need any further clarification of your responses, may we contact you again?"

10. Before you leave, remember to say "Thank you very much for your time and efforts I enjoyed talking with you, and the information which you provided will be most helpful. Thanks again. Good bye."

INTERVIEWING CAUTIONS

1. Never interview by telephone. It is impossible to convey the subtleties of questions intended for a personal interview. Too, respondents find it easier to hang up than to refuse the interviewer at the door.

2. Never take a friend or anyone else along when you do interviewing. Go alone. Respondents will be inhibited in the presence of "extra" interviewers.

3. Never allow anyone other than the designated respondent to answer your questions. Seek privacy. If others must be present and they start talking, or if the respondent asks for their opinions, tell the respondent only his or her opinions are important. Gently but firmly instruct family members not to interrupt.

4. Never let someone else do the work for you. Substitutes are worthless, since you are the trained interviewer. If you cannot complete the work yourself, notify the research director at once.

5. Never reveal the details of your job or of specific interviews to others. The information you obtain is confidential and you must respect this.

6. Never correct errors on someone else's advice. Instead, tell the research director about your difficulties.

7. Never falsify interviews. All work is carefully examined and methods of detecting false information have been devised. It isn't worth the trouble to do the job poorly or wrong.

8. Always follow instructions carefully.

9. Always study the questionnaire until you are fully familiar with it.

10. Always be completely neutral, informal, and conscientious.

11. Always read questions just as they are written.

12. Always ask all of the questions.

13. Always ask questions in the order they appear.

14. Always record comments accurately.

15. Always check questionnaire to be sure all items are completed.

16. Generally, try to interview people you don't know, and interview them alone.

17. Always interview only the designated individual.

STOCK ANSWERS TO RESPONDENTS

What You Should Say...

1. If the respondent asks: "Who is doing this survey?"
   "This survey is being conducted by the University of Wisconsin's
   Research and Development Center in cooperation with the school
   system of Jefferson County. We are trying to get some idea about
   how people may have an influence upon what the school system does,
   and about how this activity may relate to people's feelings on
   various matters."

2. If the respondent presses for a better answer on auspices: "Well...
   I have been employed to secure some of the interviews. The
   people in charge of this survey are at the University of Wisconsin's
   R&D Center; however, their representative is here at Shepherd
   College. Would you like their phone number, so that you could
   call them?" (If "Yes," give them trouble numbers.)

3. If the respondent wonders why he or she is being interviewed, or
   suggests interviewing someone else:
   "You were selected completely by chance from the Shepherdstown
   District voter registration lists. So your opinions are impor-
   tant and interviewing someone else wouldn't be as good."

4. If the respondent says he or she doesn't have time to be inter-
   viewed: "The questions won't take too long. You can go right
   on with your work and I'll just run through these items."

5. If the respondent insists he or she is too busy:
   "What would be a better time soon for me to come back? I'll note
   down an appointment that would be more convenient for you."

6. If the respondent says he or she doesn't know enough to give good
   answers: "In this survey, it is not what you know that counts.
   Rather it is what you happen to think about various topics or
   what kind of contact you have had with schools that is important."

7. If the respondent is afraid to answer some questions or asks:
   "What are you going to do with these answers?" or "Why do you
   want to know that?"
   "Well...many people are being asked these same questions, of course,
   and what you say is confidential. We are interested in these
   questions only to see what a lot of people in Shepherdstown
   generally are doing or are thinking about."

8. If the respondent is annoyed and just plain refuses to answer
   a question: "Of course, you don't have to answer any question
   you'd prefer not to. I'm only trying to get your opinion because
   our study is more accurate that way." Then, if the respondent
   still refuses, don't comment, just go on quickly to the next
   question. Mark the item "Refused."

Remember, don't ignore questions, but parry them with provided answers. Be brief in your answers. Don't pause too long, waiting for the respondent's next reaction. Rather, go on with the questions as soon as possible--in a conversational way.

INITIAL CONTACTING

"Hello, my name is _____. May I talk with _____?"

(Respondent present)

"Hello, my name is _____. I am representing the University of Wisconsin's Research and Development Center. In cooperation with the Jefferson County School System, we are conducting a survey in Shepherdstown District. I believe that you have already received a letter from us regarding this research project." (Respondent should affirm this. If you receive a negative answer, report this to us; then read purpose statement from introductory letter.)

"Well, what I would like to do is to set up some time when, at your convenience, we might complete the interview. The interview should take less than 45 minutes. We can meet in your home, at your work, or some place in town (like the student center)--or wherever you'd like. If you'd prefer we can meet some evening or over the weekend." (Continue to make appropriate arrangements. Refer to "Stock Answers" if necessary.)

(If appointment is set up):

"Thank you very much. I am looking forward to our meeting at... (Review time, date, site information). Good bye."

(If interview is completely refused):

"Well, thank you anyway. Good bye."

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

GREEN VALLEY AREA SCHOOLS

Blooming Hills

Dear

The Green Valley Board of Education is conducting an interview program to learn of your opinions about our schools, facilities, school-community relations, the school program and its operation, and generally, anything else you would like to discuss.

Dunnell

You are one of the people who has been selected to be interviewed. We urge your cooperation and hope you will be able to take the time to talk to one of the interviewers. _____
will be contacting you soon by telephone to make an appointment.

Greenleaf

The Board will make a report of the interview study which will be available to you and other community members.

The Board of Education, in general, plans to use the findings of the interview program to improve the school system, and more specifically, to improve school-community relations and revise its school building program priorities.

Marshall
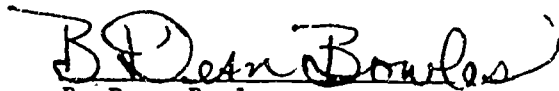
Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

                              Sincerely,

Muir Woods

Q. B. Nichols, President   Warren E. Pfister
Board of Education   District Administrator

                    B. Dean Bowles
Rose   Professor of Educational Administration

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE LETTER OF THANKS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Educational Sciences Building
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, WI 53706
Telephone (608)

Dear Mrs. Smith:

I want to thank you for taking the time to chat with me
Wednesday evening about Washington School. The information
and opinions that you gave were very helpful. When the report
is available, you will be notified.

Cordially,

John Hill

APPENDIX D

TWO SAMPLE INTERVIEW WRITE-UPS

Hubert Carson--Green Valley Position.

The Setting

The Carsons live on a secluded 30-acre estate. The home sits atop a high hill and is architecturally constructed so that you can look out on the Village of Blooming Hills. Mr. Carson gave the most succinct description of his home when he said, "This is my Taj Mahal." The home is a massive three-story structure measuring approximately 120 feet by 40 feet with three huge masonry fireplaces, cathedral ceilings, sunken living room, game room, and a well-stocked wine cellar.

Mr. Carson admitted me to his home and stated that he was willing to take all the time necessary to answer my questions. The ensuing interview began at 4:00 p.m. and concluded at 9:00 p.m. We sat down in the two Lazy Boy recliners overlooking the deer shelter and began the interview while watching two does and a 12-point buck eat the corn that Rob and Ginny had just set out for them. Mr. Carson began by asking me the first question, "Tell me, when you look around this place, does it look to you as though I need anything or that I have to have the job as Town Chairman to survive?" My reply was, "No, not unless you are living beyond your means and need the money from the Chairman's position to pay for deer food." Carson continued, "Just so we know where we stand, let me tell you that every cent I get in salary from the town goes to the churches in the area. My only interest is to preserve this community so that it grows in a respectable, not hodge-podge way." Mr. Carson specifically asked whether or not I had any personal interest in the Green

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Note: Anonymity required that names and places be changed when necessary.

Valley schools or if, as an educator, I was attempting to push the professional educator's viewpoint off on the community. I told him that my only interest was that of a graduate student earning one credit of field work in survey techniques. To this Mr. Carson replied, "Good. It's time the School Board got disinterested people in to make recommendations. I only hope they use what you give them; but, I doubt they will."

Introduction and Biography

Mr. and Mrs. (Sarah) Carson have four children, only one of whom attends school within the district. Roger Carson, 25, is an Assistant District Attorney; Pat, 21, married, is a housewife who lives 100 miles away; Ginny, 19, is a sophomore at Northwestern University; and Rob, 13, attends the Green Valley Middle School. The Carsons moved from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin to Blooming Hills 12 years ago. Ginny attended school in Wauwatosa, but when the family moved to Blooming Hills, Mr. Carson enrolled her in Lakeland Preparatory School. "At the time there was no Green Valley K-12 school district and the educational opportunity that did exist was not, we felt, adequate. Lakeland Prep, at that time, was highly rated," stated Mr. Carson. Rob may go to the high school here, but we aren't sure yet. The Iowa Achievement Tests showed Green Valley was a disgrace, and I can't see paying for an education that produces losers," he said. At this point Mr. Carson digressed, comparing his business operations with how he believed schools ought to be run. "I own six businesses," he said, "and I reward those who work and fire those who don't produce. If the schools are to succeed they will have to reinstitute the merit system in order to get my support. I run a commercial contracting outfit (Carson Contracting, Inc.), a realty firm, an automobile rental company, and a panel fabrication company. I've seen what happens

when the schools don't perform, and I'm not going to let my son be one
of those that can't read or write like it showed on the test (Iowa
Achievement exam). You don't run a business that way and you don't run
a school that way. We pay $6.00 more per thousand in taxes than people
in _____ for our schools, and the Iowa tests show we are way
down in comparison to _____ students. I am a loner on the
Town Board. I support no group and am part of no group. I am an indivi-
dual. I oppose any new school construction until I see some performance
results, and I don't care what groups or people think or say. I've heard
lots of arguments for this program and that building but none of the
school administration seem to be concerned about the taxpayer and what
he's getting for his money."

In regard to the elementary schools, Mr. Carson stated, "There's
nothing wrong with the little schools. They (the administration) should
never have closed them in the first place. They sold the Boone School
building for $6,000 and it was a sound building." At this point Mrs.
Carson interjected, "I don't even know what any of the schools besides
Rose and Marshall look like." In terms of any additional facilities,
Mr. Carson grouped the middle school in with what he considered the
elementary and stated, "Probably the middle school would need an addition."
He noted that, "The middle school was built on a swamp--a typical admin-
istrative decision and a typical blunder. Pine Tree, the school that
the district is renting, is another strictly political move by the
administration. Decisions of this nature illustrate the stupidity of
the administration's actions as well as their contempt for the people
in the District. Pfister (Superintendent) must think those of us who
live here are buffoons if he can't see that we really know what's going on."

Marshall Referendum

When questioned about the Marshall Referendum, Mr. Carson stated point-blank, "I'm proud to say that I was responsible for its death and I'll tell you why. First of all, the whole program was touted to be a small classroom complex but it wasn't. When the Annual Meeting was held, the people were flabbergasted by the extent of the architect's report which showed 27 rooms, of which one-third were to be used for administrative offices and special education administrative personnel. They weren't building classrooms; they were building offices, and they hadn't told the people that before the annual meeting. Secondly, the way they (the administration) selected the architect was not proper. The administration didn't even put out bids for offers. St. Vincent's, the Catholic elementary school, built an addition which meets all state standards, and it didn't have terrazzo floors and carpets; just a good solid school. Our architect won't design a building like that; oh, no. We'll have all the fancy stuff. What I'm saying is that the administration has no respect for the taxpayer in the district. I could personally pay the taxes on any one of these schools, but what about the little guy, the old people who live here on fixed incomes?"

In an effort to probe deeper into the Marshall construction question and specifically to solicit an attitude response toward the administration, I asked Mr. Carson why he believed the administration would deliberately use such tactics on the people. Mr. Carson's response was, "Mr. Pfister is building up his briefcase to move on, and he cares little about this district. Pfister gets $35,000 a year and is grossly overpaid. He is particularly interested in getting as many additions and programs instituted as he can without regard to the taxpayer. As to qualifications of

teachers, Pfister couldn't care less. There are some teachers who are
super and some that are absolutely worthless. Half belong in the pro-
fession; the others should be thrown out. (Mr. Carson would not indicate
names, stating, "The teachers I know that could give you inside informa-
tion would be afraid to talk to you because they would be afraid the
administration would force them out. The morale of the teachers is
extremely low. Pfister can't get the support of his own teachers because
a majority of them don't like him. The morale problem is directly
associated with the administration and Mr. Pfister.")

When querried about the campaign to defeat the Marshall referendum,
Mr. Carson vented the following remarks: "What happened at the Annual
Meeting was typical of all the school board meetings. Pfister always
has a small group of teachers at each board meeting that present proposals
for new programs that aren't needed. In addition, Pfister has administra-
tors or other so-called experts up front threatening the people by saying
that state or federal aid will be lost if you don't do this or that.
One night, Pfister had two principals and Philip Chesterton (Director
of Student Services) up front telling us that we had to institute a new
special education program and how we could get the program with state
aid money 'and that it wouldn't cost us anything. How stupid do they think
we are? Where does the state get the money or the federal government
for that matter? From us! This is just a method Pfister is using to
build his dynasty and add papers to his portfolio. My argument is simply
this: If we have to build, let's wait until the people get here first
so they can share the cost. Why build now and let those who come in get
the whipped cream? The administration has been telling us all along about

the tremendous growth we are going to have. The Regional Planning
Commission says that 50% of the Town of Blooming Hills is unbuildable
for homes. We have had it with that growth line. It's a phony." In
direct response to the Annual School Board Meeting, Mr. Carson stated
that, "The administration had the whole night's activities rigged. First,
they held their usual secret board meeting prior to the public meeting.
Second, they hit us with this plan for 27 supposed classrooms and then
wanted us to vote on it that night. Half the people at the meeting got
up and walked out which left the School Board with a legal problem as
to whether or not a vote could be taken that would be upheld in court.
In addition, the Board raised the question of salary increases after half
the people had left. The teachers' group was well represented and organized
for the annual meeting, but it didn't work out the way they had expected.
Although they did get their raise, they lost the confidence of the
people."

As a result of the walk-out at the Annual Meeting, the administra-
tion was forced to go the route of a referendum. Mr. Carson then organ-
ized a Town Meeting for the express purpose of discussing the Marshall
Referendum. Carson had distributed literature prior to the meeting to
drum up opposition. At the Town Meeting Pfister and Carson locked horns
over numerous issues surrounding the administration's tactics and waste-
ful spending as it related to Marshall. Carson argued that the adminis-
tration had not told the truth about the size of the complex, the use
to which rooms were to be put, the manner in which the architect was
selected, the cost of the facility, and the location. According to
Mr. Carson, "Pfister is a very talented man and can be very persuasive;
but that night his arguments just didn't wash with the people. They had

had enough of being railroaded." In conclusion, Mr. Carson stated, "I
even offered free rides to the polls for those who would vote the
Marshall addition down. We defeated the thing and proved to the adminis-
tration they couldn't sneak behind the peoples' backs anymore."

Facility Construction Attitude

Mr. Carson's first reaction to the idea of any new building or
addition was, "Bus the kids to Redbank and let the district pay for the
use of the schools there until there is a proven need or people or both
here in Green Valley to justify and support a new construction program."
The only immediate kind of construction Mr. Carson would support is a
remodeling to eliminate the open concept at the middle school.

When asked to indicate what he might support, assuming the actual
need could be proven to him, Mr. Carson remarked that he liked the idea
of the neighborhood schools but thought one larger elementary complex,
capable of maintaining 1,000 students, would be a more efficient use of
tax money. He believed it should be located between Greenleaf and
Muir Woods.

In regard to the high school, Mr. Carson emphasized his opposition
by stating, "I would support no building program, period. I encourage
the use of the split shift program. It has worked well elsewhere and
its merit depends strictly on whether or not an administrator or taxpayer
is suggesting the plan. The split shift obviously offers tax advantages
to the district by delaying construction. I don't see why we couldn't
even have school in the summer if that becomes necessary. It's a waste
of facilities not to use them for 3 months out of the year. Parents don't
care if their kids get home at four or six o'clock, and the kids shouldn't

even be asked about what they want. Pfister gets the kids to come home with his plans as threats and uses them against their parents for his own benefit."

When asked specifically about certain types of space utilization, Mr. Carson stated that he could, if need was proven, support additional classrooms at the high school. He said, however, that they should be designed to hold about 30 students each with a maximum capacity of 50.

Mr. Carson would not support the expansion of the gymnasium for any reason, stating, "You don't give a new gym to a guy who perpetually develops losing teams." When asked if he thought better facilities might lead to improvement in athletics, Mr. Carson replied, "That's ridiculous. It's not the place that makes a difference; it's the person." In regard to a pool, Mr. Carson indicated, "That's a luxury;—the people can't afford it. Besides, we live in a community that has eight lakes; it would be a foolish waste of tax dollars." In conclusion, Mr. Carson stated, "Until the district introduces the merit system, I really don't feel prone toward any construction. You must provide performance before you get buildings; the proof is in the pudding."

Communications

When asked about school-community relations, Mr. Carson replied, "They are zero." The Carsons do receive the school newsletter, but Mr. Carson believes that "It is cram, jam full of stuff that only supports the administration's viewpoint" which he considers half truth, half fact. He also criticized the small print. In concluding his remarks, Mr. Carson simply stated that "There is no trust between the taxpaying constituents and the administration, so what information they supply us with is

suspect from the start. We're going to be paying for Pfister's trip to some convention. He won't come back with a damn thing for the taxpayer. There will be no reward for the community, but he'll make it sound like a big thing in the newsletter."

When probed, in an effort to determine what should be done to improve community-school relations, Mr. Carson itemized the following:

1. "Don't hold secret School Board meetings before conducting public meetings.

2. Don't put people with questions on the last place on the agenda at School Board meetings.

3. Don't hold School Board meetings on the same night as the Town of Blooming Hills meetings.

4. Put a transcript of the entire School Board proceedings in the Greenleaf Register which is the only major district-wide newspaper.

5. Hold local area people-administration meetings to let people know what is being proposed and allow them to help in making decisions.

6. Don't let the administration hide tax-spent dollars by putting items in miscellaneous budget categories. Itemize every expense, every position, so the people can see where the money goes.

7. Have the administration explain why there is such a large surplus of money each year."

Mr. Carson stated that the major need is to "Re-establish faith between the people and the school administration and School Board." Personally, as far as Mr. Carson is concerned, this goal can only be achieved through a change of administration. Asked point-blank if he

felt Mr. Pfister should be replaced, Mr. Carson stated, "There won't be any changes until that man is out. There is no way he can regain the confidence of the people. He's got to go." Mr. Carson then noted that the kind of man he would like to see as superintendent was one like Mr. Schumacher, a former school system principal. Mr. Schumacher, according to Mr. Carson, had good rapport with the people, held public meetings, got the word out and the facts straight. He said, "I can tell you personally that when deciding on teachers for employment, our super-intendent has not recommended those most qualified. This is a known fact from another administrator within the Green Valley School District. This is the kind of thing a man like Schumacher would not do and the kind of man we need." (Mr. Carson absolutely refused to name personalities.)

Curriculum

Mr. Carson believes equal emphasis should be placed on vocational and college preparatory coursework. "I'm for split shifts and think it would work out great for the kids because they could get skilled training in school and then go out and get jobs for that portion of the day they aren't in school. In the past, the high school kids have just had too much time on their hands anyway," stated Mr. Carson.

Discipline

Mr. Carson believed that because of his privileged position in regard to access to certain police information, he would prefer not to comment on disciplinary problems at the schools. He did state that there was an obvious and commonly known drug and alcohol abuse problem at both the high school and middle school locations.

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Other Issues: Old Blooming Hills City Hall

Whether or not the following information is directly related to
Mr. Carson's attitude towards the school district will have to be weighed
and evaluated by the reader. Obvious overtones of contempt were noted
when Mr. Carson spoke about the Alternative High School located in
Blooming Hills and this writer's opinion, while based totally on conjecture,
is that the inability of Mr. Carson to secure the old city hall property
located in the town has been like an acidic sore on his plans for the
community. Mr. Carson began renovating the Town of Blooming Hills
approximately 5 years ago. First, he purchased the Traveler's Inn and
later acquired the Old Country Store. Last September Mr. Carson purchased
the grocery store and the old railroad depot. The reason for the
renovation of the town is, according to Mr. Carson, twofold: (1) to
improve the community, and (2) to make a "shitload of money" when he sells
it. (I did not ask for an operational definition of how much money was
involved, assuming only that it meant a good profit.) Eventually, Carson
believes it will be a bustling little community.

The significance to the school district of the Blooming Hills
renovation stems from the fact that while Mr. Carson owns most of the
businesses and a total of 10 acres in and around the little community,
he does not own the old city hall building which is located adjacent to
the Traveler's Inn. When Ray Cosgrove offered to sell the old city hall,
Mr. Carson submitted an offer of $40,000. Because of a personality con-
flict between Carson and Cosgrove, Cosgrove refused Carson's offer and
sold the old city hall to Mr. Jeff Smart for $25,000. (All dollar facts
are those supplied by Mr. Carson.) Mr. Smart then rented the old city

hall to the School District for use as the Alternative High School.

Mr. Carson then purchased the lot at the rear of the old city hall for

$3,000 from Mrs. Grace Hopkins, President of the local bank. Thus, the

situation amounts to the following: Mr. Carson owns all the land on

three sides of the old city hall. Those who work at the Alternative

High School can either park on the street or behind the building. The

only problem is that to get to the parking spaces in back of the building,

the school people must use the drive which belongs to the Traveler's Inn

and Mr. Carson. Mr. Carson's objection to the Alternative High School is,

as he stated, "That those people are not performing a function that is

a credit to the community." When asked to define what he meant by credit

to the community, Mr. Carson said, "Look. The kind of services they

perform could be performed anywhere, preferably in existing schools, or

in a more central location. Those people do nothing for the town and,

in my estimation, they discriminate against other kids because what it's

costing the taxpayers to rent that building could be used for other

school costs and helping other kids. No one comes to town looking for

a bunch of school psychoanalysts. It's not like a community service

provided by a barber, doctor, or businessman, and they don't contribute

anything to the growth of the town or its businesses." Mr. Carson also

noted that at the time the old city hall was rented out by the school

district the Rivervale schoolhouse was vacant and could have been used

as the Alternative High School. This was seen by Mr. Carson as contempt

by the administration towards the taxpayer and nothing more than a game

of political arm twisting. Mr. Carson said, "If I wanted to I could be

a real bastard about the parking around the place and just chain off the

access to the rear parking lot. I won't do that because those people

would just park on the street and take up space for customers who want

to go to the other business places." I did not relate to Mr. Carson that

I had talked to Mr. Chesterton, but the following piece of information

sheds a different light on Mr. Carson's non-bastardly explanation for

not chaining off the rear parking lot. According to Mr. Chesterton,

Mr. Carson has increased the amount of rent charged to the man who

operates the Traveler's Inn a total of $40.00 per month. Mr. Chesterton

stated that the operator of the Inn had been in and complained that his

rent was being raised by $40.00 and that Carson had told him he could

recoup that loss if he would charge the people at the Alternative High

School $40.00 a month rent for the use of the access road to the rear

parking lot. Mr. Chesterton stated that the Traveler's Inn drive was

a public access and that no one could charge for its use. According to

Mr. Carson, the land and drive belong to him and can be roped off. What

will happen at this juncture is not known but the technique used by Mr.

Carson to apply pressure on the administration through the Alternative

High School is obviously indicative of a strong desire to get the Alter-

native High School out of town. Interestingly, Mr. Carson's attempt to

have the operator of the Traveler's Inn do his dirty work implies that

he does not want to confront the school system in an open or direct

manner. In effect, he suggested as much when he said, "I won't personally

interfere with anything that has to do with the Alternative High School,

but I can guarantee you that no one else will park behind that building

when they are out of it--unless they have a car that's only 1 foot wide."

Clint and Bonnie Adams--Prairie Town: Referral

Biographical Information

Bonnie grew up and attended schools in Marquette County, Wisconsin.
For the elementary grades she attended a small rural school near Poynette.
Then she completed a 2-year teacher education program at Brown County
Normal School. She is a housewife and has been for many years.

Clint grew up on a farm and worked with his parents on many farms
in southeast Wisconsin. He finished his formal education at the eighth
grade level at various schools in Columbia, Dane, and Walworth Counties
with 1 full year at Mt. Horeb. Clint works simultaneously as an inde-
pendent contractor and for another contractor.

Although Clint does not consider himself a farmer, he owns a 280-
acre farm. They have lived on the farm and within the school district
for 12 years. They have lived in their present house on their farm
property for 6 years. Before this period they briefly lived on a 10-acre
farm in a rural area near Madison.

Their marriage of 16 years is the second one for both Bonnie and
Clint. They have 10 children, two of whom were born from their marriage,
and three of whom presently live at home. Information about their children
living at home follows:

1.   Jeff--18 years old. He went through New Holstein public school
system but he did not complete high school.

2.   Joyce--15 years old. She has gone through New Holstein school

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Note: Anonymity required that names and places be changed when necessary.

system and is currently at New Holstein Union High School.

3. Mary--10 years old. She is in fifth grade at Frederick Elementary School.

Personal Impressions

Clint and Bonnie were very pleasant, friendly, and hospitable people; I believe that they would "give you the shirts off their backs." Several evidences of their generosity are apparent. For example, after several minutes of getting acquainted, Bonnie gave me an impressive little booklet about an historic landmark in the area. Also, they seem to take delight in having a set of their parents live with them. A third example is that when a child marries, the newlyweds are given 2 acres of the farm. In summary, both of them impress me as being honest, fair, warm, and generous people with whom one can talk.

Bonnie is of short stature, slightly overweight, and has grey hair. Her eyes and smile convey a feeling of warmth. Clint is about 6 feet tall and slightly overweight. He has a rudy complexion with a twinkle in his eyes. Both of them appear in their mid-50's and were casually dressed.

Bonnie and Clint describe themselves as "average folks." Also, even though they are included on my referral list, they do not consider themselves well versed on educational matters within the community.

Both of them have worked hard for what they have. They live in a very nice ranch style house set back from the road among trees. The interior of their home is tasteful, clean, and well maintained. As one surmises, they value the work ethic very much. In addition, Clint strongly believes the importance of having things paid for. A standard by which

to measure one's success in life is if he is free from debt. When Clint was discussing two of his sons, he emphasized how their houses, cars, and trucks are paid for.

Instructional Programs

Kindergarten is of concern to them. It is a "touchy subject" between them, for they disagree on its method of operation. Clint believes that generally kindergarten is not applicable to every child; some 5-year-old children are as developed as first graders and have no need for kindergarten. For example, one neighbor child was able to do simple math and recite the alphabet before kindergarten. Although Clint agrees with his wife that the child may need social development in kindergarten, he asserts that his classmates would not be at his level. Bonnie maintains that every child needs kindergarten in order to facilitate social adjustment.

They sent their daughter Mary to a private kindergarten in the Frederick area, and both greatly enjoyed this arrangement. Clint thinks that each family should voluntarily pay for its own children to go to kindergarten. He does not want to pay taxes for mandatory enrollment in pre-school, especially when not every child needs it. He was willing to pay $250.00 per year to send his own child; it was his decision alone to pay for his child.

So Clint prefers not to have kindergarten this coming fall. The program will cost $11,000 and he does not want to pay any more taxes. Also, if kindergarten was offered at Frederick Elementary School, the one free room would be used, and eventually additional space would be needed.

Bonnie and Clint agree that the subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic constitute the core of teaching. Although Bonnie likes the wide selection of mini-courses which are offered at the high school, she believes that the "basics" need to be more emphasized. Also, re emphasis is needed in vocational education, though Bonnie thinks that the high school curriculum is leaning positively toward this direction.

Both of them appear quite concerned about a student's motivation to learn. This concern seems understandable in the light of having several children who have been uninterested in school and not finished high school. Clint recollected that during his youth the subjects of history and geography were very boring; yet now as an adult he values these subjects very much. So, on the one hand, he believes that history and geography are invaluable for students, yet on the other hand, Clint dislikes seeing students "turned off." He is aware of this conflict but he asks, "Why learn what doesn't mean anything?" Bonnie believes that courses such as history and geography definitely need to be taught, and it is basically the teacher's responsibility to motivate the students. As Bonnie maintains, "A teacher's duty is to the children, not her pocket- book." Both of them want to see children attend school because they are really motivated to learn rather than because they are "forced" to attend; this goal is a challenge for parents as well as teachers.

Although Clint values education, he does not consider it a fore- most priority. Formal education is not the only criterion for a success- ful and happy life. For example, one college-educated man lives in the area and appears to lead a depressing existence. He has no wife, family, house, or ambition; he makes a living as a sharecropper. Another example

to show that much formal education is not needed to succeed in life is a neighbor who has gone through the fourth grade and who has an excellent reputation as a farmer. In contrast, another neighbor who graduated from college is a poor farmer, not knowing how to finish cattle properly for market. Clint thinks that his children are just as well prepared, if not more, for life than many others including the valedictorians.

Discipline

Discipline at the high school is of utmost concern to them since their daughter Joyce, who is a sophomore at New Holstein Union High School, has had confrontations with school personnel. Her parents describe her as one who likes excitement; who is mischievous; who does not respect authority figures, such as Dr. Richmond; who is "turned off" by school, though her grades are better than last year.

At the high school, discipline is not good and sometimes unfair. Clint protests that with Joyce's reputation she is declared guilty before proven innocent. So sometimes she is punished for what she did not do and more harshly than if another person had behaved the same way. For example, Joyce skipped school and was suspended for several days. Several days after returning to school, she sat on a register in the hall and was disciplined. Joyce and her parents consider the latter reprimand unfair, for other students sat on the register without receiving any reprimands whatsoever. Joyce was also disciplined for protesting. Clint believes that strict discipline is good but only when it is applied to behavior which evokes discipline. It is unfair to punish an individual because of one's past.

Both of them agree that the methods of discipline are ineffective. A discipline involves sitting in a classroom for a couple of hours after school with other students; it is a "big joke" since everyone talks, is rambunctious, and has fun. When one accumulates 3-5 disciplines, one is suspended for 3 days. Suspension reinforces Joyce's preference to get away from school for several days; it is no solution for her.

Bonnie reiterated as before that motivation to stay in school needs to be encouraged. For example, she praised one "marvelous" teacher who had helped her son Jeff. He cares about students, <u>listens</u> to them, and always has an open-door policy. They also praised Mr. Morehouse, a former-principal, who for "many, many years," tried to persuade another son, Dick, to graduate. Both Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse were involved in reinforcing him to remain in school. One day during an appointment with Clint, Dick, and Mr. Morehouse, the principal skipped his lunch and let the phone ring uninterrupted several times. This behavior demonstrated to Clint and his son that he cared.

In regard to Joyce, the parents reflected briefly on their own behavior. They don't have the time to spend with their children like they want either because they are involved in their own activities or because their children are involved with their own friends. Also, they seem to regret their increased lack of patience due to advancing age.

Clint prefers to solve problems with others through listening and talking. However, he thinks that a special type of education is needed for children who vandalize property. For example, these students should be withdrawn from school for a year and "put on a stone pile" in order to let them use their muscles since that physical exercise is what

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students want anyway when they vandalize. Bonnie does not believe that "policemen" should monitor the halls.

Discipline is not considered a problem at Frederick Elementary School primarily because their only child at that school, Mary, is a well-behaved, good student.

School Buildings and Faculty Needs

Clint and Bonnie believe that the areas of Frederick and New Holstein have had good schools in spite of their growing size. They are concerned about increased enrollment. For example, at Frederick it is not good that as many as 30 students are in some classes. Actually, Clint would prefer to see a return of the one-room schoolhouse. This setup would encourage students to do more for themselves. For example, it would teach students basics about living by using an outside toilet and by drinking water from a dipper. One cannot learn everything in books and realistically not everyone can attend college.

They both question the need for a school psychologist. Bonnie has heard from others that if emotional problems are dealt with in a child's early years, future potential problems and money can be saved. She agrees with this opinion to a certain extent but needs proof that money can be saved in the long run. She further asserts that it is the teacher's responsibility to identify problems and make referrals, thus precluding the need for a school psychologist.

Taxes and Costs

Both of them firmly agree that they presently have more taxes than they can afford. Clint apologizes for his selfishness but a school psychologist cannot be afforded. In addition, state policy will require

a health class. Clint thinks that a nurse is necessary but a health course is a luxury which cannot be afforded.

They question some fiscal priorities. For example, a couple of ashtrays at $100.00 each were bought for the teachers' lounge. Small ashtrays for tables are sufficient and considerably less money.

Bonnie and Clint emphasized that they want the best possible education for their children. Yet they are concerned with taxes as much as with education. As Clint jokingly asserts, "If I can't drink champagne, I drink beer."

District Reorganization

Clint and Bonnie mentioned that they don't have many opinions about the district reorganization alternatives. Clint is undecided about the New Holstein K-12; he is almost convinced that it is necessary in order to acquire state and federal financial aid.

Both of them favor a separate Lakeland District (break the Lakeland area off from New Holstein) if the taxpayers of New Holstein Union High School District do not have to pay for it.

School-Community Relations

An increase in the community population has adversely affected involvement in school functions. For example, PTA meetings are not as well attended as in the past. School events and concerns do not seem to be the focal point of the community as they once were.

This topic prompted discussion about the people who live in Frederick Meadows. Clint and Bonnie view these individuals as a positive asset in the area. They serve as catalysts in promoting necessary services,

such as street lights, police protection, newspaper delivery, and kindergarten. These people contribute new ideas and challenges, both of which are healthy for the area.

Clint describes these people as being different in that they are not the kind of people who just drop in to visit or with whom to make ice cream. However, Clint associates with them through committees and employments and thinks that they are fine people. As he conveyed, "wealth doesn't turn me off generally, it's the person himself."

Referrals

1. Mike and Jean Smith

   No address or phone could be found. Mike is Town Clerk and active on many committees. Jean is very knowledgeable on school matters, especially Chapter 89.

2. Mr. and Mrs. Dean Bradley

   Address: Route 2, New Holstein

   Location: Junction of Highway Q and MM

   Both are substitute teachers. Active in the community.

3. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schwab

   Address: Route 2, New Holstein

   They have children in school. "They are a different type of people than we are--well off and well educated."

4. Mr. and Mrs. Del Kalinke

   Address: Route 3, New Holstein

   Location: Two doors north of the Adams

   Very opinionated.

Clint and Bonnie's names may be used in contacting these individuals. It is fine to contact Bonnie and Clint again, if necessary as a follow-up.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEWING INFORMATION

THE ART OF INTERVIEWING[1]

This section, like the preceding one, is concerned with standardized interviews, containing either closed or open questions. A few of the points apply also to unstructured and partially structured interviews, but for the most part such interviews require greater skill and a quite different interviewing procedure (see Chapter 7, pages 263-268).

The quality of interviewing depends first upon proper study design. Even the most skilled interviewers will not be able to collect valid and useful data if the schedule of questions is inadequate to the survey's objectives or has been put together clumsily. On the other hand, if they are properly selected and trained, a staff of ordinary men and women using a well-designed standardized questionnaire can elicit the required information.

Within the limits of survey design, however, there is ample room for "the art of interviewing" to come into play. The interviewer's art consists in creating a situation wherein the respondent's answers will be reliable and valid. The ideal usually sought is a permissive situation in which the respondent is encouraged to voice his or her frank opinions without fearing that his or her attitudes will be revealed to others and without the expression of any surprise or value judgment by the interviewer.

The first requisite for successful interviewing, therefore, is to create a friendly atmosphere and to put the respondent at ease. With a pleasant, confident approach and a questionnaire that starts off easily, this is usually not difficult to achieve. From then on, the interviewer's art consists in asking the questions properly and intelligibly, in obtaining a valid and meaningful response, and in recording the response accurately and completely.

CREATING A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE

The interviewer's introduction should be brief, casual, and positive. The study's interest lies in the actual questions, and the interviewer should get into them as quickly as possible. Lengthy introductions or explanations only arouse the respondent's curiosity or suspicion. The best approach is: "Good morning. I'm working on a local public-opinion survey and would like to get a few of your ideas. For instance . . ."--and read the first question. Frequently the respondent will answer that question and go right ahead with the entire interview with only the most cursory inquiries about the objectives of the survey.

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[1]This Appendix is taken, with slight modifications, from a discussion by Paul B. Sheatsley which appeared in Volume II of Research Methods in Social Relations, edited by Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook (The Dryden Press, 1951), pages 463-492.

The interviewer's aim should be to interview everyone eligible for the sample. A small proportion of respondents will be suspicious or hostile, and a larger number may require a little encouragement or persuasion; but the good interviewer will find that hardly 1 person in 20 actually turns him or her down. Many people are flattered to be singled out for an interview. The interviewer should answer any legitimate questions the respondent has and should, if necessary, produce his or her credentials and explain that names are not recorded, that the interview is not a test (there are no "right" or "wrong" answers), and that in a democracy it is important to find out what people think about important issues--and the only way to find out is to ask them.

The interviewer's manner should be friendly, courteous, conversational, and unbiased. The interviewer should be neither too grim nor too effusive; neither too talkative nor too timid. The idea should be to put the respondent at ease, so that he or she will talk freely and fully. A brief remark about the weather, the family pets, flowers, or children will often serve to break the ice. Above all, an informal, conversational interview is dependent upon a thorough mastery by the interviewer of the actual questions in the schedule. The interviewer should be familiar enough with them to ask them conversationally, rather than read them stiffly; and he or she should know what questions are coming next, so there will be no awkward pauses while he or she studies the questionnaire.

The interviewer's job is fundamentally that of a reporter, not an evangelist, a curiosity-seeker, or a debater. He or she should take all opinions in stride and never show surprise or disapproval of a respondent's answer. The interviewer should assume an interested manner toward his or her respondent's opinions and never divulge his or her own. If the interviewer should be asked for his or her views, he or she should laugh off the request with the remark that his or her job at the moment is to get opinions, not to have them.

The interviewer must keep the direction of the interview in his or her own hands, discouraging irrelevant conversation and endeavoring to keep the respondent on the point. Fortunately, he or she will usually find that the rambling, talkative respondents are the very ones who least resent a firm insistence on attention to the actual business of the interview.

ASKING THE QUESTIONS

Unless the interview is unstructured or only partially structured, interviewers must be impressed with the importance of asking each question exactly as it is worded. Each question has been carefully pretested to express the precise meaning desired in as simple a manner as possible. Interviewers must understand that even a slight rewording of the question can so change the stimulus as to provoke answers in a different frame of reference or bias the response.

Any impromptu explanation of questions is similarly taboo. Such an explanation again may change the frame of reference or bias the response, and it is easy to see that if each interviewer were permitted to vary the questions as seemed best to him or her, the survey director would have no assurance at all that responses were in comparable terms. If any respondent gives evidence of failing to understand a particular question, the interviewer can only repeat it slowly and with proper emphasis, offering only such explanation as may be specifically authorized in his or her instructions and, if understanding is still lacking, note this fact on the schedule.

For similar reasons, the questions must be asked in the same order as they appear on the questionnaire. Each question sets up a frame of reference for succeeding questions, and it is assumed that each respondent will be exposed to the same stimulus. Frequently the answer to a later question will be influenced by facts called to mind in an earlier one; to ask the later question first, even though to the interviewer there seems sound reason for doing so, will destroy the comparability of the interviews.

The interviewer, finally, must ask every question, unless the directions on the questionnaire specifically direct him or her to skip certain ones. It may sometimes seem that the respondent has already, in answering a prior question, given his or her opinion on a subsequent one, but the interviewer must nevertheless ask the later question in order to be sure, perhaps prefacing his or her inquiry with some such phrase as "Now you may already have touched on this, but . . . ." Similarly, even if the question seems foolish or inapplicable, the interviewer must never omit asking it or take the answer for granted. Again, he or she may preface the inquiry with some such remark as, "Now I have to ask . . . ."

OBTAINING THE RESPONSE

It might be thought a simple matter to ask a respondent the required questions and to record his or her replies, but interviewers will soon find that obtaining a specific, complete response is perhaps the most difficult part of their job. People often qualify or hedge their opinions; they answer "Don't know" in order to avoid thinking about the question; they misinterpret the meaning of the question; they launch off on an irrelevant discussion; they contradict themselves--and in all these cases, the interviewer usually has to probe.

Alertness to incomplete or nonspecific answers is perhaps the critical test of a good interviewer, and since no one can foresee all the possible replies which may call for probes, each interviewer must understand fully the overall objective of each question, the precise thing it is trying to measure. Both the written instructions and the oral training should emphasize the purpose of the question and should give examples of inadequate replies which were commonly encountered during the pretest. By the time he or she is actually out interviewing, the interviewer should have formed the automatic habit of asking him or herself, after each reply the respondent gives: "Does that completely answer the question I just asked?"

When the first reply is inadequate, a simple repetition of the question, with proper emphasis, will usually suffice to get a response in satisfactory terms. This is particularly effective when the respondent has seemingly misunderstood the question, or has answered it irrelevantly, or has responded to only a portion of it. If the respondent's answer is vague or too general or incomplete, an effective probe is: "That's interesting. Could you explain that a little more?" or "Let's see, you said. . . . Just how do you mean that?"

Throughout, the interviewer must be extremely careful not to suggest a possible reply. People sometimes find the questions difficult, and sometimes they are not deeply interested in them. In either case, they will welcome any least hint from the interviewer which will enable them to give a creditable response. Interviewers must be thoroughly impressed with the harm which results from a "leading probe," from any remark which "puts words in their mouth." To be safe, the interviewer should always content him or herself with mere repetition of all or part of the actual question, or with such innocuous nondirective probes as are suggested in the preceding paragraph.

The "Don't know" reply is another problem for the interviewer. Sometimes that response represents a genuine lack of opinion; but at other times it may hide a host of other attitudes: fear to speak one's mind, reluctance to focus on the issue, vague opinions never yet expressed, a stalling for time while thoughts are marshaled, a lack of comprehension of the question, etc. It is the interviewer's job to distinguish among all these types of "Don't know" responses and, when appropriate, to repeat the question with suitable assurances. In one case, for example, he might say, "Perhaps I didn't make that too clear. Let me read it again"; in another, he or she might say, "Well, lots of people have never thought about that before, but I'd like to have your ideas on it, just the way it seems to you." Or, again, he or she might point out, "Well, I just want your own opinion on it. Actually, nobody really knows the answers to many of these questions."

Qualified answers to questions that have been precoded in terms of "Yes-No," "Approve-Disapprove" or similar dichotomies are an interviewing problem which is actually in the domain of the study director. As far as possible, the most frequent qualifications of opinion should be anticipated in the actual wording of the question. If very many people find it impossible to answer because of unspecified contingencies, the question is a poor one. Most qualifications can be foreseen as a result of the pretest, and those that are not taken care of by revisions of the wording should be mentioned in the instructions to interviewers, with directions on how to handle such answers. In some cases, special codes may be provided for the most frequent qualifications; in other cases the interviewer may be instructed to record them as "Don't know" or "Undecided." In avoiding many qualifications inherent in the response to almost any opinion question, the interviewer may find it helpful to use phrases such as, "Well, in general, what would you say?" or "Taking everything into consideration," or "On the basis of the way things look to you now."

REPORTING THE RESPONSE

There are two chief means of recording opinions during the interview. If the question is precoded, the interviewer need only check a box or circle a code, or otherwise indicate which code comes closest to the respondent's opinion. If the question has not been precoded, the interviewer is expected to record the response verbatim.

On precoded questionnaires, errors and omissions in recording are a frequent source of interviewer error. In the midst of trying to pin the respondent down to a specific answer, keep his or her attention from flagging, remember which question comes next, and the many other problems that engage the interviewer's attention in the field, it is not surprising that he or she will sometimes neglect to indicate the respondent's reply to one of the items, overlook some particular question, check the wrong code on another, or ask some other question when it should be skipped.

The better the interviewer, the fewer the mistakes he or she will make, but even the best interviewers will occasionally be guilty. The unforgivable sin is to turn in the interview as complete when it contains such errors and omissions. The only certain way for the interviewer to avoid this is to make an automatic habit of inspecting each interview, immediately after its completion, before he or she goes on to another respondent, to make sure that it has been filled in accurately and completely. If the interviewer is lacking any information, he or she can go back and ask the respondent for it; if his or her questionnaire contains any errors or omissions, he or she can correct them on the spot; if his or her handwriting is illegible in places, or if he or she has recorded verbatim replies only sketchily, he or she can correct the weakness right there. If he or she waits until later in the day, or until he or she returns home at night, he or she will have forgotten many of the circumstances of the interview, or perhaps the prospect of editing the whole day's work will seem so forbidding that he or she will skip the matter completely.

The importance of clerical errors and omissions can be impressed upon the interviewer during training by pointing out that the questionnaire is designed as an integral whole, and that the omission or inaccurate reporting of a single answer can make the entire interview worthless. Thus, if for each question the responses of persons with different amounts of education are to be shown separately, and the interviewer neglects to record the amount of schooling the respondent has had, that whole interview must be discarded in that part of the analysis.

In reporting responses to free-answer questions, interviewers should be aware of the importance of complete, verbatim reporting. It will often be difficult to get down everything the respondent says in reply, but aside from obvious irrelevancies and repetitions, this should be the goal. Interviewers should be given some idea of the coding process, so that they can see the dangers of summarizing, abbreviating, or paraphrasing responses. Unless the coder can view the whole answer, just as the respondent said it, he or she is likely to classify it improperly or lose some important distinctions that should be made.

Interviewers should be instructed to quote the respondent directly,
just as if they were news reporters taking down the statement of an
important official. Paraphrasing the reply, summarizing it in the
interviewer's own words, or "polishing up" any slang, cursing, or bad
grammar not only risks distorting the respondent's meaning and emphasis,
but also loses the color of his or her reply. Frequently the verbatim
responses of individuals are useful in the final report as illustra-
tions of the nuances of attitudes, and they should not be abbreviated
or distorted.

Although it is frequently difficult to record responses verbatim
without using shorthand,[2] a few simple techniques can greatly increase
the interviewer's speed and the extent to which he or she succeeds in
the verbatim recording of responses. It is perfectly permissible to
ask the respondent to wait until the interviewer gets down "that last
thought (that's pretty interesting)," but in order not to slow up the
interview, the following devices will be found helpful for speedy re-
cording. First, an interviewer should be prepared to write as soon as
he or she has asked a question and to write while the respondent talks,
not waiting until the entire response is completed. (Experienced
interviewers often finish their recording of the prior response while
they ask the next question and the respondent is considering his or
her reply.) Second, the interviewer should use common abbreviations.
Third, he or she should not bother to erase, but should cross out in-
stead. Fourth, he or she may depart from the ideal verbatim recording
to the extent of using a telegraphic style; omission of "a," "the,"
and such parenthetical expressions as "well," "you know," "let's
see," will ordinarily not lead to loss or distortion of meaning. But
the interviewer should not speed up his or her recording by merely
jotting down key words here and there. The connecting words and
phrases are easily forgotten, and the recorded answer, even if it
means something to the interviewer, may prove incomprehensible to the
coders.

It is generally helpful if, on the precoded questions, the inter-
viewer reports verbatim anything the respondent says to explain or
qualify his or her coded response; but he or she should not solicit
such comments. The volunteered remarks of respondents often help the
study director later in evaluating the meaning of the results and
warn him or her of any commonly held qualifications or differences
in intensity of opinion.

SAMPLING

Sampling is an essential part of the interviewer's job. No
matter how precise and detailed the original sampling design, its
execution will depend upon the training and competence of the inter-

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[2]Shorthand recording, although it has the advantage of more
easily achieving a verbatim report, has the disadvantage of requiring
later transcription, which may be very time-consuming and thus ex-
pensive.

viewers who carry it out. Although the interviewer's responsibility is much greater under quota-sampling conditions, in which he or she selects the respondents to be interviewed, even under probability sampling, where he or she has no freedom of choice, he or she must be careful to avoid error and bias.

If the sample is predesignated by name, for example, the interviewer should be given advice on how best to make contact with the assigned individuals and how to overcome any hostility he or she may encounter. If a system of substitution is provided for cases in which the originally designated respondent cannot be interviewed, the circumstances in which substitutions are allowed should be described carefully so that the sample will not be biased by too free an exercise of this provision.

If the sample is of an area type--that is, if it involves selection of dwelling units within a given area according to some prearranged plan--interviewers must be thoroughly trained in its execution. It has been found, for example, that biasing errors may easily creep into the listing of dwelling units, and into the supposedly random selection of households and of individual respondents within those households.

Biases are particularly likely under quota sampling, in which the interviewer selects the subjects. It is especially likely to occur when quotas are assigned in terms of economic levels, the definition of which is largely subjective. Unless some restraint is exercised upon the interviewers, they will generally tend to pass up persons who look unpleasant, uninterested, or inarticulate, and to seek out individuals they think will give them "good" answers. There is also the danger that unless area controls are introduced, too many interviews will be concentrated in one neighborhood, with consequent overrepresentation of particular religious, occupational, or national groups.

It is generally helpful, when a quota-type sample is used, to give interviewers informal quotas in terms of education and to keep a check on this factor as the interviews are returned. Such an additional informal control will ensure some effort on the part of interviewers using quota samples to avoid the usual tendency of including too few respondents in the lowest educational and socioeconomic groups, and will permit the study director to caution any members of the staff who seem to be guilty of sampling bias of this type.

BIASING FACTORS INTRODUCED BY THE INTERVIEWER

Interviewer "bias"--that is, systematic differences from interviewer to interviewer or, occasionally, systematic errors on the part of many or even all interviewers--may enter not only in the selection of the sample, but also in the asking of questions and the eliciting and recording of responses. Interviewer bias is not simply a matter of prejudiced or untrained interviewers exerting influence on their respondents and deliberately or carelessly distorting the answers they receive. The dangers of bias cannot be overcome simply by hiring "impartial" interviewers. The fact that an interviewer has strong opinions on the

subject under survey does not necessarily mean that his or her work will be biased, nor does the fact that he or she has no strong stand of his or her own necessarily make his or her work free from bias.

Much of what we call interviewer bias can more correctly be described as interviewer differences which are inherent in the fact that interviewers are human beings and not machines and that they do not all work identically or infallibly. The fact that respondents, too, are human beings, with differing perceptions, judgments, and personalities, simply compounds the differences that would occur even if the interviewers were engaged in evaluating physical instead of human materials. It is not expected, therefore, that interviewers will unfailingly bring back complete, comparable, and valid reports. Although a large number of the more obvious types of error and bias can be overcome by appropriate methods of interviewer selection and training, some are bound to remain. Fortunately, however, it is easier for the study director to become aware of the biases of interviewers, and thus to discount their effects in his or her interpretation of the data, than it is for the clinician, the experimenter, or the participant observer to detect his or her own bias when he or she collects the data.

Assuming an unbiased selection of respondents, bias in the interview situation appears to come about through (1) the respondent's perception of the interviewer, and (2) the interviewer's perception of the respondent. We use the term perception here in the broad sense, which emphasizes the manner in which the relation between interviewer and respondent is influenced and modified by their wishes, expectation, and personality structure.

There is an abundance of experimental evidence to prove that bias may result, under certain conditions, regardless of anything the interviewer may do to eliminate it. In one study, 50% of a sample of non-Jewish respondents told non-Jewish interviewers that they thought Jews had too much influence in the business world, whereas only 22% of an equivalent sample voiced that opinion to Jewish interviewers. Similar experiments have shown that blacks will frequently answer differently when interviewed by white people, and that working-class respondents are less likely to talk freely to middle-class interviewers. Such effects can occur no matter how conscientiously the interviewer attempts to be "unbiased."

The magnitude of these effects naturally varies with the way in which the respondent perceives the situation. Thus, in one study, it was demonstrated that blacks spoke more frankly with white interviewers in New York than they did in Memphis, Tennessee. The interviewing situation was "objectively" the same in both cities, but respondents perceived it differently. By altering the respondent's perception of the situation (for example, by assuring him or her that his or her name will not be recorded), these biasing effects can often be reduced, but they can seldom be eliminated.

The study director should keep these matters in mind when he or she selects his or her interviewers, and the staff should be warned of the dangers. It is for reasons of this type that interviewers are usually instructed, for example, to dress inconspicuously so that their clothes and appearance will not influence lower socioeconomic respondents, to interview the respondent privately so that his or her opinions will not be

affected by the presence of some third person; and to adopt an informal, conversational manner in an effort to achieve the best possible rapport.

Not all interviewer effects operate through the respondent's perception of the interviewer, however. Indeed, some respondents appear to be totally immune to even the most flagrant biasing characteristics of the interviewer. Fully as important a source of bias are the interviewer's perceptions of his or her respondent. No matter how standardized the questionnaire may be and no matter how rigidly the interviewer may be instructed, he or she still has much opportunity to exercise freedom of choice during the actual interview, and it is often his or her perception of the respondent that determines the manner in which he or she asks the question, the way in which he or she probes, his or her classification of equivocal responses to precoded questions, and his or her recording of verbatim answers.

Interviewers do not approach each new respondent in an unstructured fashion. Indeed, they often have strong expectations and stereotypes, which are more and more likely to come into play as they continue interviewing. On the basis of their past judgments, or of prior answers received from other respondents, they may, for example, quite unconsciously come to associate lack of education with ethnic or religious prejudice, or they may come to anticipate a large number of "No opinion" responses from the blacks they interview. Such expectations will almost inevitably affect their performance.

Thus, given the same "No opinion" response from a wealthy businessman and from a black housewife, they may probe the former's reply, in the belief that an opinion must be lurking there somewhere, whereas they will routinely accept the latter's reply without probing and go on to the next question. An experimental study has shown that when the same equivocal answer regarding aid to Europe was embedded first in an "isolationist" context of previous responses and then in an "internationalist" context, only 20% of the interviewers classified it in internationalist terms in the first context, but 75% of the same interviewers classified it as internationalist in the second context. Experiments on verbatim recording have also shown that interviewers tend to select from long answers those parts that most nearly conform to their own expectations or opinions and to discard the rest.

A final source of bias arises from the interviewer's perception of the situation. If he or she sees the results of the survey as a possible threat to his or her interests or beliefs, for example, he or she is likely to introduce bias. Or if he or she regards the assignment as impossible, he or she is almost bound to introduce bias. Such difficulties can best be overcome by proper motivation and supervision.

Since interviewers are human beings, such biasing factors can never be overcome completely, but their effects can be reduced by standardizing the interview, so that the interviewer has as little free choice as possible. Thus, the use of a standard wording in survey questions aims to prevent the bias that would result if each interviewer worded the question in his or her own fashion. Similarly, if interviewers are given standard instructions on probing procedure, on the classification of doubtful answers, and so on, their biases will have less chance to operate.

It should be noted, however, that as the interviewer's freedom is restricted, the opportunities for effective use of his or her insight are correspondingly restricted. Conversely, the more responsibilities the interviewer is given for probing and evaluating his or her respondent's opinion, the more bias is likely to result. A compromise must generally be made. In a study whose results are to be analyzed statistically and quantitatively, and in which large numbers of inexperienced or hastily trained interviewers are relied upon, it is wise to reduce the interviewer's freedom of choice to a minimum by standardizing, so far as possible, every aspect of the interview situation.

Since bias, in the sense that different interviewers will not always bring back the same answers from equivalent respondents, can never be entirely eliminated, the study director's main responsibilities are to select, train, and supervise his or her staff so that any net effect of bias will be at a minimum, and to be aware of the possibilities of bias as various points so that he or she can discount their effects in his or her analysis.

Many critics tend to exaggerate the significance of "interview bias"--overlooking the fact that social scientists are universally dependent upon data that have been collected by means of oral or written reports, and that these reports, no matter how collected, are invariably subject to essentially the same sources of error and bias as are those collected by survey interviewers. The clinician and, frequently, the experimenter depend upon oral reports of feelings, perceptions, behavior, etc.; and they, as well as the sophisticated "participant observer" in another type of investigation, are just as likely to bias their subjects' responses as are the interviewers participating in an attitude survey. The major difference is that when the social scientist has to depend upon the reports of interviewers whom he or she selects and trains, he or she becomes more aware of the dangers and difficulties involved.

MORE DO'S AND DON'TS FOR DEPTH INTERVIEWS

DO'S:

1. Be brief and simple in identifying oneself and one's purpose.
2. Be truthful.
3. Be willing to go into detail—if asked.
4. Be careful to cover future work needs in the interview.
5. Be concerned in getting people interested in your project.
6. Note key observers in the community and organization for assistance in the study.
7. Get notations down as soon as possible after the interview.
8. "On-off" technique should be used in the interviewing process.
9. Note order of apparently disconnected information.
10. Notes should be as full and complete as possible at the beginning.
11. Keep interpretations out of description and observation.
12. Make an analysis every night.
13. Diagram data from the first day.
14. Obtain independent, outside criticism.
15. Utilize team research whenever possible to provide a mutual assist and to counteract bias.
16. Note that often those who appear hostile to the interview situation are a prime source of information which is not otherwise available.
17. Keep up contacts for future reference and use.

DON'TS:

1. Become involved and immersed into the system which you are studying.
2. Become identified with any of the groups with whom you are interviewing.
3. Interrupt action in the system.
4. Pass judgment on events or people in the system.
5. Try to influence or intervene in the system.

SAMPLE CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Note: The checklist items will have to be chosen in relation to issues that are prominent in your particular situation but the following list might be of help for stimulating ideas:

1. Discipline
2. Basic skills
3. The reporting system
4. Buildings and facilities
5. Home-school-community relations
6. Homework
7. IGE, team teaching, or any new instructional organizations or approaches

8. Costs and taxes
9. Bond issues
10. Lunch program
11. Athletic program
12. PTA/O
13. Attendance area boundary line changes
14. Special Education program
15. Summer School program

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Interviewer _____ Respondent _____

	Poor		Good		Excellent

1. Conversational, relaxed

    1   2   3   4   5

2. Explained the purpose of
   the interview clearly

    1   2   3   4   5

3. Gathered adequate
   biographical data

    1   2   3   4   5

4. Focused on interview
   objectives

    1   2   3   4   5.

5. Obtained referrals

    1   2   3   4   5

6. Got specifics such as
   names, dates, and places

    1   2   3   4   5

7. Got operational definitions
   and examples to make issues
   more specific

    1   2   3   4   5

8. Used comparisons to
   sharpen issues

    1   2   3   4   5

9. Overall depth of interview

    1   2   3   4   5

10. Used probes effectively

    1   2   3   4   5

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX F

IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY INFLUENTIALS

Identification of Community Influentials
(Individuals)

Name of Individual	Bases of Influence			Means of Identification			Issue Involvement	Group Affiliations
	Formal-Position	Economic	Social	Positional	Reputation	Decision		
(Sample) Smith, H.	Councilman		Teachers Union	X			Teacher Welfare	Teachers Union Dem. Party
(Sample) Jones, A.		S & L Chairman	Expertise Speaker		X	✗	Sch. Budget Soc. St. Curr. Bussing	Repub. Party Chamber of Comm. Recreation Assn. School Board

Identification of Community Influentials
(Groups)

Name of Group	Bases of Influence			Means of Identification			Issue Involvement	Influential Individuals Affiliated
	Formal-Position	Economic	Social	Positional	Reputation	Decision		
(Sample) School Bd.	X			X		X	Budget Organ.	Jones, A. Johnson, etc.
(Sample) Recreation Association			X		X	X	Athletic Prog., Sch. Bd. Elections	Jones, A. etc.

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APPENDIX G

A SAMPLE REPORT

Objectives of the Study

This report on the Green Valley Public Schools focused on three
prinicpal questions: (1) reasons for the failure of the Marshall
referendum, (2) facility needs including information on alternatives
and priorities which would be supported or not supported in a referen-
dum, and (3) school-community relations. Some interviewing was done
on the overall strengths and problems of the Green Valley Public Schools
but normally in the context of the principal objectives enumerated
above. The Board also asked that several other items be assured
exploration in the course of the interviews as secondary objectives
including sources of information about the schools, the effectiveness
of the Newsletter, the concept of the "neighborhood school," and
transportation (as a school-community relations problem), among
others.

Selection of Respondents

Respondents were selected from an overall list of over 500 names
(sometimes as Mr. and Mrs.) available to the research team. The 500
names were derived in the following manner: (1) lists of school,
town, village, and county officials, (2) persons who were nominated
as knowledgeable and informed of school affairs, and (3) a random
selection of parents of children currently enrolled at the public
schools. Approximately 110 names were selected, and a form letter
(Appendix A) indicating the general nature of the study and its author-
ization was sent to each potential respondent. In the course of the
interviews respondents were asked if they would recommend any other
"knowledgeable or informed" people to whom the interviewer might talk.
Twenty additional respondents were contacted in this manner. A total
of 154 contacts were made and 132 interviews were obtained. The 22
contacts who were not interviewed either (1) indicated that they had

no knowledge of the schools, (2) did not keep two or more appointments, or (3) refused to be interviewed.

All interviews were obtained at a time and place convenient for the respondent. The average length of interview was about two hours. All interviewers had several days of careful preparation and training. Interviewers reported an open, cooperative attitude on the part of the respondents. Respondents generally viewed the interview experience and goals of the study favorably.

Findings

The following findings will be organized into three principal sections corresponding to the objectives of the study. Because these findings largely represent opinion and perception of the respondents, they _may_ differ from the factual circumstances in some instances. No attempt will be made to enumerate or count the frequency of responses. Rather, an attempt will be made to interpret whether or not (1) an issue exists, (2) the degree of consensus about a particular issue, (3) substantial differences exist in the community(s), and (4) those differences occur because of the existence of social differentiation or political factionalism.

The Failure of the Marshall Referendum

The failure of the Marshall Referendum can be explained in several ways. The primary reason for the failure of the Marshall Referendum can be attributed to the general feeling among supporters that the Board failed to integrate the Marshall addition into a long-range plan, explain the implications of the building at Marshall for the schools at Greenleaf, Muir Woods, and Dunnell, and organize effectively to get the "yes" vote out. Second, the long-term residents in the Muir Woods, Greenleaf, and Marshall areas voted against the referendum for reasons of "costs" and "taxes" in the "middle of a recession." Third, potential supporters of the Referendum in the Greenleaf area

either voted "no" or stayed at home because the immediate school facility needs at Greenleaf were not being met by the Marshall addition.

The dominant and prevailing opinion in the Marshall area was in opposition to building at Marshall for a number of reasons. First, the addition to Marshall was inconsistent with the controlled growth policy of the town board and planning commission. Second, there was no desire to have children bussed into Marshall when "all the information indicates growth in other areas of the school district." In short, Marshall was not seen as the center of population growth nor did the prevailing opinion in the Marshall area want it to be so. Third, a mistrust of the administration and board of education predominated in the Marshall area. Finally, a general anti-tax and anti-expenditure feeling in a time of recession also contributed significantly to the defeat of the referendum.

Building Program Priorities and Alternatives

The most important finding is that <u>the community as a whole is uninformed and unaware of the school facility needs of the Green Valley Public Schools</u> and does not possess a clear understanding of the alternatives and priorities available. Exceptions would be those who actively participated in the Marshall Referendum or the few who have been actively and intimately involved in the public schools in recent years. This finding can be generalized to adults who do not have children in school as well as those who do.

Nevertheless, those who have children in elementary school did have some opinion of the circumstances related to "their elementary school" and some perceptions about the middle school and high school. Similarly, parents with children in the middle school or high school had some knowledge and opinion about their needs but little knowledge or opinion about needs elsewhere in the District.

Dunnell Area. Respondents in the Dunnell area recognized that the growth in the District will be primarily in the Muir Woods and Greenleaf areas relative to school facility needs. It is also under-

stood that building at Muir Woods and Greenleaf would alleviate some
present and future "over-crowding" at Dunnell. Yet, parents in the
Dunnell area want the 5th grade out of the middle school and re-located
in their respective "neighborhood" elementary schools. Dunnell parents
would like to see Dunnell expanded only to satisfy the need for special
purpose rooms (e.g. library) and/or general classroom needs which would
not be satisfied by the new facilities at Muir Woods and Greenleaf.
Dunnell area parents expect that Pine Tree would no longer be rented
as part of any building program. There is considerable pride in the
Dunnell area which translates into support for the neighborhood
schools. On the other hand, there is confusion about the school
facility needs of the District and how any alternative plan would
affect Dunnell. There appears to be no support for building at the
middle school since it is assumed that the 5th and/or 6th grades should
be and would be removed from the middle school. There is some support
for additional general classroom and vocational educational space at
the high school. The concept of a pool at the high school is not
seriously considered at this time. There is some opposition to major
expansion at the Rose School site due to its "undesirable" location.

Greenleaf Area. Parent respondents in the Greenleaf area were
consistent in voicing a need for a new elementary school on the middle
school site. Such a school, it is felt, would meet the current and
anticipated growth in the Greenleaf area. Greenleaf parents generally
shared the observation that the 5th grade should be removed from the
middle school. Adults without children in school were generally opposed
to a substantial building program; yet, there was some support for the
school at the middle school site. The only building at either the
middle or high school site which had some support in the Greenleaf
area was the addition of vocational education space at the high school.
A final observation: the further away from the Village of Greenleaf
the less understanding and support for a new elementary school in
Greenleaf, and indeed, opposition increased.

Rose Area. In general there is some support for a new elementary school at or near the Muir Woods high school site. There is general satisfaction with the size of the Rose School if some unspecified remodeling and/or specialized space could be provided. In short, Rose School area residents generally wanted to have the 5th grade out of the middle school. The Rose area supported the general class-room vocational educational additions proposed for the high school. Again, it must be re-emphasized that Rose area respondents had little appreciation or knowledge of the impact of building plans for Rose School and a new school at Muir Woods on the rest of the District. Like most of the other areas, people in the Rose area responded to their perceptions of local needs.

Marshall Area. The dominant and prevailing opinion among respon-dents in the Marshall area is to add "zero capacity" to their school. While it was not frequently articulated, it was suggested that building an elementary school at the Muir Woods high school site would alleviate all the problems in the Marshall area including re-locating the services and offices housed in the leased bank building. It was not clear what the respondents in the Marshall area would support at the high school. Opposition was expressed to building at the middle school. A small, emergent group in the Marshall area would be in support of "almost any reasonable building program," but certainly this is not the current, prevailing sentiment in the area.

Muir Woods. Muir Woods provided the clearest, relatively equal split in sentiment concerning alternative building program plans. The older, long-term residents generally responded that "we can make do with what we have." Newer residents, mostly with children in school, see a clear need for a new elementary school in Muir Woods. This group would generally support any reasonable building program which promised relief of what they view as inadequate current and future school facilities. The former group generally rests their case on the question of "cost" and "taxes." Respondents in the Muir Woods area are particularly uninformed of the needs in the Greenleaf area or

the Dunnell area. The divided support in the Muir Woods area could
possibly be changed if an integrated, long-range plan for school con-
struction would be developed. There appears to be virtually no support
for building at the middle school but some support for vocational educa-
tion, general classroom, and a swimming pool. (Those who supported. the
latter indicated that it would be "nice" but "wouldn't go.")

Summary. The most important finding. is that the community as a
whole is not informed of the school facility needs of the Green Valley
Public Schools particularly as those needs affect areas other than
their local elementary attendance center. Parents would generally
support a building program which would benefit their "neighborhood
school" particularly if it could alleviate over-crowding and provide
a better educational program. Most parents also supported some building
at the High School. Adults without children in school and older, long-
term residents were at best supportive of local benefits (except Marshall),
sometimes indifferent, but mostly opposed to a building program on the
grounds of "costs" and "taxes," particularly without the benefit of a
long-range plan. Among those who were informed and who could articulate
the alternatives, the following table of support and opposition is pro-
vided.

Additional Findings Related to School Facility Needs

Another issue related to school facilities is the "open space"
concept at the middle school. The open space concept is a lightning
rod of opposition across the Green Valley School District even among
t'se who would generally support both a school building program and
other innovative ideas and practices. Overall there is opposition to
the concept from the mainstream of the community who express educa-
tionally conservative sentiments even while frequently advocating
liberal educational expenditure policies. That is not to say that the
middle school open space is not without support; there is strong
enthusiastic support, but that support appears to be rather narrowly
based in the community. Other opponents generally focus attention
on the need for more "structure" and the allegation that 5th and 6th
grade children should not be in an open space environment. The Board

and administration of the District should take these sentiments and
values into consideration when entering into a building program in the
future.

The "neighborhood school" concept had considerable suppor- through-
out the District. This was the case even when the interviewer would
frequently force the respondent to choose between the efficiency of
two educational centers (with high schools, middle schools, and elemen-
tary schools at the same site) and the less efficient five elementary
site plan (with two common high school and middle school sites). The
criticism directed toward "too much bussing" and "too many hours on the
bus" also argued for support of the five elementary, neighborhood school
site plan. Indeed, parents frequently expressed the sentiment that "We
would rather pay for better schools and more education than bus rides."
Size was also a part of the support for small, neighborhood schools.
Many criticized the idea that there was real efficiency and economy
in the increasing size of elementary schools. Then, too, many new
arrivals expressed the sentiment that "We left _____ to get away
from bigness in everything including schools. We don't want big
schools now." Finally, there is clear evidence of sharp distinctions
in community identity among both new and old residents everywhere
except in the Rose area, and in the Rose area there is a pride in their
local school which substitutes for a sense of community identity.
Fortunately, the five elementary school sites under consideration are
geographically located in their respective "communities."

The issue of "over-crowding" in the schools was also explored.
The majority of respondents have little first-hand or factual knowledge
on the "over-crowding" issue. Those who have are convinced of "over-
crowding" only in the school where their child attends. There is
little district-wide perspective of the problem. Many respondents
were aware but unconvinced of over-crowding at the high school due
to the staggered shift and forthcoming double shift. Others think that
it is a ruse to panic people into support of the referendum or an
efficient use of the school plant. Finally, the plethora of available

rental space and small schoolhouses has caused some respondents to question the need for a building program at all.

In summary, "open space," lengthy transportation routes, and "neighborhood" schools are critical concepts when associated with the school building program.

Recommended School Facility Plan

The following recommended school facility plan is based upon the school facility needs and plan set forth in the "Johnston Report" and the findings of support and opposition among the residents of the Green Valley School District.

1. Elementary Schools

   a. Build new, complete elementary schools at Muir Woods and Greenleaf.

   b. Provide for limited additions at Dunnell.

   c. Maintain Rose at its present capacity.

   d. Maintain Marshall at its present capacity.

   e. Remove the 5th grade from the Middle School.

   f. Terminate the lease on Pine Tree School.

2. Middle School: Remove 5th grade from the Middle School and maintain at its present capacity.

3. High School: Provide for additional capacity for both general classrooms and vocational education.

4. Other

   a. Retain an alternative high school at either the Spider Trail or Naubenway site.

   b. Move out of all rented space including the special services center at Blooming Hills.

   c. Close and sell the Jennings, Eagle Bend, Dundas, Grelton, and Naubenway or Spider Trail properties.

   d. Utilize the existing Muir Woods and Greenleaf facilities for storage and offices.

A Table of Support and Opposition

Building Alternatives and Priorities	Support by Areas of District				
	Dunnell	Muir Woods	Rose	Marshall	Greenleaf
Addition to Marshall Elem.	No	Yes/No	No	No	No
New School at Greenleaf	Yes[1]	Yes/No	Not an Issue	Not an Issue	Yes
Limited Addition to Dunnell	Yes	Yes/No	Not an Issue	Not an Issue	No
New School at Muir Woods	Yes[1]	Yes/No	Yes	Yes/No	No
Remodeling at Rose	No	Yes/No	Yes	Not an Issue	Not an Issue
High School Vocational Space	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not an Issue	Yes
High School Classrooms	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not an Issue	No
High School Pool	No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Not an Issue	No
Middle School Addition	No	No	No	No	No
Close Pine Tree	Yes	Yes	Not an Issue	Not an Issue	Yes
5th Grade Out of Middle School	Yes	Yes/No	Yes	Not an Issue	Yes
Retain Alternative High School	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No

[1] Only after needs met at Dunnell School.

In considering the activities which will help solve existing problems, it is essential that the school staff consider the following guidelines:

1. The entire school needs to be involved in creating good home-school-community relations. Teachers, aides, students, and parents, as well as the principal, must be involved in the home-school-community relations program;

2. The entire community must also be involved in creating good home-school-community relations. The school community includes more than the parents of students at the school. Senior citizens, business people, parochial school parents, and parents of preschoolers are important members of the school community;

3. Good home-school-community relations include more than mere communication with the school community. Good two-way communication between the community and the school is essential, but it is not sufficient. The creation of a supportive relationship requires community participation in decision-making, community involvement of time and resources in the school program, and resolution of school-community problems which exist.

A series of simformations designed to provide practical, hands-on materials to improve home-school-community relations are being developed by the R & D Center's Home-School-Community Relations Project. There are six simformations in the current series:

Simformation 1: Introducing Parents to the Wisconsin Reading Design

Simformation 2: Organizing Volunteer Programs in IGE Schools

Simformation 3: Home-School Visits

Simformation 4: Depth Interview Handbook

Simformation 5: Reporting Student Progress

Simformation 6: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Parent-Teacher Conferences

These may be obtained from the CCL Document Service, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

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