Power and Authority in a Rural School District:

A Study of the Pine Plains Central School System

by

Carol Ascher

This study, conducted in Pine Plains, NY, during the 1972-73 school year, was submitted in 1974 in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree in anthropology at Columbia University.

My name at the time was Carol Bergman Lopate. Serving on my dissertation committee were Professor Charles Harrington, Chairman, and Professor Conrad Arensberg and Professor Robert Murphy. As is often the rule in academic research, the name of the school district was changed — in this case, to Green Valley, which is how the inside pages read. However, enough time has passed that I can inform interested local readers of the district where my study took place.

ABSTRACT

POWER AND AUTHORITY IN A RURAL SCHOOL: A HISTORY
OF THE GREEN VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Carol Bergman Lopate

As late as 1930, the 250 square mile area now served by the Green Valley Central School System still contained some thirty rural schools, covering grades one through eight, and a union free school, covering grades one through twelve. The area was still primarily agricultural, although farming as a major industry had begun to decline many years earlier. In 1931, a central school system was created which served around five hundred students (some of the rural schools remaining open). In the next thirty years, all of the rural schools closed down, making the new central school building on the site of the old union free school the only school in the area. By 1970, the school population had expanded to nearly eighteen hundred students. A new elementary school and junior-senior high school were opened, and the central school was turned into a second elementary school building. Concommitant with the gradual closing down of the rural schools, agriculture had further declined in the area, and jobs in an emerging service sector as well as three large IBM plants within forty miles from Green Valley were supplanting

farming for most workers.

Through interviews with former students and teachers in rural schools, historical records, diaries and newspapers, a picture is created of daily life in the rural school. This is then compared with daily life in the central junior-senior high school as witnessed during a year of intensive participant-observation in the school. Just as the rather autonomous and familial style of the rural school is shown to have fitted the needs of an agricultural economy, the new centralized system with its growing bureaucratic structures is seen as suited to the new economy of which it is a part.

The ideological components of the growing bureaucratization of education are also analyzed. School centralization in Green Valley took place in the context of the depression years with ideas of consolidation and bigness connected to those of efficiency, progress, and scientific planning. Moreover, many ideas stemming from progressive education were intermingled with notions of what students needed and promises of what centralization would bring. In general, the new central school was to deal with the "whole child" in a manner which rural schools were unable to do. Centralization promised, and delivered, guidance counselors, vocational education, lunch programs, athletics, and bussing within the first decade. As growth and specialization have continued, ideologies have emerged to promote and support such change. The bureaucratization of the school has brought with it incipient notions of a bureaucratic leadership style, which, however, still gives way to a nostalgia for the older, more personal leadership.

Finally, the increasing interconnections between the school and bureaucratic institutions outside the school district, such as learning corporations, the state and federal educational bureaucracies, unions and professional associations, are shown. An attempt is made to analyze the effect of this growing interdependency on relations of power and authority within the school.

Power and Authority in a Rural School

a history of the Green Valley Central School System

Carol Lopate

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To Hardstone Farm

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While I am solely responsible for the information and interpretations presented in this dissertation, several institutions and many people were involved in the project. Financial support for the fieldwork came as part of the Social Organization of Schools Project funded by the Ford Foundation and the National Institute of Education. The fact that these agencies supported the research does not constitute their endorsement of the findings of the study. My thanks to Francis Ianni of Teachers College, who directed the Social Organization of Schools Project, and whose consideration and flexibility made my dissertation possible.

Because of the hospitality, generosity and kindness that I received from the people in Green Valley, I am sorry that I cannot thank them by name. There were dozens of women and men, girls and boys, who spent hours and even days of their time with me, pulling out old memories, files, books and dairies, or letting me watch them as they went about their daily life. But I have chosen rather to respect their privacy, as I believe most of them would have wanted me to. I have therefore changed their names as well as the names of localities which might identify them.

Over a longer period, this dissertation is also possible because of the help of a number of individuals at Teachers College and in the Graduate Faculties of Columbia University. Charles Harrington has been my constant

advisor since I entered Teachers College in the fall of 1969. Lambros Comitas and Conrad Arensberg became involved in my progress later in my graduate school career, and have been helpful whenever I called on them. Robert Murphy has extended himself beyond the call of duty in both intellectual and emotional ways: his line by line comments on my dissertation, coupled with his continual interest were very important to me.

My friend and colleague, Muriel Schein, spent long weekend evenings on the farm talking out a number of ideas that appear in my dissertation.

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Chapter I

INFLUENCES AND PREDISPOSITIONS

Driving from New York City to Albany along the Parkway, one glimpses the rich rural countryside which once helped two-thirds of the nation's grain come from New York State. Although legislation has protected the landscape on both sides of the highway from poster signs, industry and even residential development, it is a rare traveler that strays off the road on his way north or south to see what the beautiful countryside is like beyond the state-protected areas. In fact, it would probably surprise most to discover that once one is seventy or eighty miles north of New York City the countryside is largely uninhabited, taken up by empty or abandoned farms or by tiny rural hamlets. The separation between the Parkway and the area surrounding it does not work only one way, however. To the people who have lived in the area for many years, the Parkway is like a rut cutting through their traditional landscape. They rarely use it, preferring the old numbered highways which parallel it, and they are unlikely to refer to it as a marker when giving directions.

From June 1972 until October 1973, I lived on a rundown, unused dairy farm within walking distance of the Parkway. The 250 acre farm had once been owned by a gentleman farmer who hired a man to milk the sixty cattle, grow the grain needed for feed, and care for the livestock and equipment. The farm owner had never made a living from his dairy business; his

money came from ownership of one of America's larger watch companies. However, the man who worked the farm had been provided with a cottage on the premises, the barns and acreage. Although he had supplied his own livestock and milking equipment, he had been able by growing his own feed to eek out a living for a family of four. For several years in the mid 1960s, the farm had been worked as an experimental station by a large dairy equipment company whose factory was situated some fifteen miles to the south.

Then in the spring of 1972, a month before I moved to the farm, the large acreage was sold to a New York City business man to use as a tax hedge and eventually a real estate investment, and the farmer himself had moved his cattle and equipment to another farm near the Canadian border. The farm now lies fallow, like many others of its size in the area. High taxes, the intensity of land usage in the region over many generations, and new transportation and refrigeration methods, have all made farming less profitable for even the few corporate farms than other land further away from the large metropolises.

The huge old farm house in which I lived grows shabbier daily. Now owned by the divorced wife of the watch corporation owner, it sits legally separated from the rest of the land. The woman finds it difficult to keep up with decaying roof tiles, crumbling outside paint, frequent boiler breakdowns and high heating costs. And a recent "land equalization" tax reassessment, raising the tax rate of long-time residents relative to new people, has made continuing ownership as tenuous for her as for the hundreds of others who have lived in the area for many years. Talk in the local stores and bars is often

about the end of farming in the area and the increasing number of urban summer people, absentee owners and, most recently, land developers. Town meetings all over the area are largely devoted to planning for or fighting against possible housing developments, shopping malls, weekend resorts and even novelty attractions such as children's zoos. Large farm houses like the one in which I lived are often rented to rock bands and groups of young people who look for escape from the city. My house had been rented to a rock group the year before I came, leaving the farm with a far-reaching reputation for drugs and wild happenings. The local people feel that the changing economy is largely beyond their control. If they can prevent a developer from moving in by careful zoning, they still are impotent in the face of new tax laws, the rising cost of feed (the recent increase in soy bean consumption by human beings, for example, makes the crop nearly untenable now as animal feed; and the sale of wheat to Russia in the fall of 1972 increased the cost of wheat for anyone who could not grow all he needed), and the breakdown of their traditional values. Like in the cities, law and order have become by-words.

Thirty years ago, coincident with an increased financial pressure on small farms, a large IBM plant moved into the southern part of the county; ten years later another one moved in across the river, and a few years later a third near the first. Now there are three such large plants within a forty-five minute drive, providing employment for local people as well as bringing new people into the area. The three plants employ a total of more than 15,000 people (IBM 1966; IBM 1973). The two on the east side of the river supply

employment to approximately ten per cent of the county's labor force (Dutchess County Data Book 1969:77-92). Because the county never contained more than a few small mills and clothing factories, most of which are long since gone, the area has in a sense begun a rapid jump from an agricultural to an advanced industrial economy. Hundreds of men whose fathers were farmers or agricultural workers now take long daily rides to work on the computer assembly lines. Only one large plant from an earlier era, the dairy machinery plant, still provides employment to a significant number of workers.

Besides agriculture and the large dairy machinery and computer plants, salaried employment in the area now stems from two sources: public facilities, especially the gas and electric plant and road maintenance, and the education and health industries. There are a number of state hospitals, homes for the mentally deficient, for juvenile offenders, for the aged or for ex-addicts; and half-way houses, camps, private boarding schools and small colleges dot the countryside. Some of these have taken over the old estates once owned by the rich or by churches. Some have bought out farms such as the one on which I lived. Large central district schools with their needs for food services, maintenance and transportation also provide employment for many men and women. The combination of these kinds of services total approximately thirty per cent of the county's employment (Ibid.). However, in some townships such as the one where my farm was located or in Green

Valley[1] some ten miles away, which became the locus of my study, public services provide an even greater percentage of the employment opportunities. In Green Valley, out of 604 employed workers listed in the 1970 census, 239 or almost thirty-eight per cent were in the service sector (US Census 1970).

Most anthropologists describe their fieldwork as a project well planned in advance. This is probably a near necessity when the geographic area is New Guinea or tropical Africa, a place a white middle class woman would not usually find herself in by chance. Most also leave the reader with the impression that the final product of the fieldwork is an objective "thing" in the sense that it was either the logical outcome of what was there, or at least the logical outcome of what there was to describe, given the investigator's professed area of theoretical interest.

For me, fieldwork has been an experience much more like backing into a relationship. I had rented the farm early in the spring of 1972 as a place to rest and do historical research. Although I had spent my childhood in a small town in the midwest, for the past twelve years—with the exception of a year in Spain and Morocco—I had become a New York City person. I had lost much of my midwestern accent. I felt that I could not live without my city friends, the movies, the restaurants, and even the frenetic nervousness the city provided. Doing historical research was, in fact, a way of stalling or perhaps even avoiding (I hoped) the obligatory initiation rite of leaving the

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[1]The name Green Valley has been fictionalized, as have all township names and names of individuals. Scholars wanting citations referring to such names, which therefore have also been fictionalized, should consult the author.

country to do fieldwork. The farm would be a summer vacation near enough to the city that I would be able to serve all my acquired needs when necessary.

In June I found myself driving back and forth to the city to see friends, attend meetings, check out books. By July, I was resenting the trips and cutting down on them. In fact, to be accurate about the true backing-in character of my fieldwork, in mid-July I managed to contract mononucleosis, which left me largely confined to the farm for the rest of the summer. This meant that I had to rely on farm people for much of my stimulation. I started spending time in the garden, listening to my landlady who stayed in the front wing of the house and knew a great deal about the history of the farm and, through it, the area. Soon I was reading the local newspapers and—to my city friends' surprise—becoming interested in barn sales, church events, school plans, town meetings and all the other items that make news in the weekly papers of this declining agricultural area.

Then in August I was given the chance to participate in a study of the social organization of high schools. I had already spent a good deal of time and thought on education. I had written a book some five years ago on women doctors in which I focused on their relationship to the training institutes through which they passed. I had spent another three years writing for the Office of Economic Opportunity on Head Start as well as other educational projects. Finally, an earlier fieldwork project in graduate school had been on a bilingual elementary school in Manhattan. I knew I did not want to go back to the city to study yet another school, but if I could stay up in the country

. . . . The thought frightened and excited me. After a week of obstinately continuing my reading, I drove myself to the city to discover how I might relate to the project.

Organized by Professor Frances Ianni of Teachers College, with funding from both the Ford Foundation and the National Institute of Education, the project was still in a relatively flexible stage. Thus the six or seven individuals who had come together that day were able to develop some of our own thinking as to how the project would evolve. We decided, for example, that there would be three high schools in the study: an urban one, a suburban one and one in a rural area. The study would concentrate on participant-observation in the schools, and would attempt to break through looking at schools along traditional lines of role definitions. By focusing on such behavioral categories as sorting, the use of space, and rule-breaking and rule-making we hoped to get a fresh slant on schools.

Thus in late August I found myself driving around the townships and their central villages which neighbored the old farm. There were a number of possible schools on which I could focus, although ones south of the farm tended to have a more suburban flavor, as did ones to the west by the river, which were receiving an increasing number of commuter families from the city.

Green Valley lay a little over ten miles to the northeast from the farm on which I lived. Once a bustling trading center for a profitable dairying area, three railroad lines fed eighteen trains into the village daily. Then in the late 1930s, the last of the trains stopped running and the station was closed

down. Agriculture had begun to decline toward the end of the nineteenth century as new possibilities for transportation and refrigeration made land further away from the metropolises more profitable. The end of rail service further decreased the viability of dairying, as well as of the village's second most important industry, summer boarders. For a time, a north-south highway which becomes the main intersection of the village still brought in long-distance traffic, and a milk plant outside the village gave it some local industry. Then in the late 1950s, the plant was closed down and the large parkway was built, diverting traffic nearly ten miles away from the village. There was little to draw outsiders to Green Valley.

With the decline of agriculture and the change in transportation routes, Green Valley has largely become a town without commercial or industrial purpose. Old, deteriorated and partially abandoned, the buildings which border the main intersection testify to businesses which no longer exist or are only minimally operative. Were it not that the village houses a central school system for a 250 square mile district, it might well have lost any centrifugal force or have fallen into total disrepair. For the village of Green Valley, the school and its related services have become an important source of economic and social activity.

The Green Valley Central School District was formed in 1931, the first district in the county to consolidate its rural schools. Initially consisting of twenty-one rural school districts, mostly in the township of Green Valley, in the next twenty years a number of additional rural districts were added until

the centralization included over thirty rural districts in nine townships, spanning parts of Columbia and Dutchess Counties. The first central school building was completed in 1935, on the same site as the town's earlier Union Free School. The building was constructed largely with state and WPA funds and provided work during the Depression years of the 1930s.

In the first year of centralization, with a number of the rural schools already shut down, the district consisted of a staff of twelve rural teachers each covering grades one through eight in their own one-room school, and twenty teachers in the main school covering grades one through twelve. All but one of the rural teachers were women, as were seventeen of the teachers in the Frank Farley building. The district was run by a principal and a five-man board of education, both responsible to the county superintendent of schools. Children in the rural schools found their own way to school, while those attending the central building received one of the new privileges of centralization: bussing. Thus centralization immediately brought with it a new group of school personnel—bus drivers. Throughout the 1930s, the one-room schools continued to close as communities willingly agreed to send their children to the central school, or as they were cajoled to do so. Sometimes the rural teachers followed their students into the main school; more often, they simply dropped out of teaching. By the early 1940s only a few rural schools were left; the last two closed in 1948 and 1960.

Once the rural schools had been shut down, the entire district was served by two schools: the central school in Green Valley, which contained

grades kindergarten through twelve, and a smaller school at the southern end of the district which had once been a Union Free School for its village, but upon entering the centralization was turned into an extra elementary facility. Then in 1970, the old elementary school was closed down, the original Green Valley Central School building became an elementary school, and two new buildings were constructed: an elementary school in the southern, more densely populated part of the district, and a low two-story beige brick building on the west side of the village which would house grades nine through twelve.

Between 1931 and 1973, the total student population had grown from 490 (including students in the rural schools) to 1597, of which over 700 attended the junior-senior high school (GVCSD Annual Census). In the same forty-year period, the number of teachers had increased from a total of thirty-two to seventy-eight. This increase in students and teachers reflected new districts added to the centralization, as well as new age groups brought in through the addition of kindergarten at one end and compulsory attendance for high school pupils at the other. For the population of the region did not grow at anywhere near this rate during the forty-year period. The township of Green Valley, for instance, grew from a population of 1209 in 1930 to 1720 in 1970 (US Census). The two townships in the southern part of the district grew slightly more rapidly, while others, particularly those in the county to the north, grew more slowly.

Administrative and student services had also grown during this

period. Centralization brought with it courses which had never before been part of the curriculum: music, physical education, home economics, commercial and agricultural courses. Between 1931 and the late 1950s, first a head teacher and then an elementary school principal had been added. Cafeteria workers, busing personnel, guidance counselors, a district clerk, and school secretaries had all increased the number of peripheral staff.

In 1972-73, the Green Valley Central School District boasted one of the least complicated administrative organizations in the entire county— one which was certainly unthinkable in any urban setting. Yet the district had emerged from its first forty years of centralization with an elementary principal (serving both elementary schools), a junior-senior high school principal, a district principal, a full-time district clerk, as well as half a dozen secretarial and clerical personnel.

But the population of Green Valley and other surrounding towns had not merely grown in the past forty years. It had also changed its character. Where the teaching population had once been almost entirely women, reflecting the low pay awarded teachers and the family character of education, thirty-eight of the seventy-eight teachers in the system were now men: nine of the forty-two elementary teachers and, more impressive, twenty-nine of the thirty-six teachers in the secondary grades. Where students in the school were once being educated for participation in a largely agricultural economy, usually within the same township, graduation from Green Valley Central School in 1973 meant one of several alternatives: entry into the nearby community

college as a training ground for various low-level technical skills or, more rarely, for continuation in a four-year college; direct entrance into the local labor market in sales, as a public employee on the roads, at the telephone company or the gas and electric company, or as a worker in one of the three large industries which had entered the southern part of the county during the past thirty years: IBM, a dairy machinery plant, or an oil and chemical research company. Only a very small percentage of the Green Valley students in 1973 went into farming, on the one hand, or on to professional careers, on the other.

Students usually left the village when they graduated, as they did the other hamlets which formed the school district, for there was little room for newcomers in the economic life within the area. While the visual facade of the village remained as if frozen in the past, the activity behind the walls of the buildings had largely diminished. Green Valley harbored a large number of residents on social security and pensions, and the proportion of old people was very high.

If the original central school building with its high ceilings and heavy wood moldings stood as a tribute to the workmanship of individuals caught in the Depression years, the new junior-senior high was built in the airy modern tradition which makes little visual differentiation between factories, hospitals, schools and even prisons. Set back from the road by more than an acre of land, a large parking lot covered part of the space between the school and the road on the left side of the building. In the

center area was a giant well-mowed lawn with a solitary flag pole, and on the right side of the building were a series of tennis courts and beyond that, "the Pines." Although the copse of trees was legally off limits, students went there to smoke and be with each other between classes, in their free periods, or when they were skipping school. Behind the building lay the baseball and football practice fields and a large track and field bordered on one side by flood lights and bleachers. The new junior-senior high school sat on a plot some ten times the size as did the old central school.

Inside, spacious hallways lined with metal lockers ended in floor-to-ceiling doors and windows looking onto the outside green. While most of the rooms were still traditional classroom size, some had been constructed as doubles, with folding doors so that two classes could meet at once for "large group instruction." The room across the hall from the administrative offices was an "amphitheatre" with floors sloping downward toward the center where a folding door usually closed it into two separate study halls.

The school contained a large gymnasium with a balcony for wrestling and gymnastics; several well-equipped art rooms with facilities for ceramics, sculpture and drafting; auto mechanics and shop rooms; a photography lab; a music area with a band room, a chorus room and a number of soundproof practice rooms; a library; a reading laboratory with all kinds of audio-visual materials; a teachers' lunchroom; and a double duty cafeteria and commons for those entitled to "unstructured" study hall, all on the first floor. On the second were the home economics rooms which included a

model livingroom, three model kitchens and a large sewing area; the yearbook room; a senior lounge; the teachers' work area with its xerox machine and a room for storing audio-visual equipment and catalogues. Science rooms on both floors had been constructed as laboratories and were still richly endowed with books and experimental equipment from a time in the early 1960s when one of the science teachers went after federal sputnik funds.

A conference room, guidance and nurses' offices, and an 800-seat auditorium completed the physical accommodations. Except for physical education classes in good weather, students were not allowed outside, although the rule was not strictly enforced. Still, there was usually little reason to go outside, except as an escape from the building. In the old school, high school students had gone across the street to a cafe where they could have coffee and smoke; but there was nothing like this in or around the new building. The main intersection of the village, with its drugstore and submarine shop where students hung out after school and in the evenings, was half a mile away, too far to walk during the school day. For students who had to ride the bus in from one of the other areas in the district, there was almost no chance of going anywhere between the time they got off the bus at 7:30 in the morning and 2:15 when they boarded again.

Although the elementary school, whose schedule ran about an hour and a half later than the junior-senior high, provided it with a "late bus" for students staying for sports and other extra-curricular activities, relatively few hung around after the 2:15 bell. Starting a few minutes before the final bell

rang, students began to emerge from the building to file into the busses lined along the front sidewalk. Once the busses were out of the driveway, student-filled cars began to leave in full force. At 2:30, teachers were allowed to go and, unless a group of them had become engaged in a game of scrabble or their regular "cooling out" banter had extended beyond its fifteen-minute borders, they too were out soon after that. By 4:00, even on activity afternoons, except for the secretaries, there was rarely anyone left in the school.

I remember entering the school for the first time in late August of 1972. A dozen girls lined one corner of the track in back, practicing their cheerleading. Blond and blue-eyed, they looked more like suburban teenagers than what I imagined rural girls would look like. Watching them call the old cheers I still remembered, I recalled what my own adolescence had been like and felt a sudden revulsion toward the inevitable reliving of it that I knew would occur during the school year. Now, more than a year and a half later, even the cheerleaders seem less perfectly groomed and cheerfully energetic than they did that day, and my own adolescence seems more under control. But I can still recreate that initial feeling of fear towards them as the "popular" ones—a group of which I had never quite been part.

I said earlier that for me fieldwork was like backing into a relationship. It was. But like with any relationship, one enters with expectations, concepts, theories of what the world of the relationship will be like. In joining the project, I had presented an outline for the study of power,

authority and self-activity within the school. This was an extension of reading and thinking I had been doing about both blue and white collar work as well as women's work roles. It was an interest which had developed, at one level, out of my own experience. But it had been fortified, clarified and rounded out through study.

Although I do not wish to go into the numerous studies I had read in detail, a brief review of some of the ideas which had stayed with me and which I continued to find useful during my research in Green Valley may help the reader to understand my own predispositions. For example, I had read a number of sociological studies of blue collar workers, largely in factory situations. These studies were most often done from the viewpoint of management, and the orientation was toward seeking better worker- or union-management relations and increasing productivity. However, within this context a number of interesting questions received attention. William Whyte (1943) had used a processual analysis to show the establishment and functioning of a union and union-management relations in a steel plant. Whyte showed howdifferent jobs in the industry allowed for variations in mobility and thus differences in power among workers. Abruzzi (1956) investigated an attempt to systematize the work process in automated production; he concluded that work could not be totally systematized and that "nonsystematic work" had to be allowed for. Brown (1954) had done a series of interesting studies from a social psychology point of view. They highlighted the importance of workers' decision-making for worker "satisfaction," usually measured in terms of productivity. In an

extremely useful study, Blauner (1964) had compared the work process and the possibilities for self-determination in four types of industrial situations: printing, textile, an automobile assembly line, and a single-process chemical plant. His work was an attempt to arrive at a concrete definition of Marx's concept of alienation in terms of the work situation. As the reader will note in the pages that follow, his four kinds of alienation have been influential to my thinking even though I do not use them as such. Blauner's four kinds of alienation were: (1) separation from ownership of the means of production and finished products; (2) inability to influence general managerial policies; (3) lack of control over conditions of employment; and (4) lack of control over the immediate work process. For Blauner, the final freedom to be deprived of—and thus the greatest form of alienation—was the loss of control over the pace of work, which occurred above all on the assembly line. Finally, Bendix (1956) studied ideologies of management in Russia and the United States. The value of his work to my thinking had been its emphasis on the contribution of management ideologies to workers' and managers' solutions to control over the work process.

Particularly relevant to what would develop as my interest in the growth of bureaucracy in the Green Valley School System was Gouldner's Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy (1954). Gouldner and his colleagues compared the organization of work in a subsurface mine and a surface factory of a gypsum plant. Through analyzing the impact of a succession crisis, Gouldner tried to relate the technological presses in the subsurface mine and

in the surface factory to the increased bureaucratization in the factory but not in the mine. His hypothesis was that the organization of work as necessitated by the crisis aspects of mining produced worker militancy and resistance to bureaucratization, whereas the growth of bureaucratic structures in the surface factory was related to the routinized character of work. Finally it was Gouldner's hypothesis that in any industry efforts will be made to install or enforce bureaucratic rules only if those measures are judged to be both expedient and legitimate. Gouldner takes a consciously optimistic position on the growth of bureaucracy; his goal is to contradict the predominant notions emanating from Weber that the growth of bureaucracy is "inevitable." For Gouldner, "the degree of bureaucratization is a function of human striving; it is the outcome of a contest between those who want it and those who do not. . . . resistance to bureaucracy is possible [and] it is sometimes successful" (Ibid.:237).

Although much has been written about white-collar work and the white-collar worker, it is often generalized accounts which do not describe the interaction of forces in any specific work situation.[2] In fact, among the studies of white-collar work, some of the best are those that describe service institutions, such as hospitals and schools. William Caudill's study, The Psychiatric Hospital as a Small Society (1958) as well as Stanton and Schwartz's Mental Hospital (1954) had been influential in my conceptualization of the work place as a closed system—and the problems of these studies warned me of

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[2]See, for example, C. Wright Mills (1951), Daniel Bell (1960), or William Whyte (1956). These authors all present an overview.

the difficulties inherent in the category, "system." Although I usually could not follow teachers and students as their lives continued outside the school, I did try to do so from time to time, and my fieldnotes reflected my constant interest in their talk about that other world. Moreover, I did try to follow lines of power and authority whenever they went outside the school. Despite the problems of the "system" approach, Stanton and Schwart's book is one of the few that focused on the power and authority of workers in both their subjective and objective manifestations. Their insight that when a worker at one level of the hierarchy feels powerless, it is likely that workers at all levels of the hierarchy will feel the same, has been germinal to my thinking.

School studies too, have focused on the school as a system, and a small minority of them have tried to describe and analyze the work of education workers (teachers, administrators, etc.). McPhearson's Small Town Teacher (1972) and Lacey's Hightown Grammar (1970) are two examples, although the latter does not focus specifically on teachers or administration. Since I treat the literature on school in more detail in my final chapter, I only mention it here. Suffice it to say, it was not the studies of schools and education which had influenced my thinking prior to my fieldwork as much as the research on work.

Finally, the only study whose theoretical and empirical focus was the nature of work in a white-collar bureaucracy (prior to my own research) was Blau's (1964) comparative investigation of a state employment agency and

a federal employment control agency. The theoretical impetus for The Dynamics of Bureaucracy was Max Weber's work on bureaucracy, and much of Blau's analysis of the two government agencies is an attempt to show empirically that Weber's definition of bureaucracy as a form of social organization with specific characteristics is too static and that, instead, "the only permanence in bureaucratic structures is the occurrence of change in predictable patterns, and even these are not unalterably fixed." (Ibid.:201). But Blau's focus on patterns of interaction among government employees is not sufficient for other than empirical quibbles with Weber. He does not, for example, challenge Weber's conception of bureaucracy as a social mechanism that maximizes efficiency in administration. He does not ask "efficiency for what?" Nor does he challenge the necessity of hierarchy: "To be sure, the status distinctions inherent in the exercise of authority are necessary for the effective administration of a large organization, where officials in central positions must be able to direct and coordinate the work of specialized groups" (Ibid.:206). As the quotation makes clear, this is partly because he does not ask a third question: the necessity for large organizations. Finally, Blau asserts that, contrary to the cliche of bureaucratic institutions as conservative, workers in bureaucracies are more willing to change than are workers in factories. This, he says, is because they are not motivated by the fear of losing their jobs as well as because the sources of conflict between officials and management have been rationalized and thus largely eliminated.

As the reader will discover, my conclusions do not follow either

Gouldner's or Blau's optimism about the nature of bureaucracy. To take one example, in Green Valley the receipt of tenure did not appear to encourage teachers to take chances in seeking reform. However, when I first entered the Green Valley school, with its rural setting, I was far from seeing it as a bureaucracy, and equally far from taking a position on the pros and cons of bureaucracy although I did have the usual layman's attitude toward the "red tape" so often connected to it. I make this point to emphasize both the intellectual background with which I approached my fieldwork as well as the preconceptions that I had. What followed during the year of spending my days in the school and my evenings in the villages around it, and during the months of writing the work up, was a result of both my emotional and intellectual development at any given moment in interaction with the world which, in turn, pushed me to a new state of reading, thinking and feeling. I believe that I am not unique in this; but that an openness about this process has too often been forfeited for the more fashionable goal of "objectivity."

My interest in power, authority and self-activity receded into the background during the early months of fieldwork, when much of what I looked at was determined by where I was allowed to go or where I felt comfortable, or simply by the kinds of daily happenings which were most striking to me as a newcomer. In a sense, I was not operating like a theoretical person, but rather like someone swept along with the currents. For a time, finding it difficult to permeate student groups, I became fascinated with the kinds of interaction and gossip circles which teachers formed. Teachers joked that

what I was really studying was them—which I did not deny. I even began reading some of the basic ethnomethodological texts, as I became temporarily committed to understanding how, if at all, students' life chances—the socially-constructed reality of who students are—were being created through teachers' gossip and interaction networks. The theoretical models of Schutz (1967), Holzner (1968) and Cicourel (1970) influenced my thinking during this period. With names and faces still left to connect to each other, the school remained too large an institution to think of in structural terms.

Some time in October, I was asked to co-teach a senior sociology class with one of the social studies teachers, and this gave me my first access to closeness with students. The goal of our course, as we developed it together, was to turn the students into sociologists of their own villages, and in particular of their religious institutions. What we wanted them to understand was the "social sources of denominationalism" in their community, using the perspective of H. Richard Neibuhr (1957), a rather daring task considering their generally committed religious backgrounds. We gave them tape recorders, and they busily interviewed religious leaders. As the students discussed their interviews and listened to their tapes with me, talk often flowed over into other subjects, and I began to get a sense of what their personal and social lives were like.

Shortly after becoming involved in the sociology course, the BOCES psychologist who visited the school once a week asked me if I would lead a "rap group" with him. A man in his first years of work, he wanted to

try new ideas but felt that his training had left him unprepared. Since most of the students referred to him were girls, he was particularly anxious to have my help. The rap group as it emerged contained eight eleventh grade girls; now I was hearing about fights with parents, drug trips and boyfriends. The serenity and order which had struck me on entering the school was becoming confused and shattered by the pictures of inner turmoil that I was getting.

The sociology class and the rap group inadvertently led me to an understanding of structural aspects of the school which had been hidden until then, and might have remained that way, had I not begun to stretch the system. One day the department chairmen called a meeting from which I was excluded to discuss, among other things, some of my infractions of the rules. Students had been calling me—and because of me, the school psychologist—by our first names. I had brought students into the teachers' lounge to listen to tapes several times and, although the teachers had said nothing to me, they had obviously lodged their complaints against me. Finally, students were buzzing around the building with their tape recorders; people wanted to know who was keeping account of both cassettes and students.

I was never criticized directly; rather, a memo was put in everyone's mailbox the next day, listing in an impersonal way rules which were not to be broken. Knowing that I was the only one who had broken the "rules," or at least that I was considered the instigator of their being broken, I felt churned up and distressed at not being able to have a face-to-face confrontation. I remember even going to the Principal, who cautioned me not to make

more of it by trying to talk to the teachers. I felt that I was being socialized to a system whose codes of conduct I did not accept.

By January, through underground networks, I had become an unofficial counselor-helper to a number of students. I was now as threatened by my ambiguous role in the school as the teachers were. Although being called "Carol" did not disturb me, I was exhausted and distressed that my days in the school were increasingly consumed by needy students. Driving home some afternoons, I felt I had gotten no research done. Information was coming at me that seemed to have no place in field notes, even if a theoretical point could be based on it. And most important, I felt that I was drowning. Untrained and structurally unequipped to deal with the stream of adolescent problems that was reaching me, I wanted out.

The school's first drug bust in its history, about which I felt I knew too much, gave me the final impetus to make myself less open to this type of information for a while. I had been planning to go through old school board records in order to get some historical perspective as well as concrete information on changes in allocations in the school budget. The records were stored in the elementary school a few blocks away, where the district principal had his office. I had by this time spent a week of observation in the principal's office. Going over school board records, I reasoned, would get me out of the high school for a week or two, would enable me to get some sense of what the district principal did, and would give me some of the historical background I wanted.

What started, then, as an emotional relief and peripheral interest took an increasing hold on me. What I saw in the records, which span the period from 1918 to the present, was the bare skeleton of the history of one school district. Geographically, the district had more than tripled in size as once autonomous districts joined the consolidation in the 1930s, '40s and '50s. At the same time, however, the number of separate school buildings had shrunk first from over thirty to one—with a couple of one-room schools still hanging on. Then in 1970, two new buildings had been built: an elementary school and the Green Valley Junior-Senior High, leaving the original central school as a second elementary school for the district. In terms of power and authority, the records showed increasing subjection to outside forces: state and federal control and regulation, extra local, national and even international political and economic fluxes which tightened the range of decision-making.

My study of the school board records took me three months, not two weeks, although I took to dividing my time between them and the high school. Inspired by the records, I also began to interview retired teachers who had taught in the one-room schools or in the old central school building. I talked to old people who had been students in rural schools to get a picture of what daily life had been like. And I talked to middle-aged people and young adults only recently graduated from high school. Once people discovered I was interested in local history, I learned about old books, newspapers, yearbooks, pamphlets and diaries, all of which took an increasing

amount of emotional commitment, even when I tried to limit my time. Sometimes I felt that I was doing two studies at once: one on the history of the area and the school, and another on the everyday life of the central junior-senior high school in 1972-73.

As it turns out, what felt during the final weeks of the school year like a self-enforced schizophrenia, became a necessary whole for me during the summer months. For it was during the summer, with more time to think clearly, talk to people, and even read with leisure, that I began to see that what I had found—and could show—would be the history of a rural consolidated school district in terms of the changing structure of power and authority within it.

My thesis, as it unfolds in the following chapters, is that the history of education in Green Valley shows an increasing removal of educational authority from the classroom to administrative groups at the school, district, state, and national level, and that this removal of decision-making has been reflected in the daily interaction of both teachers and students as well as administrative personnel. This study traces the history of that removal and focuses in particular on two eras: the period of school district centralization around 1930 and the period some forty years later, 1972-73, when I spent a year of participant-observation in the school. At one level, the study attempts to show the educational as well as more general ideology which has been part of that removal. At another level, it tries to analyze the relationship between changes which occurred in education in Green Valley and those which have

occurred in the economic base of the general area which feeds into the Green Valley Central School District.

By 1910, the population of the United States was predominately urban, and the dominant culture even in rural areas was increasingly one which stemmed from the urban areas (Kirkland 1939). Rural educational change in the twentieth century in Green Valley and elsewhere thus often consisted of innovations which responded to needs and crises which had hit the cities and urban schools (Cremin 1961). For example, the ideologies and techniques of progressive education which were promoted along with those of school centralization had been developed largely in response to the deterioration of the family caused by early industrialization in the cities. Dewey's concept of dealing with the "whole child" stemmed from his belief that in an urban industrial environment the schools would have to take over functions which the family could no longer maintain.

> . . . Dewey laid the blame for the ferment in education squarely at the feet of industrialization. Society, he contended in Platonic terms, educates. Behind the older agrarian society lay the time-honored education of the agrarian household and neighborhood, where every youngster shared in meaningful work and where the entire industrial process stood revealed to any observant child.
>
> But social life, Dewey continued, had undergone a thorough and radical change under the impact of industrialism. . . . The school would have to assume all of the educative aspects of traditional agrarian life/Cremin 1961:117/.[3]

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[3] Although Cremin documents the urban sources of both vocational and progressive education, he does show spontaneous rural interest in the former (Cremin 1961).

Progressive education was also a response to management problems in the growing city schools which made traditional curricula and authority arrangements difficult to continue. The ideologies and techniques, however, were then superimposed on rural education as solutions to rural educational problems.

As I illustrate in Chapter IV, the ideas of progressive education entered Green Valley educational thinking at a time when its message and methods were in some ways inappropriate. That they were accepted can be understood in terms of: (1) the economic crisis the rural economy was undergoing and the solution which educational innovation promised; (2) the pressure that the State Education Department and the teacher training institutes, for their own reasons, were putting on rural schools to follow the same solutions as urban ones; and (3) an ideology which increasingly emphasized rationality, efficiency and consolidation as a solution to a number of rural problems, as well as emphasizing the inadequacy of rural people and ways when compared with urban ones.

In order to institute the totality of subjects and services which progressive education demanded, rural schools had to become consolidated, creating the large centralized schools which, for the first time, would approximate urban schools in management and administrative problems as well as in decision-making styles. In this way, the Green Valley educational system has been a pacesetter for the conversion from an agricultural economy and way of life into an urban industrial one, helping to bring a service economy to the area even as it fostered modern industrial styles and values.

By 1970, out of 604 workers in Green Valley, 199 or nearly one-third were in the service sector, and twenty-three were primary or secondary school teachers (US Census 1970). At the same time that the central school enlivened the economy of the village, it was also part of a rapid acceleration in the removal of political-economic power and autonomy away from the local level. Green Valley's central school system now stands as an institution largely reflexive of state and federal decision-making as well as nation-wide commercial responses to, and investments in, education. The study attempts to trace this history both by looking at changes in structural relationships within the school as well as between the school and the villages and towns, at one level, and the state and federal bureaucracies and commercial film and publishing houses, at another. In addition to analyzing structural changes, the study tries to fill out the picture of historical change by describing the experiences of people who have worked in, or attended, the school at different points in time.

Since I use four words, "bureaucracy," "power," "authority," and "ideology" throughout my discussion, it may be useful for me to define the way I use them. With minor exceptions and clarifications my thinking about and definitions of bureaucracy, power and authority derive from Max Weber who, despite both empirical and logical criticisms, remains the intellectual giant in the study of formal organizations and particularly bureaucracies. Weber's notions of bureaucracy are dispersed throughout his writings: they appear in the context of his discussions of bureaucratization

as well as in the context of his analysis of different types of authority. The quotation below is a summary of Weber's thinking on bureaucracy by one of his followers, Reinhard Bendix. In a bureaucracy:

> (1) Official business is conducted on a continuous basis.
>
> (2) It is conducted in accordance with stipulated rules in an administrative agency characterized by three interrelated attributes: a) the duty of each official to do certain types of work is delimited in terms of impersonal criteria; b) the official is given the authority necessary to carry out his assigned functions; c) the means of compulsion at his disposal are strictly limited, and the conditions under which their employment is legitimate are clearly defined.
>
> (3) Every official's responsibilities and authority are part of a hierarchy of authority. Higher offices are assigned the duty of supervision, lower offices, the right of appeal. However, the extent of supervision and the conditions of legitimate appeal may vary.
>
> (4) Officials and other administrative employees do not own the resources necessary for the performance of their assigned functions but they are accountable for their use of these resources. Official business and private affairs, official revenue and private income are strictly separated.
>
> (5) Offices cannot be appropriated by their incumbants in the sense of private property that can be sold and inherited. (This does not preclude various rights such as pension claims, regulated conditions of discipline and dismissal, etc., but such rights serve, in principle at least, as incentives for the better performance of duties. They are not property rights.
>
> (6) Official business is conducted on the basis of written documents [Bendix 1962:424].

For Weber, power was "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests " (Weber

1947:152). Since most often the notion of power is connected with getting other people to do one's will, I want to point out that for both Weber and myself, power includes the notion of self-activity or carrying out one's own designs even when they do not demand the cooperation of others, except in the sense of getting others not to limit one's own activity.

In contrast to power, authority includes the notion of social sanctions or legitimation. For Weber, there were three kinds of bureaucratic authority which were both analytically and historically distinct: charismatic, traditional, the modern, rational-legalistic forms. Whereas charismatic authority was based on the strength of an individual's personality, traditional authority was grounded in norms and mores embedded in the culture. In contrast to these two forms which, for Weber, relied on the irrationality of personality or tradition, the rational-legalistic form of authority relied on the rationality of the law. For Weber, the history of the development of institutions was one of increasing rationalization, ending in the modern bureaucratic form. Weber believed that those who filled positions within a modern, rational legalistic bureaucratic hierarchy had the power (i.e. the capacity to move themselves and others) because of the impersonal or legal authority allocated to their position, not to them as individuals. His concept "control by means of knowledge," (Weber 1947:337) forms the core of his position that in a rational-legalistic bureaucracy technical competence yields a kind of authority.

Although Weber's three kinds of authority are analytically useful,

I believe that my study makes two critiques of his concept of authority. First, to the extent that authority loses its charasmatic and traditional sanctions and becomes purely rational-legal, I believe it loses both legitimation and the power of enforcement except through formal mechanisms. And second, despite the power and authority which bureaucracies may hold as a totality, the technical competence which Weber usually believed [4] yielded authority to individual workers in a bureaucracy, in fact yields rather little. Moreover, as bureaucracies grow in size and complexity, thus gaining more power as a totality, the sphere of individual power and authority declines.

I use the word "ideology" in a quite standard sense. The definition in Webster's Third New International Dictionary is that ideology is "a systematic scheme or coordinated body of ideas or concepts, especially about human life or culture." This is consonant with my own usage. Ideology often has the implication of a belief system used by a dominant class to further its power and authority; although I do not necessarily mean to imply this connotation when I use the word, there are times when the ideologies I am discussing are those of an elite group. Still, it is important to understand

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[4] Although Weber speaks of "control through knowledge," one can also find passages such as the following, which have a quite opposite implication: ". . . it is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving toward bigger ones. . . . It is as if in politics . . . we were deliberately to become men who need 'order' and nothing but order, who become nervous and cowardly if for one moment this order wavers, and helpless if they are torn away from their total incorporation in it." (Quoted in Bendix 1962: 464.)

that I do not view ideology as merely a conscious or unconscious tool through which those in power control those who do not have power. Ideologies are equally strong among oppressed groups, although they are generally not my focus in the following pages. Another common implication of the term, ideology, is "false consciousness." In this view, ideologies are the masks which hide "reality" from those who participate in it. For some, this masking is necessary; for others, it is what we seek to overcome. Murphy (1971) may be considered among the former. He says:

> Perhaps Simmel's remark that mutual nonknowledge of others makes interaction possible can be extended to the realm of culture. The perception of social life depends, then, upon the placement of a veneer between its flow and its perception. Culture is an illusion, but, like other illusions, it gives life /Ibid.:241/.

The question of whether or not ideologies can ultimately be transcended cannot be solved in the context of the present dissertation; nor is its solution necessary to the argument that follows. What is important, however, for the argument is my understanding of the relationship between ideology and economic formations. There is a common position among some social scientists that ideology is a kind of superstructure, determined by the economic base. As such, it has no life of its own. Conversely, some social scientists emphasize the determining aspects of ideology. As I hope the following analyses will make clear, my view is that ideologies determine—as well as are determined by—economic configurations. This is a position common to at least some of the works of Marx (1949) and Weber (1958). It has also been central to the works of Lukacs (1968), George Herbert Mead (1964), Mannheim

(1936) and, in my own field, to Geertz (1959) and Murphy (1971). As Mannheim has expressed it, "The problem is to show how . . . certain intellectual standpoints are connected with certain forms of experience, and to trace the intimate interaction between the two in the course of social and intellectual change" (Ibid.:81).

Using these conceptual categories, Chapter II lays out the historical background in which school centralization took place, tracing economic changes in the area around the turn of the century. Chapter III describes the authority structure of the rural school, with its incipient forms of a changing structure. Chapter IV discusses the ideology of centralization as it was presented to the people in Green Valley in the late 1920s and the early 1930s. Chapter V presents a history of the changing structure of authority in the school system since centralization, as seen through the school board records and the school district budget; it analyzes both the internal complexion of expenditures and the meaning of specific changes in state and federal funding. Chapter VI describes change as currently felt in Green Valley; its focus is on people's perceptions of their world and the possible relationships between these perceptions and specific kinds of change. Chapter VII analyzes what I call "the transfer of authority" in the everyday life of the central junior-senior high school both through structural and processual analyses. Chapter VIII, the final substantive chapter, is a critique of current educational practices in Green Valley, tracing their origins to urban configurations and the mass solutions of commercial audio-visual, instructional and publishing companies.

Chapter IX contains a review of two kinds of literature: the anthropological tradition of community studies and its progeny, and the historical treatments of educational organization by historians and political scientists; the chapter then gives my own views and suggests where the Study of Green Valley may contribute to the tradition of educational studies.

Chapter II

LOOKING BACKWARD

Driving through Green Valley today, one senses a village frozen in the past. A bank, a drug store, a tavern, and an abandoned and decaying hotel structure bound each of the four corners of the main intersection. Two general stores, a hardware store and two restaurants, a real estate and insurance office, a doctor and a day-a-week dentist are some of the other commercial establishments which one notices as one passes through. Only the gas stations, an Agway farm supply store and a Grand Union indicate the newer era of franchises. Like the three-year-old central school building, these signs of centralization and monopoly are situated off to the side of the main intersection.

In 1915, had a traveler stopped to buy or sell on his way through to one of the larger towns which lie some twenty to thirty miles away, he would have found the village a far more active and profitable lay-over point than he would now. Perhaps he would have arrived on one of the three railroad lines which sent eighteen trains through the village daily. He might have come to check out cattle for trading, to buy milk or to sell supplies to one of the numerous farms in the area. A dairy farm of over 3,000 acres had been established eight years before out of half a dozen small farms. The first corporate farm to enter the township of Green Valley, it had become an important part

of the local economy, supplying work and trade. Or the traveler might have come to transact business with the local milk plant. Perhaps he had come to sell goods to the smaller farmers or merchants in and around town. Many of the small farmers had an extra winter business of ice-making at one of the local ponds. Most had an active summer business receiving vacation boarders who came by train from as far as New York City. Boarding houses and tourist homes in the village also did a brisk business and needed supplies.

Having come to Green Valley on business, the traveler of 1915 would have stayed overnight at one of the two hotels which then framed the south corners of the main intersection. Both hotels had bars downstairs with poolrooms where men from miles away came to discuss the latest purchases of animals and land, crop prices, and new kinds of machinery. Having finished his business, he might also have gone to the opera house which, standing on the northwest corner of the main intersection, offered cabarets, musicals and dancing, or to the large roller skating rink with its broad oak floor panels which had recently been built at the end of North Street. Had the traveler simply wished to walk about town, he would have come upon an elegant four story wooden building which housed the Union Free School with its provision for education from the first grade through high school on floors one through three and a teacher training institute on the top floor. Standing several blocks to the southeast of the main intersection, this school had been a source of local pride for nearly fifty years. First built as a private boarding academy it had become a public school some twenty years earlier. A rural one-room

school stood a half mile to the north of the main intersection, and several rural schools were situated somewhat further out on all sides of the village. Although Green Valley had long contained its Protestant sects within one religious meeting house, in the last years the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Lutherans and the Presbyterians had all built their own churches. The few Catholic families in town had also built themselves a church in 1912. Most of these now dotted the main east-west road of the village. Probably most impressive to the traveler, however, would have been the signs of a telephone system just installed that year.

The village of Green Valley was thriving in 1915, but the township in which it was located, like the rest of the County and other counties in southeastern New York State, had reached its peak as an agricultural center some twenty-five years earlier. Since then, it had gone through several phases in its attempt to deal with changing transportation technology. "At the close of the Revolution, the Hudson River was called 'the Bread Basket of the Nation'; the next generation called the Genessee country the 'granary of the Nation.' The Erie Canal robbed the farmers along the Hudson of their supremacy as food providers; the railroads, in their turn, permitted the establishment of the Nation's granaries farther and farther to the west" (Hedrick 1966:266).

Before 1835, the County's most profitable cash crop had been wheat. More than a third of the grain shipped from New York State came from this county, transported down the Hudson River by flat boat (Bayne 1936:30).

The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 caused a gradual decrease in wheat production in southeastern New York State. Rather than fertilize or rotate crops, many farmers simply moved further west. Those remaining behind in Green Valley or other townships in the area turned to raising sheep or, more often, cattle. By the 1840s wheat was already ranking fifth instead of first among the staple crops of the county (Ibid.:31).

With the opening of the railroad lines in the middle of the century, the possibilities for farming once again changed. Now western beef began to flood the New York market at prices with which farmers in the county could not compete. As the railroads entered Green Valley in the 1870s and '80s, most farmers took advantage of the new form of transport and switched to dairy farming. "By 1880 the county reached the peak of its agricultural expansion. About 95 per cent of the total area of the county was designated as farmland, amounting to 490,620 acres. Milk distributing plants were built throughout the county, some shipping to New York, some canning condensed milk (Bayne 1936:31). Still, subsistence farming had become unviable and abandoned farms were already beginning to exist. The population of the area had begun to decline slightly from its 1845 peak (see Table I).

By 1915, Green Valley with a population of 1500 in 1845, had shrunk to 1250. But it was by no means a dying town. The latter half of the nineteenth century had been a period of rapid commercial growth for Green Valley. If the railroads had forced some farmers to move or turn to

TABLE I

POPULATION OF GREEN VALLEY TOWNSHIP*—1845-1940

1845	1860	1880	1900	1920	1930	1940
1499	1412	1352	1263	1252	1209	1301

*US Bureau of Census, except 1845 which is from the New York State Census.

other forms of work, building and operating railroads was also supplying work, building and operating railroads was also supplying work to Green Valley and other communities in the area. An independent bank had opened in 1839, collapsed in the 1850s and reopened with a more permanent organization in 1858. A Green Valley newspaper was tried out for a brief period in 1872 and then begun by another editor-publisher ten years later. While the Gazette was—and is to this day—called a Green Valley newspaper, as early as 1882 it received correspondence from nearly fifty villages and hamlets in the northeastern part of the country, "though they did not write every week" (Green Valley Gazette 5/25/57:1). A doctor came to Green Valley in 1876, having practiced in nearby hamlets for several years previously; but two years later "owing to poor health he opened a drug store and confined himself mainly to office practice" (Ibid.:5). (When "Doc Reeves" died, the drug store passed on to his son; from his son, it went to a gentleman who is presently the president of the local bank and who, upon his retirement from the drugstore, passed on its ownership to an adopted stepson who is its present

owner.) The 1860s saw the opening of a jewelery and a barber shop, while the next decade produced a nursery and "the largest country store in this part of the state" (Ibid.:5). Public facilities were also started toward the end of the century. The "lamp district" was organized in 1874, the "water district" around the same time, and a local "board of health" a decade later" (Ibid.:8).

In the 1870s, Frank Farley, a wealthy bachelor farmer bequeathed his estate to the town for a private school, and in 1879 the Frank Farley Academy began to take in boarding students (Hunt 1897). Private boarding schools were quite common during this period. Most large villages in the county had them (McCracken 1958:277-91). Like many other academies of this era, the Frank Farley Academy was converted to a Union Free School at the end of the century. The Academy had quite a reputation in its day: a number of families who vacationed in and around the village every summer sent their children to board at Frank Farley during the school year. In several instances, students from other towns and cities met their spouses while at the Academy and ended up settling in Green Valley. One citizen who gained a position of prominence in the first quarter of the twentieth century entered the economic life of the community in just this manner: while his forefathers had been original settlers in the area, his father had become "a city man," and the family spent their vacations on the old family farms while the son, Joseph Morton, spent winters at Frank Farley. Marrying a local girl from an old family, Joseph remained in the community, becoming cashier of the bank and a member of the school board.

There are two very old maps of Green Valley, one done in 1780 and the other in 1860 (<u>Green Valley Gazette</u> 5/25/57:5; Hunt 1897). Both include designations of churches, schools and homes with the names of residents. Examining these maps, one is struck with how often the same names show up on both. Where a name appeared on one site on the earlier map, it may appear on two or three spots as families had spread out during the intervening generations. Were our traveler to have mapped out the town once again in 1915, he would have discovered most of the names from the earliest map still in existence. For if the population had declined slightly between 1860 and 1915, the families constituting it had changed very little. Even as late as the first decades of the twentieth century, the society was still basically agricultural, with traditional inheritance patterns through the male line and relatively infrequent sale of land. Among the new names one might have noticed in 1915, the most conspicuous, in fact, would be those of the two Italian families which now held the shoemaking and tailoring businesses and the one Jewish family which ran a drygoods shop. Stories are told of a second Jewish family attempting to establish a shop around this time and being systematically boycotted because the village had unofficially set its quota. Today, with the onset of several new industries within a forty mile radius and other commercial enterprises stemming from them, a number of new names—often Italian in origin—have appeared in the area. Still, the old names are recognizable as they form place names and appear over and over in membership lists of local voluntary associations. An old timer in Green Valley

is someone whose family has lived there for at least four generations.

Wealth and power until the end of the 1930s were held by a small number of families, nearly all of whom were old timers. Positions of influence such as town supervisor, officer in the bank and school board member rotated among a few families and were often passed from father to son or brother to brother. For example, Ezra Beekman served the Green Valley bank as president between 1844 and 1858; he became bank cashier in 1864 and remained in that position until 1879 when he died and his son, William Beekman, took over the job. Ezra, the father, was also town supervisor for two terms during this period. His second son, Samuel Beekman, succeeded his brother as bank cashier in 1885 and became president between 1896 and 1916. Samuel was also town supervisor and among the first members of the Union Free School Board of Education when it was established in 1896. Abraham Beekman, a third son of Ezra, was another of the first members of the board of education as well as becoming bank cashier when his brother Samuel, moved on, and succeeding his brother as president from 1916 to 1948. A third generation of Beekmans, Samuel's son, James, was president of the bank from 1948 to 1962.

One family, whose financial and political power reached its height in the 1920s and '30s was the Walters, a name that appears on the earliest map. Isaac Walters and his brother, Nathanial, owned two of the most prosperous farms in the area at the end of the nineteenth century. Nathanial, with a reputation for being an eccentric, never had children. Thus Isaac took on

the positions of responsibility, such as being town supervisor, and since he had a son and two daughters, the son, Jacob, inherited a large amount of land. Some of the Walters' property was sold to a huge dairy farm south of town. For a time Jacob Walters drove cattle; then he taught school for a while. In 1917, he started a coal, feed, lumber and hardware business, letting out his farms to others to work. Jacob Walters' business became the source of tremendous political and financial strength. As long as agriculture was the dominant economic base of the community, Jacob Walters could provide almost anyone with whatever he needed.

Jacob Walters served on the school board from 1918 until 1938, when the State Education Department suggested that the board should find a way of eliminating a conflict of interest. During the 1920s and '30s, Mr. Walters had often lent the school money to pay teachers' salaries or purchase equipment for the new Farley Central School when it was built in the mid '30s, and his company continued to furnish the school with pea coal and other less costly supplies for many years after that. Mr. Walters resigned from the school board soon after the state's charge of conflict of interest. However, his position was soon filled by his store manager, Mr. Donald Culligan, who served on the board of education for the next several decades.

Although he was never an employee of the bank, Jacob Walters owned more than fifty per cent of the stock, was on the board of directors for many years, and was close friends with Joseph Morton, the bank cashier. During the 1930s and even into the 1940s, anyone who went to the bank for

a loan was told to go to Mr. Walters first to have his or her credit okayed. If Mr. Walters said yes, the person got the loan; if he said no, there was no loan. Many people in the village today still recall having to go to Mr. Walters. Others remember how their friends or neighbors, unable to pay their bills to Mr. Walters, found themselves giving up portions or all of their farm land to him. Mr. Culligan, Mr. Walter's manager, still recalls the depression when Mr. Walter's money was the only money around: "Oh what a lot of mortgages we put up then!" A school teacher remembered, "You did your shopping from him and paid his prices, or if you went somewhere else to buy and he knew it and then you needed money, there wouldn't be any available at any amount of interest." This teacher remembered getting a mortgage for his house after he returned from World War II from Mr. Walters.

Mr. Walter's son, Coleman, graduated from Frank Farley in 1929 and, after attending a New England prep school for a year, was accepted at an upstate university. The story goes that he bounced around through eight or nine colleges and spent some time in the armed forces. In any case, it was the late 1940s before Coleman reappeared in town. Coleman took over the coal, feed and lumber business when his father died in 1949, and with his father's ownership of fifty-one per cent of the bank stock, became president in 1962. But the business failed rapidly and Coleman was removed from his position at the bank in 1966. It was sold to a wealthy New York City man in 1951. Coleman moved to a nearby village, where he set up a real estate business and antique shop. Coleman, the people say, "seemed not to be able

to find himself." The legend goes that he spent his time with hot cars and fast women. People say he was in a number of automobile accidents and had two wives. They attribute his failure to carry on in his father's footsteps to quirks in his personal character and to irresponsibility and laziness which being the son of a rich man invites.

But the political economy of the town had changed by the time Coleman returned to Green Valley. Coleman had stayed away for the duration of the depression and of a deterioration in the transportation links between the town and the rest of the world. He had missed the beginning of new industry in the southern part of the county which was affecting the entire county as well as lands to the north, and he had missed the start of what would be a slow dying out of most of the locally owned commercial establishments in the village.

Signs of a changing transportation network were already occuring at the end of the 1920s when Coleman left town. New roads were being built and the railway service that had made Green Valley the agricultural center for a ten-mile radius during the last fifty years had begun to be stripped. Starting at the north end of the lines, year by year first passenger and then freight service was curtailed until the last of the trains and tracks were abandoned in Green Valley in 1936. But new roads and the promotion of their future importance had slightly preceded the destruction of the railroads, although not the premonition that they would be taken away. In 1928 a north-south highway was being constructed to pass directly through Green

Valley; the local newspaper recorded its progress weekly and advertised its benefits: " . . . motorists who have used it say it is one of the nicest they have ever ridden on," said the newly reorganized Gazette (10/18/28:1) in October of 1928. A year later, when railroad service which had traditionally brought students to Frank Farley from hamlets to the north ceased, the Gazette assured its readers that a new bus line would be commencing " . . . which will fit into the students' school schedule" (Ibid. 19/26/29:1).

The discontinuation of railroad service coincided with a nationwide Depression, only aggravating what was already a near disaster to many families in the area. Of those railroad workers who lived in town, some moved south to where the trains still ran, some retired on pensions, some got work on farms. The clerk at the village railroad station became the school clerk at Frank Farley, or what was now becoming the Green Valley Central School. Local railway workers had numbered few enough so that they could largely be absorbed. But what really hurt the town almost immediately was the end of the summer boarder industry. Lean years made summer vacations difficult for everyone: with no railroads leading into the area, tourism simply stopped. Within a couple of years, an industry which had sustained so many both in the village and out on the neighboring farms no longer existed.

Roads were also putting pressure on an already squeezed dairy industry. A writer describing the county in 1936 remarked:

> Just as in 1835 farmers could not compete with western wheat brought down the Hudson River in canal boats, so the 1935 farmer cannot compete with western milk

> brought down the Albany Post Road in refrigerated trucks. The largest milk distributors, Borden and Sheffield, are operating most of their Dutchess County plants at a loss, and are closing many small local centers, following the policy of shifting bottling to the distributing point, rather than keeping it at the producing point /Bayne 1936:32/.

Although the Green Valley milk plant was one of the last to go, not closing down until 1957, medium-sized dairy farms were either closing down or decreasing their land parcels. Many farmers were turning to a more primitive form of agricultural economy, attempting to raise foods first for themselves and only then for others. Poultry and vegetable farming were common. Thus, while the number of farm businesses was experiencing an overall decline, between 1930 and 1935 one hundred new farms under ten acres appeared in the county as well as fifty new farms between ten and fifty acres. (See Table II.) As one man recalled, "We didn't have to suffer too bad because people more or less raised everything they needed in their gardens." But these were only temporary measures. Once the Depression had subsided, the small farms were abandoned. By 1940, farms of fifty acres or under were back to their 1930 number, and the medium-sized farms of between one hundred and five hundred acres were continuing their long decline. It was some of these dying, medium-sized farms, cheaply sold toward the end of the depression, that constituted the land basis for industrial development in the southern part of the county.

Green Valley suffered far less than did farming areas in the dust bowl of the United States, partly because it was not hit by the severe weather

TABLE II

NUMBER OF FARMS IN DUTCHESS AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES—1920-1940*
(by Size of Farm)

	Dutchess					Columbia				
	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940
Under 10 Acres	254	153	150	251	179	243	247	195	285	194
10-49 Acres	539	379	335	392	323	436	492	394	462	419
50-99 Acres	545	379	374	339	317	360	404	310	387	324
100-179 Acres	953	772	695	678	614	845	857	713	806	713
180-259 Acres	438	331	341	287	257	437	387	346	336	308
260-499 Acres	310	240	221	210	203	220	177	154	196	167
500-999 Acres	65	41	60	64	63	36	20	27	28	31
1,000 & Over	10	8	14	15	17	3	3	5	4	2

*Compiled from: US Bureau of Census, 15th Census, Agriculture, VI, Part I. "County Table II, Farms and Farm Acreage, 1930, 1925 and 1920"; 17th Census, Agriculture VI, Part I. New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central Statistics for Counties, "Number of Farms 1940 and 1935."

conditions and partly because it had already tempered the magnitude of its agricultural industry and thus had less to lose. For those who could make ends meet with subsistence farming, the Depression is remembered as tolerable. Salaried employees throughout the village in all kinds of jobs were forced to take ten per cent cuts. Women teachers were made to sign contracts which contained the provision that the contract would become void should they marry. There were those who lost their jobs, and those who could not keep their farms going. In fact, much of the push in the late 1920s and early '30s for forming a central school district and consolidating the rural one-room schools into a new central building was connected with maintaining or even increasing the economic viability of the village. A 1931 Gazette article on the school, for example, stressed the possible employment and real estate boom:

> Among the enthusiastic comments made by the people of [Green Valley] on the many advantages of forming a central district here was the fact that the building of the new school would be a boom for the town. It would release a lot of money in the town and require a lot of labor. People would be coming here to work and staying here. Undoubtedly it will increase the value of real estate and in general make the town a much more desirable place to live in. The example of [Willow Corners] has been cited. Since building a central school there, every house has been rented and there is a long waiting list of people anxious to move into the town. It is the first time in many years that such a situation has existed [Green Valley Gazette 2/12/31:1].

The beginning of construction on the central school building in 1933-34 became the focus of economic interest in the village as well as in the surrounding rural areas. It was also at the core of a significant change

which was occurring in the economic and political structure of the community and its relationship to the rest of the world. Financial incentive for school centralization had first come from the State, which in 1924 had begun to offer twenty-five per cent of the cost of a new school building and half the cost of transportation to any community or communities willing to form a central school district. Thus school centralization provided a way of rapidly bringing outside money into the community. Then in 1933-34, with the onset of school construction, federal funds also became available. The Rural Rehabilitation Division of the Federal Resettlement Administration was helping needy farmers who had "adequate farm experience" with loans (Bayne 1936:45-46). The Works Progress Administration now offered the possibility of assistance to non-agricultural workers through providing the school with salaries for workers and one-third of the cost of materials for specific construction projects.[1] Between 1934 and 1938 WPA monies supported grading work on the school property, landscaping, the paving of sidewalks and a driveway, the construction of several tennis courts and the tiling of locker room floors. Four local artists were also commissioned to paint pictures which hang on the school walls to this day. Some old people in the community talk as though the entire school was built with WPA funds, indicating that federal financing may have stretched beyond what it was actually contracted for. However, at the same

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[1] WPA contracts and progress are mentioned periodically in the minutes of the Board of Education around 1936 and 1939.

time as the people are proud of the school and the workmanship that went into it, they are staunchly Republican and harbour strong anti-New Deal feelings. The construction of the central school during the Roosevelt era marks the earliest memory of government support and interference in the ongoing life of the town. For with state and federal monies came a rapid, geometric increase in the amount of regulations and inspectors emanating from the outside.

As the railroads closed down in the 1930s, many of the hamlets surrounding Green Valley disappeared, for along with the abandonment of railroad stations went the discontinuation of other localized services. Hotels, churches, graveyards, smiths and tanneries—all disappeared. The few hamlets which were situated along one of the new highways being built at the time may have hung on to survival by adding a gas pump to the services provided by the general store, and the post office may have remained, at least for a time. But with the steady decline in agriculture as the main industry, a modern road was the necessary but not the sufficient condition for a hamlet's viability. Other industry had to come in to replace agriculture, and only at the southern end of the school district did this occur. Here, because the railroads—as well as the rural schools—went out quite late, coinciding with industrial expansion from the south and some new resorts, a few hamlets remain. But for most hamlets which did not lie along any of the new arteries, the end of the railroads marked the end of their viability. School consolidation only furthered this process. By 1931, nineteen rural schools had agreed to come into the Green Valley Centralization, and in the next five years

had closed down and sent their students to Green Valley. Green Valley Central School continued its expansion into the 1940s and '50s, picking up rural districts further to the south. But this was a quantitative change: the qualitative one had already been effected.

From the vantage point of the many hamlets in the area, Green Valley had created for itself a larger sphere of influence than it had ever had before. If Green Valley was no longer a commercial center for a busy agricultural community, it was now the center of educational resources for an even larger geographic area. And with the decline of agriculture and the lack of any significant industrial growth in the northern part of the country, education was becoming an important industry. The problem inherent in this industry as a salvation from economic decline was that it made the community increasingly dependent on the public sector. For an agricultural area with its long ideological tradition of independence and autonomy, this would be a difficult change to effect.

Chapter III

THE RURAL SCHOOL

"If I were just starting out and really wanted to be a teacher, the first thing I'd do would be go out and get me a million dollars worth of liability," said Mr. Driscoll, a teacher in the Green Valley Junior-Senior High School. "I think we're gonna have to have a malpractice thing the same as doctors have." Mr. Driscoll had taught in the Green Valley system for over forty years and was among the most influential teachers in the school. When the junior-senior high moved into a new, low-slung building three years ago, Mr. Driscoll's room was the only one in the new school with a built-in stage—other teachers said the stage had been the condition for his moving into the new building. And Mr. Driscoll was one of two department chairmen who had a private office off to the side of his classroom. Yet like most old-timers among the faculty, Mr. Driscoll had an acute sense of how it was increasingly difficult to act on one's own initiative. He and others like him felt that with each year it had become harder to get anyone to assume responsibility for authority, or even to take it upon oneself if one was inclined to do so. Through the years, he kept careful track of instances of corrosion of teachers' power. Most recently, he said, he had read in the newspapers of a teacher losing a case for "verbal abuse." To Mr. Driscoll, a malpractice insurance had become a symbol of returning to a situation in which he would

have the power to do battle on his own.

A large-framed, heavy set man who had taken a leave of absence from Green Valley to volunteer in World War II, Mr. Driscoll had started teaching in a one-room rural school. He had come into Frank Farley when it became the central school for all grade levels in the district, watched it grow in size and complexity, and gotten himself added teaching credentials as the system had demanded it. Then in 1970, when the central school at Frank Farley had split into two elementary schools and the junior-senior high, he had made what he considered would be his final move, into the new building. Like most old-timers in the school, Mr. Driscoll tended to stay away from the teachers' lounge or other places where teachers gathered;[1] he spent his free periods and lunch time alone or with some of his senior students. He was not one to voice his opinions freely among his colleagues, except when an issue came to a head, and then he would appear and offer a concise formulation which, due to his seniority, would quite often hold sway. Mr. Driscoll had watched the changes in educational philosophy and in the school over the years, and he had compared his notions of what constituted responsibility and

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[1]Among the excuses that older teachers gave for staying away from the teachers' areas were (a) that they did not smoke, and (b) that they did not enjoy the younger teachers' topics of conversation. I believe that generational differences in attitudes towards their students as well as towards themselves as teachers contributed to the older teachers' discomfort. In addition, most of them had spent most of their teaching years in schools where there were no specialized teachers areas and so were more comfortable alone or with their students.

leadership in the school with what had been the basis for these characteristics in the armed forces. Of their importance, he had no doubts. "In the rural school," he said, "either you kept the class under control and taught them something, or nobody did. Because there was only you and the trees and the four walls between the two."

While the daily life of a rural teacher was characterized by almost total autonomy and responsibility for the students as well as the teaching process, certain legal apparatuses had been established as early as the end of the eighteenth century which were providing in rudimentary form the outlines for a changing power structure.

In 1795 the State Legislature of New York passed "an act for the encouragement of schools" which set the foundation for the present system of state aid (Horner 1954:14). A history of education in the county chronicles that:

> Under this act, Dutchess County (which then included Putnam County) received 2100 pounds as state aid. In this period a school district was called a society. Lundenberg (which previous to 1818 included Green Valley and Crescent) appears to have been very educational minded, as it had 17 such societies in 1795. By 1819, after splitting Green Valley and Crescent, Lundenberg still had eleven full districts and four fractional districts, imparting instruction to 456 children between the ages of 5 and 15 /King 1959:42/.

Financial aid from the state did not come without a concomitant authority structure which would relate back to the state. For the first time, school trustees were part of a line of authority which extended beyond the group of

families who sent children to the school. Formal authority now went up from the trustee to the school commissioners to the treasurer of the county in charge of state allocations to the State Department of Education. At the state level, a new position—Superintendent of Common Schools—had been created, which would evolve into the Superintendent of Public Instruction and, later, the Commissioner of Education. An early history of Green Valley describes the new act as it was seen by the town:

> By it, among other things, the amount of the school fund "distributed" or assigned to the county was apportioned by the supervisors to the several districts, pro rata according to attendance. The teachers reported to the trustees, the trustees to the commissioners of schools, and the commissioners to the treasurer of the county, with an order to pay the trustees of the respective districts [Hunt 1897:267].

The author goes on to say that "The act caused a good deal of discussion as to its real meaning and intent, but good, bad and mixed, it was a new departure in the school system" (Ibid.:267).

For rural teachers and their trustees, the most immediate effect of the the act was that for the first time "official" records had to be kept of school expenditures, including teachers' salaries, equipment, and building repairs as well as the number of students and their daily attendance. The state form also provided a space for visitors' signatures, which formalized for the first time the difference between those who belonged in the schools and those who did not. Other aspects of state authority were only minimally operative, distances being too great for the commissioner to visit often and the state as yet having

little to say about the content of education. Rural school records from the area as late as the 1920s show the county superintendent visiting at most three or four times a year.

In 1822 another law was passed, obstensibly on the grounds of efficiency, which increased the authority of the State Superintendent and made way for what would become the final judicial function of the Commissioner of Education. The rationale for the statute, argued in the Superintendent's annual report of 1822, is worth quoting in full:

> Although the superintendent of common schools is frequently consulted on questions arising in towns and counties and is required to give written legal opinions thereon, and to enter into a long correspondence with the officers entrusted, in towns and school districts, with the execution of the act, and with others, on the subject of their complaints, still there exists no legal authority to enforce any of his opinions, nor to put an end, to the vexatious controversies submitted to his decision. The school act is already too complicated in many of its provisions, to increase the difficulty, by driving the parties into an expensive litigation, to settle probably a point of no great importance in itself, but which derives all its interest from the passions and prejudices of the parties concerned. It were better, perhaps, in such cases, to have a speedy decision, at the risk of being wrong, than to injure, if not derange, the whole system, by a long, oppressive, and procrastinated legal controversy. It is proposed, therefore, to provide a remedy, by giving the right of appeal to the superintendent, and that his decision should be final in the specified cases mentioned in the section submitted for that purpose /Yates 1962:V/.

The 1822 decision was based on an argument which has become common in educational history. First, local communities were considered both too busy and too self-interested to decide objectively on many issues.

Second, some of the issues which would arise were really too unimportant for them to waste their time on, particularly given the possibility of protracted discussions injuring any on-going system. Finally, the smooth continuation of the system was implicitly considered a top priority. A central commissioner could dispense with the issues in an objective manner—or at least he would not be influenced by local interests. Moreover, because he would not be tied down to democratic forms, he could do so with rapidity. Thus decision-making by local laymen had been judged inefficient and the solution, as it would be more overtly expressed during the next 150 years, was to professionalize and centralize decision-making.

Critics of early twentieth century reform have emphasized that much of the rationale for removing the governance of the schools from the local level came out of the urban situation. There a covert ideology existed which ". . . deplored the decentralized ward system in large part because it empowered members of the lower and lower middle classes (many of whom were immigrants)" (Hays 1972:8). Centralizing political control over education meant removing it to the authority of middle-class, WASP, business and professional people. In rural areas like Green Valley, schools were usually controlled by local elites, so that there had rarely been a problem of extending decision-making to the lower classes in a way that would upset the class system. Moreover, rural educational systems were not beleaguered by the kinds of ethnic problems which the cities experienced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But they easily could and did lose their political clout at the state

level on issues in which small and large cities were aligned.

The decision regarding the powers of the state superintendent marked the beginning of this three-part play-off among rural areas and the small and large cities with an end result of increased power to the state. Two other laws were passed in the mid-nineteenth century which further centralized educational authority at the state level. The "Regents of the University of the State of New York" had been created in 1784, but had focused their energies mainly on the universities in the first part of the nineteenth century. In 1865, however, they began a state examination system with a plan of entrance or "preliminary" examinations for pupils wishing to attend the academies. These examinations were extended upward into the form of academic Regents examinations in 1878 and downward into the elementary grades in the form of grade examinations in 1889 (Horner 1954:70).

For Green Valley, the initiation of Regents examinations was the occasion for a boost to the educational prestige of the village. For during the latter part of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth until the establishment of a centralized school system, first Frank Farley and then the Green Valley Union Free School provided the center for the biannual examinations for the surrounding rural areas. Some of the elderly people in town still say today, in fact, that Green Valley won the centralization because it had first had the Regents examinations.

The second law, passed in 1867 under the title of "An Act to amend

an act entitled, 'An act to revise and consolidate the general acts relating to public institutions,' passed May 2, 1864, and to abolish rate bills authorized by special acts" was generally known under the more catchy title of the New York State's Free School Law of 1867 (Mohr 1969:231). However, the Free School bill did not make schools free; rather, free schools meant that the majority of property owners would be paying additional New York State taxes. "Free schools would be schools free of the old rate bill system, not schools that maintained themselves" (Ibid.:237). As the governor of New York, Myron H. Clar, said, free schools were

> . . . based upon the principle that the state is even more deeply and permanently interested in the education of its children than their parents, and that the expense of providing it should be borne by the aggregate of the property within its limits /Ibid.:237-38/.

This philosophy was drawn to its legal conclusion in 1894 when the constitution of New York was amended to make common schools the legal responsibility of the state legislature.

The Commissioner for the Green Valley area, like most rural school commissioners, had been among those commissioners least in favor of ending the old rate bills. An intermediate step between private and completely public schools, expenses were covered partly from public funds derived from such things as the sale of public lands or from local taxes, while the remainder was obtained from assessing parents according to the number of days their children attended school. What often happened under this system was that when a family's taxes reached a certain point, they simply pulled their

children out of school. Thus poor attendance had been one of the main thrusts of attack used by supporters of the "Free School" law. But this line of attack was not particularly meaningful in a rural area where students were often pulled out of school anyway to work in the fields and where school could easily seem like a distraction from the real order of business. Moreover, the old rate bills had fit into the agricultural system of accounting and payment. "When a man was poor he was sometimes allowed to 'workout' his school bill by chopping wood or other labor, or his neighbors would contribute towards the amount of his bill" (Green Valley Gazette 5/25/57:5).[2] Even in the 1920s, long after the old rate bills were abolished, teachers in Green Valley say that students often brought them fruits or vegetables, according to the season. At this point, the items were gifts given in addition to the teachers' salaries, but they can be seen as vestiges, in symbolic form, of the old system of personal payment which had been possible under the old rate bills.

The Free School bill was passed largely with the passive acquiescense of the rural areas which were persuaded that rural districts would receive a larger proportion of the school taxes from the state fund than they had originally paid into it (Mohr 1969:239).

> In many respects the movement toward the Free School Law of 1867 was a process of the upstate urban communities persuading the representatives of the rural districts that the abolition of the rate bill system was in their common

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[2]Quotations from nineteenth century Green Valley Gazette articles were derived largely through a 1957 historical issue.

> interest. New York City remained roughly neutral in this process, realizing on the one hand that the rate bill system was intolerable, but remaining leery on the other hand of the financial drain it would suffer in any state-wide and state-supported school system [Ibid.:240].

Education was made compulsory in New York State in 1874, but this provided no significant change once compulsory payment for education had already been established. In both rural and urban areas school truancy would remain to the extent that alternative activities for youngsters existed on the outside. In the cities, child labor laws brought some students into the schools who had not previously attended; in the country, where children worked on family farms or with their parents as a family package of agricultural workers, compulsory education made little if any change.

Still, nineteenth century legislation had created a large bureaucracy at the state level. Not only had the financing and administration of schools come under state control, but the State Department of Education had begun to regulate requirements for teachers and to establish teacher training institutes. A state teachers college was founded in Albany in 1844 (the second one in the country), and a state normal school was established in a town some forty miles away in 1886. An announcement from the Green Valley Gazette in the 1880s suggests the kind of requirements which teachers had to fulfill at the time:

> A public examination will be required to pass a satisfactory examination in physiology and hygiene with special reference to the effects of alcoholic drinks, stimulants and narcotics upon the human system . . . . [the] School Commissioner [Green Valley Gazette 5/25/57:7].

Whatever the content of the exams, from the standpoint of the present argument what is important is the structure of authority implicit in the requirements. In 1894, due to an insufficient supply of rural teachers, the state approved localized teacher training classes, and Green Valley received one which it housed on the fourth floor of the Frank Farley School. The training classes were a series of courses lasting one year which entitled their graduates to teach in a rural school for two years before having to go on to normal school. Like the state's assignment of regents exams to Green Valley, the teacher training classes marked the increasing prominence of Green Valley in the area at the same time as it, more covertly, established an increasing connection between the state's growing bureaucracy and the life of the village. Many rural school teachers were students at the Frank Farley Academy—or later Union Free School—and then attended the Frank Farley Teacher Training Classes which lasted until 1930, a year before centralization.

When the Green Valley schools were formed into a central school system in 1931, nineteen separate districts within a ten mile radius were initially brought into the centralization. In contrast to the principle of central school districts, the old district schools of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had formed entirely separate, new districts, rather than enlarging existing ones, when the population increased. If a family or group of families moved into an area, a school was established. If their children could not or did not attend, or the family moved elsewhere, the school was simply closed down. The names of rural schools reflect this pattern or organi-

zation: most were named after the family who owned most of the land around the school and who usually also had contributed land on which the school could be built.

As early as the end of the eighteenth century, with the "Act to Encourage Schools," the rural schools had received district numbers to facilitate administration at the state level, and these numbers had changed from time to time as a school closed down, moved, or a new one was created. But if the numbers were valuable to the state, they were minor irritations, indications of a distant bureaucracy for the rural teachers and their students, who continued to call the schools by their local names. At one point in my research I attempted to reconstruct a map of where the schools had been from legal records, which gave me only the school numbers. As I asked former rural school teachers and students, I encountered constant confusion as they vacillated back and forth in their memories of what the number of their school had been.[3]

The schools were nominally the responsibility of a trustee, who was elected annually by the parents in the district. It was his (the trustees were

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[3]This contrasts markedly with city schools where both students and faculty know their school by number and use it even where the school also has a proper name. But such names are usually those of a famous personage, rather than a well-known, localized family name, and thus may seem abstract and remote. For example, I know of one New York City school whose proper name is "Emily Dickinson," but students and teachers alike call it "PS 75." Only rarely do even visitors notice the name above the door, and not more than a dozen students inside could tell you who Emily Dickinson was.

invariably men) job to see that the teacher received the equipment she needed and that the building and grounds were kept up. One former rural teacher described her relationship to the trustee in the following manner: "It was wonderful. You were your own boss. There was a trustee who never came near you. He gave you a check about once a month. That was all he did." Another, more shy in demeanor, remembered her constant fear of the trustee, but said he had always surprised her by giving her anything she wanted. "He built me all the blackboards I ever needed." The trustee also hired teachers and fired them if there were indications that they could not manage the school, which accounts for some teachers' memories of fearing the trustees.

At one time school teachers had largely been men, but with the advent of industrialization and urbanization toward the end of the nineteenth century, teachers' pay began to be too low in comparison to other paying jobs which men could enter either as farm hands or in the beginning industries, and so nearly all rural teachers were women. A chronicle of the Crosby Corners school, which lay amidst the Crosby family's lands some eight miles from Green Valley, says of the teacher:

> In 1912, /Rachel Haight/ got $10 a week for a 36-week year. Ten years later, in 1922, the stipend had doubled to $20 for the same school year. If the teacher also took care of the fire, she might make ten or fifteen dollars more, but that meant early hours and even attention to the stove on Sunday night /Crosby 1970-71:30/.

Former teachers of other rural schools report having earned much the same salary. Of the nineteen schools which constituted the beginning of Green

Valley centralization, only two had had a male teacher in the preceding thirty years, and one of these men had gone on after two years to receive a college education and become head of the teacher training classes.

Despite the lack of legal tenure, most rural teachers remained in the same school for many years. Often the teacher had herself gone to the same or a nearby rural school, and had had her mother or aunt as a teacher. Many elderly people in Green Valley still remember having had a relative as a teacher. The rural school was in many ways an extended family affair. Parochialism was not considered a negative quality, as the historian of Crosby Corners indicates:

> Rachel Haight was teaching in District No. 4 in 1911 and 1912. She left to see the world away from the school in sight of her own home. She went to Smith Corners—some ten miles away. . . . Then, enough of far-off places, Rachel Haight came back after two years. Until Superintendent Williams came to visit, all the students called her "Rachel." They always had! [Ibid.:30].

The transition from first to sir names appears to have been one of the last to go of the signs of the school as extended family. Most Green Valley residents who attended rural schools remember having called a rural teacher by her first name at one time. In fact, the notion that a teacher had to create symbolic forms of distance in order to gain the necessary control or objectivity for teaching was not a part of indigenous rural school philosophy.

Sometimes the school in a teacher's home hamlet was already staffed, and then she traveled somewhere else to teach. Generally, the

women took the train to the stop nearest the school, but they often had to walk several miles even after the train had let them off. One teacher recalled how in good weather the trustee had picked her up from the station in his cart and driven her three miles out to the school: in bad weather when he couldn't get through she had often had to walk. Teachers also spoke of having boarded at a family's house near the school in the height of winter when the snow was deep. Another woman remembered with pleasure how the train conductor had always done her the favor of stopping front of her school, rather than going directly on to the train station. It is this kind of personalized attention that characterizes many of the memories of this period.

Children, too, got to school any way they could, although schools were generally spaced out so that no one had to go more than five or six miles. Commenting on school centralization, one former rural teacher remarked, "They had to bus them in so they could give them exercise classes." Most children walked to rural schools, finding short-cuts through woods and meadows. Former rural school pupils in the Green Valley area remembered the process of getting to and from school with much pleasure. For many, it had been their only time free of adults and perhaps even work, as they often had farm chores to do both before and after school. At times, it must have given them the opportunity for skipping school, for improved attendance through public conveyances was one of the prominent arguments offered in the profusion of literature promoting school consolidation in the early twentieth

century.[4]

Rural schools in the area were generally similar structurally, one of the main differences being whether or not they had two front doors. The ones built before the turn of the century were generally constructed with two entrances, one for girls and one for boys. Even when children were allowed to sit in sexually-mixed patterns, it was apparently felt that school proceeded more orderly when boys and girls entered separately. Schools differed slightly in size, depending on the number of pupils which had been expected when the structure was built. With few exceptions, however, the schools contained one room and were one-teacher schools. (The village of Green Valley itself had had a one-room school for the grades until 1864, when a two-room school had been constructed.) Schools had originally been red, gaining their famous name—the little red schoolhouse—from the fact that they were washed down with elderberry juice. But as paint had become more available, they were painted white. Many had a steeple with a school bell. All had their two privys some feet from the building.

On the inside, schools were also generally similar: the iron stove, the painted blackboards, the nailed-down desks often seating two students, the recitation benches. A description of the Crosby Corners school by Mr. Crosby, who attended it around 1912, provides the flavor of some of the

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[4]See, for example, Betts (1913), who bases his argument for school consolidation largely on increased attendance. Also Reaves (1920) uses this argument.

impressions which these schools left on their students:

> . . . the windows faced east, south and west. A hall for coats and overshoes furnished entrance and cut the chill of the north wind. In the one room, the blackboard was at the north end; in the center was a good round iron stove. Against the south wall was the library—a bookcase not five feet high and in width about three. A bench for "recitations" was pushed against the wall on the west side near the blackboard—no artificial lights, no plumbing. Two privies, separated by a tall wooden barricade, were at the south end of the schoolyard. Water was brought each day from the well in "Haights' Yard." To bring the water was a much desired labor for the boys of the school. Another coveted task was putting up the flag. Actually, getting water was the better. It took longer and, occasionally, you could clumsily stumble, spill the water, and be forced to go back after another bucketful. Besides, it took two to get water, only one to raise the flag /Crosby 1970-71:27/.

Most of the rural schools in the Green Valley area are still standing. Some have been turned into small homes, others used as the base for larger houses, and still others have been left to deteriorate slowly from vandalism and weather. The Berrydale school, for instance, has become an informal hangout for beer parties and trysts. Placed on the line of two farm properties, as was generally the case, the Berrydale school became the center of a property argument when it was closed down. Since its ownership was never settled, it could never be sold, and was not kept up by either of its potential owners. People in the area speak of the deterioration of the old Berrydale school with a mixture of sadness and pride. That farmers can retain such feuds even in this day of commercialism appears to give them a sense that their traditional values which place land over money have not been totally destroyed.

Hamlets surrounding Green Valley clearly varied in wealth during their day as do their remnants today. But when I asked how or to what degree such variations might have affected the school structures, I could find no one who was clear on the subject. Even former rural teachers who had taught in two or three schools—and who had sisters who had taught in as many—were vague about economic differences between communities or differences in their schools. When pushed, their only analytical tool seemed to be the proportion of agricultural workers' or tenant farmers' to farm-owners' children in the school. But they did not believe that this had affected the school structure or the kind of equipment available. The general feeling was that expenses had been so low that any district could afford them.

Miss Anderson, who had attended a rural school near the Holden lead mines and then taught in two rural schools before being brought into Frank Farley, did remember class differences within the same school from her own days of being a student.

> I'll tell you this [she said]. We had various groups of our society represented in those schools. And when I think of it now . . . . [The teacher] would have recitation and we'd have to go up to—I can remember that I would be sitting up there, maybe three or four of us. Down here she'd have four kids that couldn't read much. They'd be down at the other end . . . . They were poor and their fathers worked maybe on the farms of these other kids. I can't remember, because then I wasn't looking for it, you see. I was quite unconscious of it. But she'd have us up at one end of the bench. Down here would be the children of the workers, usually the workers on the farms.

Miss Anderson's father had been a farm owner and one-time trustee of the

Holden Mines School. Thus it was no surprise when she did well in school and was invited to attend the Frank Farley teacher training classes to become a teacher. In fact, she had once wanted to become a doctor, but was dissuaded from it by her parents who said they would not invest that kind of money in the education of a girl.

It is clear that decisions about academic success in Green Valley were related to class and sex as much as they are today. If educational authority was once placed more directly in the hands of the people in the classroom, school or hamlet, the schools still served the power structure of the local society, and the inequalities of class and sex were perpetuated in the school—through their traditional translation into aptitude and achievement—as they are today. It is not my contention that educational equality is more closely related to a decentralized decision-making system, given a class society. Rather, centralization and its concomitant structures make those translations of class into aptitude and achievement more difficult for the layman to put his hands on and understand, and therefore more difficult to change. In a centralized system, decision-making about students is taken away from the parent and teacher and given to "specialists": counselors, administrative bureaucrats at the school, district, county and state level (Cicourel 1963). With this specialization, a "scientific" language emerges, as does an administrative one, which mystifies the translations. Still, when I spoke with former rural teachers about the causes of academic failure, they used much the same explanations as do the Green Valley Central School teachers of today:

large families, broken homes, heavy work loads outside of school preparation, and a culture which does not place a high priority on academic learning—all of these easily translatable into lower class characteristics. Although sexual typing has been somewhat loosened in the past decade, the basic outlines and designations still remain.

Common myths about what teaching was like in the rural schools cover two poles, usually simultaneously. On the one hand, education was considered to be "left to chance and to the whims and fancies of the teachers employed in the schools," (Horner 1954:52) while on the other, there was the notion of strict, repetitive, teaching techniques and a narrow range of subject matter. ". . . it may be assumed that readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic received considerable emphasis. The 'hickory stick' and drill were the teaching techniques of the time" (Ibid.:52).

The sources of this double-edged criticism can only be understood in the context of an ideology of education prevalent at the time when rural, decentralized education was being phased out. Starting as early as the first decade of the twentieth century, there was a profusion of literature which emphasized the ideals of progressive education—a de-emphasis on traditional content, a focus on the child's needs, learning through activity and experience—as well as the necessity for centralized educational authority. Both progressive education and centralization were being instituted in some form in the cities and, as I shall show, were intricately related to each other. Moreover, as rural educational systems began to feel the pressure from the state as

well as the teacher training institutes to centralize, many of the curricular and administrative innovations which had evolved in the cities were being used as carrots to draw rural people in towards the new educational organization. Thus an opposition had to be established between what these rural systems had and what they needed. Rather uniformly, whatever they had was described by the teacher training institutes and the State Education Department as inadequate; what they needed were the same things as were being posed everywhere as the solution to problems of education.

Unfortunately, reconstruction of what teaching in the rural schools was like is limited almost entirely to the memories of their graduates and teachers. And when one relies on memory one must realize that it is being filtered by intervening experiences as well as present ideologies. Former rural teachers, for example, almost immediately tell you that what is going on in educational fashion today—ungraded classrooms, individualized instruction, the mini-school—is a return to the ideals which held in rural school life. Despite the professional literature which stressed the routinized teaching methods of the rural school, former rural teachers consistently emphasize that if you could get to know a child anywhere and respond to his needs, it was in a rural school. There, children were allowed to move ahead with the older ones if they were ready, since all grade levels were in one room anyway. Both former teachers and students recall that the older children in a school were made assistants and allowed to help with teaching the younger ones as well as grade papers. This, they remember, worked as an excellent

review device for the older ones at the same time as it gave the younger ones a chance to learn from children and not just the teacher. Slyly, they remark, "isn't this 'peer-group' instruction?" Recitation and rote learning, it appears true, were an integral part of rural school learning, but this took place within the context of a varied and flexible classroom structure.

Not unlike teachers today, the former rural school teachers with whom I spoke were invariably emphatic that they had not followed the routines and regulations that they had learned in the training institutes. Some remembered emphasizing art or music. Several had gotten pianos for their school, and one school still houses an organ to this day. One woman recalled long nature hikes around the school. Several remembered elaborate Christmas preparations with plays, songs, decorations and parties for the entire community. In themselves, these activities do not go outside the boundaries allowed by the teacher training institutes of the time; but what is important is that the teachers all remembered having "spent too long" on one thing or emphasized another too much" just because I loved it."

Thus it appears that the texts on how to teach in rural schools give a distorted picture of what actually went on in them (just as speaking only to retired teachers may distort the picture in other, more sentimentalized, ways). Even Mr. Crosby, who taught the teacher training classes in Green Valley in the 1920s still remembers the curriculum he was given to teach future teachers —as well as the difference between this curriculum and how he and others taught in the rural schools. For instance, according to Mr. Crosby, teachers

were taught to divide the day into ten-minute periods, which was considered the allotment mathematically necessary in order to teach a school's eight grade levels five or six subjects daily. However, once in the school, teachers soon learned that if they combined two or three grade levels together for some courses, or focused on one subject one day and another one the next, rather than trying to get every subject in every day, they increased the length of time they could spend on an individual project or student. Mr. Crosby remembered combining all the students for geography and English lessons. Miss Andersen said she always took out a morning a week and gave eneryone in the school art lessons. She also described how, by working out large projects, she was able to assign children of different ages and abilities to different aspects of the project and coordinate the entire school in this way.

Teachers probably varied in the degree to which they deviated from any of the scheduling which had been taught to them in the teacher training institutes. Certainly, there were some former teachers and students who were able to recreate days for me in terms of the order of subjects that had occurred. A man whose only formal education had been in a rural school remembered it in this way:

> Well, the first thing you'd have to do when you got in there, we got our lessons for that day. And, well, the first thing was arithmatic. We always had arithmatic and geography in the morning. And whatever else we had in the afternoon: reading, spelling, and stuff like that.

After finishing the eighth grade, he had become a farm worker and then the foreman of a farm with an absentee owner for more than thirty years. Four

years ago, the farm had been sold to a developer, and at the age of fifty-five he had for the first time gone to work in an indoor, institutional setting. Talking about the rural school, he said, "The days were awful long then, but not as long as now when you have to work eight hours." He remembered consistent patterns of the teacher "hearing one class" while the others did their homework.

Another student, a woman, recalled:

> In the morning we had math. I think the teacher had about twelve things always on one of those little blackboards, you know. That was our math class, which I just enjoyed very much. We had math in the morning and we often had to go to the blackboard to do our problems. Then reading. Math and reading. And of course we had spelling. And we had language, a little book, but I hated it. And we had physiology. You know what that is? Health studies. We had a book about physiology. And a penmanship book where there were lines across. And nature study.

This student had become a rural teacher and, like most who had had both the student and teaching experience, described the day as a student in a much more rigid fashion than the day as a teacher. As a teacher, she had felt that she was always taking too long on a subject or skipping a topic because she wanted to do something else. In fact, when I asked her what teaching had been like in a rural setting, she was adamant that I ought not take down a day's schedule from her since she had been so unruly and undisciplined in her teaching! Teachers with whom I spoke invariably remembered themselves as having disregarded most of the formal scheduling; and it may be that their sense of themselves as mavericks or rule-breakers was part of the informal

culture of teachers then, as it is today. However, what also becomes apparent after much discussion with rural teachers is that the training institutes must have emphasized rigidity of planning in a way which simply did not fit in once one began to work through a day in a rural classroom. If the forces for change in the early decades of the twentieth century were attacking the rigidity of rural education, it appears that they were attacking it more in terms of what teachers were being taught than how they were teaching. What seems to be the case is that the paper curriculum of rural curriculum of rural teaching was quite rigid, while the structure of the rural classroom enforced a myriad of flexible alternatives. In contrast, the paper curriculum of urban teaching that was coming into vogue stressed flexibility in content as well as structure, while the bureaucratic structures that were emerging could only rigidify anything that was done.

What was making rural education obsolete was less its theory of what should be taught or the psychology of how children learned (although that was important) than the structure of authority and the interaction patterns inherent in the rural school. For rural education allowed for a degree of autonomy and self-activity for both students and teachers that did not fit into the patterns of work that were emerging in industrialized areas. Rural education prepared people for the autonomy and self-activity of farming and rural life. Teachers who had been raised on farms with no one but their siblings to play with, went on to spend most of their professional lives alone, or in only periodic company of other rural teachers. "I was

raised on a farm, where I was alone. And therefore I didn't get people-oriented too much," Miss Andersen told me. "And I was happy doing my own business." Small units of people, a great deal of autonomy in decision-making, and control over the totality of the work experience, characterized the rural teachers' experience. For students, the rural school acclimatized them to small groups of various ages, to many kinds of responsibility—from bringing in the water, to keeping up the school or caring for books—and to a view of the adult world in which the attributes presented would correspond in large part to the attributes they would need as rural housewives or as farmers, agricultural workers, and small businessmen.

As the rural schools around Green Valley began to close in the early 1930s, their teachers took one of three alternative professional routes. Some quit teaching the day their schools closed down; others did so after a short bout in the central school. One Green Valley woman retired in 1938, when, soon after she moved into the central school, she became too ill to teach. A few attempted to continue in a one-room setting, moving from school to school every two or three years as successive ones closed down. Several teachers in Green Valley can claim the honor of having "closed down" three or four rural schools. Finally, some took the step of moving into a permanent teaching position in the Green Valley or another neighboring central school. The emphasis on additional teaching accreditation as part of the up-grading which would accompany centralization intimidated some teachers, although, in fact, a number continued for many years with a

normal school degree. More important, the simple psychic problems of making the transition into a large school situation provided an almost insurmountable obstacle for some. Elderly teachers were often afraid of the problem of keeping control of classes in a larger setting. Getting students to and from the bathrooms, the gym or the buses, became only part of a whole complex of management problems which occurred once a teacher had moved into the central school. Much of the importance of the principal, as seen by rural teachers, was in helping them with management problems during these early months. But as difficult as the prospect of entering the centralization was for most teachers, there was also pressure from school authorities to come into the central school. This was particularly so in districts where the community was against closing down the rural school and one of the arguments being made was that the teacher would be left in the lurch. In one instance, a teacher was finally persuaded to leave her rural school by promising her a room off to the side in the central school building, where everything was quiet.

The initial reactions of rural teachers to being in the central school pinpoint the differences in interaction and authority structure between the two situations. First, teachers remember the strangeness of having a principal around. Miss Andersen described him racing down the halls in the morning to make sure everyone was there, while she felt both terrified and contemptuous —"after all," she said, "I got myself to school on time for years!" Second, they recall the constant flow of teachers and students who were not directly

connected to them, and the sudden increase in the amount of time which could be given over to socializing. In the rural school, one had been with one's students from early morning until they left at night; here, teachers could take off a moment to smoke or gossip. Of her early experience in the central school, Miss Andersen said:

> Well I adjusted easily enough, because I guess I stayed in my room all the time. I don't smoke, so I didn't have to go anywhere to smoke. And in those years, teachers went into the boiler room over here. But uh . . . I didn't go into the teachers room very often. Because it always seemed that they talked about things that I wasn't interested in.

With some teachers, like Miss Andersen or Mr. Driscoll, who stay out of the teachers' rooms to this day, their aloofness has appeared to others as snobbery. With others less sure of themselves, the quiet withdrawal of the rural teachers has probably come across as insecurity and fear. But the change was not complete once teachers entered the central school. Rather, the structures had been built over the years preceding their entry and would increase and grow more complex over the next decades. Entering a central school provided a qualitative change in the structure of power and authority for the rural school teacher; continuing as a teacher in a central school would provide the experience of quantitative changes.

Chapter IV

THE IDEOLOGY OF CENTRALIZATION IN GREEN VALLEY

In Green Valley, nearly everyone over thirty knows that her or his school centralization was "the first." Some say it was the first in the state; others "in this part of the state"; others, modestly, in the county. The pride at having been a first, at having caught on quickly to a new thing, appears to be part of people's consciousness, whether or not they are completely pleased with what centralization has meant.

Stories differ, too, as to whom is given prime responsibility for the centralization, although two figures come up most frequently: Mr. Walters, who was then president of the board of education, and Mr. Olan, principal of the Green Valley Union Free School at the time. Whether individuals attribute responsibility to one or the other of the two men seems to be based largely on their vantage point during the period when centralization was taking place. People who were students or teachers in the school during the late '20s place more emphasis on the role of Mr. Olan, while townspeople, with other relationships to the school, give more weight to the role of Mr. Walters. Two stories illustrate this difference. Charlie Jameson, who was in his high school years at the Green Valley Union Free School in the late 1920s, tells the centralization story this way:

> Well . . . he could see the local problem, I guess, when he came here and this was in the process. [Mr. Olan became principal in 1929.] But they had all these little tiny school houses all around this area, and they all came to Green Valley for regents finals, which were very, very, very important then. A high school diploma meant nothing. It just meant that you were exposed to school for 10, 12, 15 years. But a regents diploma carried a lot of weight. So all the students from this large area, which is pretty much the centralized district now, all did come here for regents week. And this was the normal system. There were going to be buses and everything, because these little one-room schools offered so little. Some of them had maybe only seven or eight students, and their teacher maintained the building. So it seemed normal and natural that the best way would be to bring them all into a center from a reasonable distance, and the most logical spot would have been Green Valley.
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> So he started—in his mind I'm sure he was convinced it was the best for students and everybody—instead of going out and asking the districts to come in, he just told them, "It's going to happen and you'd better come now." And the sad part was that [the people in] Holden, out of pride or something, just not wanting to be told what they had to do, refused. Then a few years later when they saw they'd be far better off, he wouldn't accept them.

Mr. Olan had been brought in to solve truancy and discipline problems at the Union Free School, according to Charlie Jameson, who remembered that he "was a big man and looked tough. He looked like a bulldog or something." And his approach to discipline within the school seems to have been much the same as his approach outside it: he was harsh and he was rapid:

> You had your choice of behaving or staying at home. As long as you were in school, you'd better behave . . . . If there was any evidence that anyone smoked in the washroom at all, it just meant that everyone in

> the high school would lose all kinds of privileges. Everybody, bang! Until the person who was guilty confessed or somebody turned in their name.

Charlie Jameson remembered that the people up in Holden had wanted to come into the centralization later, when they realized that the nearest central school other than Green Valley would be twelve, rather than six, miles away. But Mr. Olan and the school board "came up with all kinds of reasons why they couldn't accept them," even though they were still taking in other rural districts at the time. Charlie Jameson summarized his view of the approach, saying, "I suppose this is one way of keeping control. The word soon gets out that you don't buck Mr. Olan. You don't buck Mr. Walters. You go along with them."

Charlie Jameson, like other townspeople, remembered both Mr. Olan and Mr. Walters as strong men, able to get what they wanted. But his story emphasized Mr. Olan's creative role in bringing centralization. Charlie Jameson's connection between Mr. Olan's role as disciplinarian and the organizer of school centralization may well be a reflection of a theoretical connection which was being made at the time. That is, numerous documents issued at all levels, from the state to the teacher training institutes to the local newspaper, were proposing centralization as a means of alleviating truancy, largely through busing (Reavis 1920) and discipline problems in the school, through better administrative organization and the new kinds of peripheral services (Cubberly 1916). A truancy officer was one of the early positions to be created once centralization had gone into effect; the job was

taken by a former trustee of one of the rural schools which had joined the district.

In contrast to Charlie Jameson's story, Mrs. Blanche Morton, whose husband sat with Mr. Walters on the board of education, and who herself was president of the PTA at the time, emphasized Mr. Walters' creative role in bringing the idea to Green Valley, although she mentioned others as having actively supported the project. Mr. Olan, she said, had "worked very hard for it," as had the district superintendent, Mr. Williams, her husband and she, herself, once the idea was presented to them. I have already described Mr. Walters' grain, feed and hardware company. Blanche Morton remembered that Mr. Walters traveled a great deal in connection with his business.

> He went around buying hay. His business was handling farm produce and shipping, and he went around the state buying hay. And as he went through the middle part of New York State, he ran into centralized schools. Well, we were at that time needing a new building. So Mr. Walters is the man. Really, that school should be the Jacob Walters school, I feel sincerely. Mr. Walters is the man that grasped the whole centralization idea. . . . It took Mr. Walters to observe this centralization in the middle part of the state.

Blanche Morton also placed the state in her story of the centralization. According to her, the state had long wanted centralization, but "it had to come from the people." She remembered that when Green Valley had finally voted it in, the gentleman in charge of rural education at the state level had said to her, "We've waited forty years for Green Valley to ask for

this. Do people in Green Valley appreciate Mr. Walters?" And Blanche Morton had replied, "I think they do."

Mr. Walters' store manager, Mr. Culligan, remembered that the principal, Mr. Olan, "really did a lot of work in that organization in that central district . . . but somehow or another, he petered out after a spell." He felt, however, that Mr. Walters had been involved all the way through: "He spent a lot of time and a lot of money in that school business. You see, that school was built during that terrific bank holiday we had. And he lost his shirt too." Mr. Culligan remembered his boss giving all kinds of materials to get the school built.

Mr. Culligan, like others of his generation—both he and Mrs. Morton are in their '80s—was quite articulate in his memory of the reasons for centralization:

> Now, the real motive behind this central district was to bring these children from outlying districts to come into the school where they would meet people of another class, we will say, for example. It would give them a little build-up of the way of life, not to step out of line a minute. In Lucaville, they were very stubborn about it up there, and this one meeting that I was to, I run them over by a simple explanation. It was a little bit out of order, but I was trying to help them. I said, do you people realize that you have children living in the outside of this district that, I said, have never seen a modern toilet or a modern bathroom? I said, don't you think that it would be some encouragement to these children to bring home, I said, to their parents, some of the modern ways and so forth. And I went on, explaining further into just examples like that, and it won the thing over, because—and it's true, those kids, you know had never seen a flush toilet.

Mr. Culligan also stressed the "advanced education methods" which were brought in with centralized education:

> The kids were able to come to kindergarten. They never had that before. They didn't go to school until they were seven years old. So that was a big factor. And so, oh there were many things . . . . You formed your music, your band, of course, your sports of all kinds, you built the gymnasium—they never had a gymnasium—and you had a music department, you had all the advantages of advanced education, and consequently it proved out to be very good.

Blanche Morton, too, remembered her enthusiasm for centralization as originating out of the new subjects it would bring. But because her father had brought his family up from the city, she could compare the subjects which she had been able to take in a city school with the scarcity of choice which she felt the rural children had:

> Oh, I thought it was awful! The country child didn't have any music. They didn't have any physical education. They didn't have any home economics. And all those things, you know, were brought in by centralization. And I figured it was forty years from the time I had had music in the public schools in New York City until it came to the country child. And it came through centralization. Now my husband and I used to get so provoked at people that didn't agree with us. They didn't want centralization.

Like other elites in the town, Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Mr. Culligan had been strongly for centralization. Yet over the years, they had become skeptical about what had once been their pet project. "Now I respect those people," Mrs. Morton said, "because I think centralization has made the schools too large." Mr. Culligan remarked:

> Of course, in the last few years with the tax rate, the cost of education has gone up so much that people are wondering whether it is the right thing or not. But I don't think there is anything you can do about it. You've got it. You have to live with it. You can't certainly send our modern child back to a country school with one teacher teaching eight grades, you know. Can't be done!

Mr. Crosby, the training class teacher at Frank Farley, said that he had taught the idea of centralization because "first it was expected of me, and second I'd been sold on the idea." Mr. Crosby had learned about the educational benefits of centralization in courses in rural education at Teachers College in New York City, which he attended in the late 1920s to get his M.A. degree. He said certralization was supposed to bring with it "better teachers, better books and better equipment. But it hasn't worked out that way."

What is interesting in all these descriptions is the responsibility which the old town elites take for centralization. Since they were in favor of centralization and worked hard for it, local history of how it took place is heavily colored by a sense of Green Valley initiative. Thus, from the village's point of view, the period is seen as one of power and victory, although in the long run school centralization was part of a larger trend which eventually destroyed any economically viable local elite. It may be, however, that this memory is sustained partly by the fact that, indeed, for the brief period of centralization, the village of Green Valley did appear to accrue power and glory as new hamlets were brought in under its wing.

The picture of local initiative which one gets from talking to oldtimers in Green Valley is somewhat different than the sense one gets, for example, from reading official state education department history of the period. Under the title, "Go Home and Consolidate," one document tells the story in this way:

> District superintendents succeeded school commissioners in 1912. At their first meeting in Albany they were admonished to "go home and consolidate." For the first decade following 1912 there was a net reduction of 100 districts a year [Horner 1954:156].

The entire process is described in the document as one which "moved slowly" and had to be prodded along by personal appearances of state officials as well as changes in the law:

> A factor retarding consolidation of the small districts around a rural center was the provision in the law which required each district to support the proposed consolidation by a majority vote. A backward district with a few voters might hold back a substantial majority of the whole [proposed centralization] [Ibid.:156].

Thus in 1914, a new provision was written into the law which provided for a unit vote "so that the opposition of a minority group could be absorbed in the vote of the majority in a totally specified area" (Ibid.:156). In other words, the process had been changed so that, while petitions for centralization had to be gotten from the voters of each rural district, the vote to centralize could be passed by a majority of the entire projected centralization, rather than a majority of each separate rural district. This meant that once enough support could be predicted in the entire projected centralization as a whole,

unwilling rural districts could be—and were—easily brought in. In Green Valley, school centralization passed in July of 1931 by a vote of 362 to 50, which means that those rural districts which had produced enough signatures to enter the proposed centralization also must have supported it when it came to a vote.

Charlie Jameson's and Blanche Morton's descriptions of centralization were given to me in the spring of 1973, some forty years after the Green Valley Central School was inaugurated. The state education department history was written in the 1950s at what, from their vantage point, was the victorious end of a long struggle to bring rural areas into centralization. When one asks questions of history, one has to be clear not only about the exact question one is asking but also about the source of the response. The problem with constructing history only through the eyes of those who are looking back—whether it is ten or fifty years—is that their memories are structured by intervening ideologies and experiences. People's explanations for the necessity of a centralized school system have differed through the years as well as depended at each time point on their affiliation. Given this, to what extent does current formulation of past history tell us about what, in fact, went on in the past.

To be specific, residents of the Green Valley Central School District with whom I spoke emphasized two separate, but related, qualities of centralization: it was to give the rural child some of the same educational privileges of urban children, and it was to bring in new forms of specialized

education—vocational courses, music, physical education—and organization which had not been possible in the little rural schools. The comparison with urban education contained in it the implicit assumption that whatever was invented in or for the latter arena would have to be transferred to rural areas or else leave them in a disadvantaged position. Because of the decline of agricultural production historically, education may have increasingly needed to socialize students to urban industrial forms of life, so that Green Valley residents may well be pointing to a crucial aspect of centralization when they speak in these terms. Still, the question remains as to whether or not these were overt (or covert) aspects or centralization at the time it occurred. Were it possible to step back into 1929 or 1930 and talk to different people in the Green Valley area, one would come much closer to the real parameters of the argument as they existed at the time.

For the lack of this option, I have chosen a second, more limited one: that is, an analysis of the Green Valley Gazette during a four-year period, from 1928 to 1932. The Gazette was a weekly newspaper at the time, as it is today, although in those years it played a more central role in the life of the area. It was the only newspaper serving Green Valley and its neighboring townships, whereas today there are two, and most people subscribe to the daily newspaper coming out of the nearest city some thirty miles to the south. It reported news for sixteen villages and hamlets in the area, many of which now are extinct. And it served as the advertising outlet for nearly thirty local businesses, two-thirds of which no longer exist. Moreover, at the

time the Gazette was edited and published in the town of Green Valley by Green Valley residents, and the newspaper office was also a print shop; now its editor is a Green Valley man, but the publisher runs the paper as well as a number of other small weeklies in the surrounding area from another village some twenty miles away.

Other than memory and the local school board records—which give only skeletal information on any event—the Gazette is the only source of information on the period of centralization in Green Valley. Its one limitation for this purpose, however, is that, from the start, the newspaper took a posture of enthusiastic support for the project, and with the rarest of exceptions, reported no resistance. Not only did its editorials and news releases comment favorably on centralization, but between 1930 and 1931 the newspaper frequently stepped into the position of advocate. There are obvious and quite common reasons for this. Newspapers traditionally report on whatever is new as "progress." As part of the local elite, newspaper editors and publishers usually see themselves as gaining by such progress, particularly if it means growth. As old Mr. Crosby said when I asked him why the paper had so strongly supported centralization, "They probably thought it meant more people, more sales and more printing."

Thus the following analysis will reflect the pro-centralization ideology of the time, as well as the intellectual and political climate in which this took place. But it will not reflect the disenfranchised people of the town or of the remoter areas whose resistance to the idea of school centralization

and reasons for it have generally been lost to historical record. That resistance existed can be inferred from the frequent parodies in the Gazette of "those who would reject progress." The question I will be asking then is, what was the dominant ideology concerning school centralization in Green Valley at the time, and to what extent did this ideology converge with or differ from the kinds of discussion concerning centralization which were going on in the teacher training institutes and at the level of the State Department of Education.

The Green Valley Gazette in the 1920s and '30s was structured around a number of standard weekly sections: a section called "Everywhere" which summarized the week's news in one-sentence blurbs; the report on local, state and national agricultural news; the columns containing personal news from the different subscribing villages and hamlets; the serialized novel —"The Bat" by Mary Roberts Reinhard or "The Return of Anthony Trent " by Wyndham Martyn; the woman's section, the editorials, the cartoons, the Frank Farley news column called "School Notes," which contained such items as news on grade averages, sports events, school plays, trips taken by teachers, a separate part on the training classes, and a composition written by one of the school students, often in a novelistic tone. Each week the local commercial and professional establishments had their half-page of "Business Cards," the Green Valley theatre advertised its coming attractions and the churches announced their services. Outside of the weekly format items, the front page often contained an announcement of the birth,

marriage, death or property purchase by a prominent individual. News about rural school events (the hiring of a teacher, a year's end celebration picnic), PTA and Board of Education meetings, activities of the Grange, the Women's Temperance Union, and other local events also found their place on the front page, as did such news as the closing of the railroad in a particular hamlet or progress on road and highway construction.

In order to understand the context of ideas in which centralization took place, it is useful to describe some of the trends which were being discussed in the Gazette in the late 1920s and early '30s. Throughout this period, the newspaper remained remarkably resistant toward complaints about Depression discomforts. Like the Busby Berkeley movies it announced for the local theatre, the paper conveyed an attitude of enthusiastic optimism for new alternatives and a brushing contempt for those unable or unwilling to go the new way. Whatever the economic and social realities of the period, the Gazette kept open most of its printed space for the pleasures and charms of life. Fashion and cooking hints, the serialized novel, news of the antics of famous personages, and a great number of cartoons mocking the relationship between the sexes filled its pages.

An editorial which appeared after Black Tuesday of 1929—the only mention which the newspaper gave the day—portrayed it in casual tones as the obvious result of urban folly: "Fancy all the people of a city going to one faucet for drinking water on a hot day," (Green Valley Gazette 11/28/29:1) it said, offering at the same time one of the few instances of a

latent anti-centralization point of view. Two months later an editorial quoted an "expert" to the effect that "there is nothing to worry about economically" (Ibid. 1/15/30:4). Throughout Hoover's presidency, the newspaper maintained the theory that what had gone on was a foul-up in the ratio of supply to demand and that businessmen, if left to work things out with a minimum of government interference and a maximum of personal courage, would find the solution. "The demagogues of Congress want to further shackle business and industry" (Ibid. 12/11/30:4), the paper cried out in December of 1930, and, quoting Hoover, asserted that "fear is our worst enemy" (Ibid. 4/30/31:4). Even as the front page recorded the Federal Farm Bureau's recruitment of membership among farmers in the area, the editorial page maintained that, although this might help, "nothing can nullify the inexorable law of supply and demand" (Ibid. 3/20/30:4), and that, had farmers been able to regulate themselves, they would not have needed the Farm Bureau. As a general solution to the economic problems of the time, the newspaper stressed (a) more liberal spending by those who had money, which it believed would inevitably create a demand for labor and so solve the unemployment problem, and (b) some direct charity to meet the worst needs. In other words, those who had money ought to give freely before the government was forced into federal restraints (Ibid. 12/4/30:4).[1]

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[1]The contrast between ideology and reality was stark on the local level, although not as stark as on the national scene. Although Hoover spoke the rhetoric of "voluntary measures" and "cooperation by business institutions,"

The first discussions about school centralization did not appear in the Gazette until 1929, although articles and editorials about the changing quality of rural life and agricultural production had run like a fine stream through the papers for some time. Articles on the economy of the area stressed several things: (1) that the old kind of small family farm was no longer viable, and that "large corporate farms" (Ibid. 3/28/29:4) and "scientific methods" (Ibid. 7/18/29:4) were needed if farmers were to survive; (2) that banks and bankers were increasingly useful to the problems of farmers because, more than any other "class of people," they had been "diligent in trying to understand the agricultural problems" (Ibid. 2/2/28:4); what this meant, although it was not expressed overtly, was that the increasing need for "scientific" farming had resulted in farmers having to lay out large sums of money for fertilizers, machinery and, in turn, acreage, and that therefore there was a growing reliance of the farmer on the bank; and (3) that the decentralization of industry to small towns was becoming one solution to the problems of rural areas—places like Green Valley could solve some of their economic problems through a combination of "farm plus factory" (Ibid. 12/6/28:4).

Herbert Stein has pointed out that the public works programs of 1931 "helped lay the groundwork for New Deal Efforts" (Stein 1969:24), and that "the increase in the stimulating effect of the federal budget from 1929 to 1931 was larger than in any other two-year period. The stimulating effect of the fiscal policy of all governments—federal, state and local—was larger in 1931 than in any other year of the 1930s" (Ibid.:26).

From the viewpoint of the small town businessmen, the stresses of change appeared equally great. The Gazette offered several editorials explaining the failure of local shops. One cause given for the breakdown in local businesses was that the owners were acting as "shopkeepers, not businessmen or merchants" (Ibid. 1/24/29:4). In other words, they were not adapting to modern methods of trade. Another explanation offered was the emerging mail order business. An editorial entitled "Town Grave-diggers" was one of several which inveighed against people who sent away for merchandise: "If the shoe dealer sends away for his automobile tires, and the automobile man sends away for his furniture, and if the furniture man sends away for his clothing, and so on, how can they expect to build local prosperity?" (Ibid. 19/30/30:4) the editorial asked.

Just as a changing set of ideals for town and country, and for agriculture and business, were being worked out in these editorials, so the paper was also articulating notions of what constituted legitimate, as opposed to illegitimate, merger and consolidation, and under what conditions state and federal interference and control was right and beneficial or wrong and ineffective or even detrimental. Questions of size and merger come through in a conflicting manner in the editorials of the late 1920s and early '30s. As the quotes on agriculture show, large size (that is, farm merger) was associated with increased technology and production, and was therefore considered good. On the other hand, the decentralization of urban industry to the countryside, in effect curtailing the size of any particular industrial

plant, was also considered good—partly, one can conjecture, because it provided the possibility of aiding the rural areas and partly, because (in analogy with the stock market) it was better not to put all one's eggs in one basket.

But if the editorials recommended decentralized businesses, they did not mean that these different "branches" needed to differentiate their ownership. Rather, even as the paper advocated geographic decentralization it urged merger at the level of administration and control. (Only one editorial during this period expressed even ambivalence, wondering whether consolidating and merger in industry "will ultimately be for good or evil" (Ibid. 1/3/29:4).)

On the issue of the size and power of governance units, even greater ambiguities and conflicts emerge. Between 1923 and 1931, several editorials indicated that there were problems with county politics and administration. In an early one, the solution proposed made analogy with business, implicitly using the business criterion of "efficiency" as a rationale for consolidation:

> Just as consolidation of small business under holding, or managing companies reduces overhead costs, it is fair to believe that consolidation of small counties into larger units would reduce taxes through eliminating duplicating offices [Ibid. 11/15/28:1].

In contrast, an editorial over two years later quoted Franklin D. Roosevelt, New York State Governor at the time, to the effect that, although county government should be modernized, this need not, and perhaps should not

include sacrificing the autonomy of the small units. His address, the editorial said, "closed with an exhortation not to try to solve the problem by the easy but dangerous panacea of centralization. The way to get at the root of the problem is for an enlightened and intelligent electorate to attack the situation itself and demand a thorough renovation of the machinery of local government" (Ibid. 1/8/31:4). This position was somewhat contradicted once again, however, only two months later in another quotation of F. D. R., this time against the duplication of efforts within the country: "Within our county, we have twenty towns, and twenty highway departments and, yes, twenty sets of taxation units" (Ibid. 2/5/31:4).

The contradiction becomes richer when one understands that, implicitly, the editors were for the efficiency of centralized administrative machinery, while they remained against the proliferation of bureaucracy and legal mechanisms which are almost inevitably its concomitants. One editorial in 1928 argued that "Thoughtful citizens, regardless of political affiliation are beginning to sense the menace presented by the growth of government departments, bureaus, boards, commissions and other agencies for the regulation of every detail of our daily lives" (Ibid. 8/30/28:4). And another in 1938 asked if, given the rapid increase in federal legislation, "Are we still free ?" (Ibid. 3/27/30:4).

There was in general a real vagueness about what centralization—in agriculture, business, politics, or education—would mean in terms of its structural and political concomitants. Editorials equated largeness of

district, of school building and pupil enrollment with efficiency and scientific progress in contrast to "the little old red schoolhouse of sentimental fame, with its flimsy, firetrap walls, its draughty floors and poor lighting" (Ibid. 3/6/30:4). But no editorials made a connection between big schools or large districts and a change in power or authority relationships. No news article or editorial mentioned the resulting consolidation of power by those who would inevitably make decisions at a consolidated district level or, more removed, at the level of the state educational bureaucracy. On the contrary, when the state was mentioned at all, it was in terms of its generosity in giving financial assistance, its approval (almost as if it were a father) for what Green Valley was doing, and towards the end, its kindly words of advice ("vote a budget large enough," "cooperate with nearby districts," etc. (Ibid. 4/30/31:4). And large school buildings and districts were continually equated with increasing community participation.[2] This was done largely through the constant emphasis on the enthusiasm of the people for the project: "In connection with the local agitation for a central school district, it is interesting to note . . . " (Ibid 10/31/29:4); "The people of Green Valley who have been following with great interest the progress toward a centralized school here cannot help feeling gratitude and encouragement"

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[2]For obvious political reasons, this connection is not made in the Green Valley paper to the extent that it is made in the educational literature of the time, where the trustee becomes the tyrant from whom school consolidation, like a savior, provides one source of release. (See, for example, Cubberly 1914.)

(Ibid. 8/7/30:4) and so on. And it was done through the reiteration of the phrase that "centralization has to come from the people." One editorial in 1931 went so far as to thank individuals as well as groups—the school board, people from the rural districts—for their help and enthusiasm (Ibid. 1/15/31:4).

The attempt to join the notions of efficient, centralized administration with decentralized, democratic decision-making, as well as of a consensus of desire favoring centralized administration, was made more complicated by what must obviously have been resistance toward the project. A number of editorials acknowledge this resistance, largely through charges of sentimentalism and laziness or fear of progress aimed at some unknown forces:

> Let us see what objections may have arisen to delay this apparently superior system. In the first place, there is the natural tendency of human beings to procrastinate, to put off changes. "What's the hurry? The old district school was good enough for me and it's good enough for my children." A lot of misplaced sentimentality has been lavished on the "little red schoolhouse." A golden haze surrounds the spot where today's big business men received their first instruction, an admiration in no way justified by the present-day functioning of the rural school system [Ibid. 2/28/29:4].

In a report on the principal's and superintendent's visit to a rural district, much the same point was made: "The viewpoint was also brought out that personal feelings should be foregone in order to give the children of the district equal educational advantages with other schools joining the central school" (Ibid. 10/9/30:4).

Throughout 1929 and 1930, enthusiastic reports of community

acceptance gave way periodically to editorials geared to produce guilt and fear: "The people of Green Valley can hardly be blamed if they are beginning to lose their patience over the cloudy uncertainty in which their promised new school is invested" (Ibid. 11/28/29:4), began one editorial. Or, under the title, "Returning a Favor," another argued that "an opportunity is being offered outside beneficiaries to return the favors they have received at the hands of Frank Farley Academy and simultaneously take the most progressive step they could possibly take for their communities" (Ibid. 12/25/30:4). Or at its abusive height, an editorial threatened that "the old adage, 'Opportunity knocks but once' was never more applicable than to the present case," and asked: "What if the state's offer is withdrawn?" (Ibid. 12/12/29:4).

Despite such covert acknowledgement that the entire proposed school district was not unanimous in its enthusiasm for a centralized school, the weight of reportage on people's reactions to the project was on the side of willing acceptance. Pieces of information about how the new school system would work were often couched in terms of reports on individuals' enthusiasm for specific aspects of the projected school district: lowered taxes (which were designated "inaccuracies" in a later editorial which explained that centralization would not lower taxes uniformly, but that it would in some areas, and that, moreover, ". . . because of the district's resources, it has nothing to worry about" (Ibid. 1/22/31:4); free transportation, a kindergarten, new curricula, hot lunches, and a new building.

In addition to these directly school-related benefits, arguments were also made that the central school would benefit the town economically: "Among the the enthusiastic comments made by the people of Green Valley on the many advantages of forming a central district here was the fact that the building of the new school would be a boom for the town" (Ibid. 2/12/31:1). The school was billed as capable of bringing in new people and raising real estate values (Ibid.) and even initiating better highways and roads: "Better roads have always followed the formation of central district schools in all parts of the state" (Ibid. 2/26/31:4). Finally, the Green Valley "of today" was extolled as "active, progressive and modern," and its advances were attributed to a "century of constant improvement and growth" (Ibid.).

The impression of an increasing consensus in favor of centralization was also created through the newspaper's chronicling of the progress of petition signing in the rural districts. For more than a year prior to the final vote in July of 1931, the newspaper gave front page headlines to any new district which entered the centralization, as well as adding up the total number of districts signed up to that point.

Notions of optimum size, administrative efficiency and consensus politics which were articulated during this period constituted only part of the ideological support for centralization. Equally important were statements about what the methods and content of education should—and would—be. These ideals were conveyed largely through Gazette editorials and, in 1930-31, through almost weekly front-page summaries of talks by professors of

education to a child-study group sponsored by the Frank Farley PTA. Clearly formulated and consistent in their viewpoint, the descriptions of how education should occur or what it should consist of are noteworthy for their "progressive" tint.

Briefly, the focus of education as expressed in the Gazette contained the following values, all of which are integral to Dewey's notion of progressive education: (1) a concern with "the whole child"; (2) an emphasis on practical rather than theoretical or factual learning; (3) a focus on learning by doing, which included greater student participation; this can be traced to Dewey's maxim that since education was for democratic participation, learning had to include action on choices: "Savages adapt to the environment, men transform it" (Cremin 1961:123); and (4) an emphasis on scientific measurement and methods, largely directed toward establishing the individual child's needs and capacities.

Progressive education had developed and grown at Teachers College in New York City and could be found in the course listings on educational philosophy and method of the time. Moreover, most of the faculty at the nearby State Normal School had been trained at Teachers College. In the academic year 1927-28, twenty-one out of thirty-nine faculty members, or fifty-four per cent, had been trained at Teachers College; by the year 1931-32, twenty-seven out of forty-four or sixty-one per cent of the State Normal School faculty had been trained there (State Normal and Training School Catalogue, 1927-28; 1931-32). Without exception, teachers who

had been working in the Green Valley system in the late '20s and '30s remembered that progressive education had been very much "in"; several recalled that this was still a period before the ideas "got out of hand," that is, attained the reputation that progressive education eventually received as being a system where anything could be considered educational. Although the Gazette did not label its educational values as "progressive," there is literally nothing written on education in the newspaper during this period which cannot be subsumed under the four categories which I have listed above.

Several articles in 1928 attempted to justify and articulate the goals of a student council, which had been instituted in Frank Farley. Although the explanations to the public for the student council combine a mixture of traditional and progressive education rationales, the fact of having a student council was very much a part of Dewey's notion of education for democracy. In one article which appeared in the column, "Frank Farley School Notes," historical precedent was combined with administrative rationale in such sentences as "Student council is nothing new because way back in Jefferson's time he recommended a plan of student discipline for the University of Virginia" (Green Valley Gazette 2/9/28:4). The article, somewhat in reverse of Dewey's notion, emphasized that "such a self-governing system may result in failure unless the classes and schools have demonstrated their moral and mental capability equal to the performance of the necessary functions" (Ibid.). And then, in what may even then have

been considered a dangerous admission, concluded:

> Self-government successes are numerous in the United States, but it must be admitted that there have been many failures . . . . A real difficulty is to get students to play the part of "informer" against their fellows, even in secret reports [Ibid.]

The overt connection between student government and disciplinary control is striking, particularly as student government is clearly seen as an instrument for discipline.[3] This hierarchy of priorities, however, parallels the hierarchy the paper seemed to give to the priorities of administrative centralization and democratic decision-making in terms of the organization of schooling in general.

The news items on the PTA-sponsored child-study sessions derived their orientation from an early childhood studies department which had been established at a women's college some thirty miles away in 1927. The PTA recruited professors for their group on such subjects as "the educational value of mud pies" (Ibid. 2/6/30:4), the relationship among health, nutrition and play (Ibid. 5/15/30:4), and what to expect of the child ready for school (Ibid. 5/22/30:1). As important as were the speakers' emphases on "the whole child" and the creative aspects of learning, the very fact that discus-

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[3]An analysis of the ideology of progressive education by David Swift (1971) makes the point that the ideology arose out of the needs of larger, urban schools, and provided new structures for discipline and control in a situation that had become too unwieldy for the old "authoritarian" methods. However, his analysis assumes that the connection between such ideologies as student participation and the goals of discipline was always covert, if not unconscious.

sions were being devoted to children of the pre-school age group was entirely new for the Green Valley community. The emphasis on early childhood in these lectures coincided with the principal's, superintendent's and school board's promotion of the idea that one of the things that the district needed—and that a central school would bring—was a kindergarten.

Meanwhile, editorials on education consistently stressed the value of practical knowledge and criticized or made fun of the "traditional" emphasis on great books or formal knowledge. In an editorial called "Pedants Rebuked," a famous authority and editor of a "leading dictionary" was quoted as saying that language is changing and that therefore teachers who stick by the rules are merely being pedantic (Ibid. 7/11/29:4). Another, entitled "Theory and Practice" argued:

> It is mighty fine to know a lot, but it is even better to be able to do things. Many persons who have at their command a considerable assortment of information are unable to put it to very much practical use.

The editorial followed this with a series of examples, such as the following:

> I know the economic theories of Malthus and Adam Smith, but I cannot live within my income
>
> I have studied the psychology of James and Titchener, but I cannot control my own temper /Ibid. 8/28/30:4/.

Finally, the theory of learning by doing was offered in the Gazette's editorials. Again, using the method of quoting a famous personage, the paper claimed:

> We learn by action, rather than by absorption; learning is specific rather than general; the best things to study are those which are important to our life and work; we should study the things that will most directly contribute to our efficiency and

happiness [Ibid. 9/25/30:4].

Expertise, experts and "scientific techniques" were also part of the new ideology. In contrast to the traditional rural method of argument where familiarity with the person and the person's family was important in establishing grounds for evidence, the new industrial and urban ideologies were bringing with them the focus on "qualifications" for trust. Thus, instead of weighing the evidence with a person's geneaology or how long he had lived in the community (which, in fact, occurs in news accounts and editorials of a century earlier), the editorials of the late 1920s and early 1930s weighted their quotes with the educational and bureaucratic credentials of their authors. Similarly, in attempting to evaluate the validity of an argument, the "scientific" evidence of statistics and recent experiments was mustered.

I have shown how a number of editorials and articles during the late 1920s and early'30s combined the notion of science and scientific planning with the survival of agriculture in the Green Valley area. Similarly, education and the improvement of educational techniques were being linked to the necessity for scientific methods during this period. In particular, scientific methods were to be used in diagnosing the child's needs and capabilities in preparation for teaching him or her, This was part of the attempt to rationalize the teaching process and make it more efficient through a better match between curriculum and child. For example, in an editorial focusing on the "talent for music," the writer quoted a professor from the

University of Iowa to the effect that:

> Through tests devised by psychologists, many interesting and useful facts have been discovered concerning the aptitude of a child for various pursuits. If the information developed by these tests be practically applied [sic], much time otherwise devoted to training for activities for which the child is naturally unsuited may be saved [Ibid. 9/27/28:4].

Although no overt promise was made that the central school would bring such scientific measurement, the connection between large school size and the opportunity for rationalized education was everywhere evident. As the Gazette stated,

> . . . the demands of progress must be met in education, as well as in other phases of our increasingly complex civilization. The new and larger consolidated school, with its staff of better prepared teachers, its improved organization, and its more modern equipment, will mark an advance over the "little red schoolhouse" which must make for a more enlightened and efficient citizenship [Ibid. 6/6/29:4].

In much the same vein, one of the leading authors on rural education wrote in 1913 that "The grading and organization of the rural school is haphazard and faulty. This is partly because of the small enrollment and irregular attendance, and partly because of the inexperience and lack of supervision of of the teacher." In his most condemning tone, the author noted that "Children are often found pursuing studies in three or four grades at the same time" (Betts 1913:20).

The link between the holistic attitudes of progressive education and the notion of scientific measurement and rationalized placement needs some explaining. In the educational training institutes, science, and

particularly the science of human measurement, entered the discussion in terms of the new focus on the individual child, rather than on a body of curriculum which could be taught to an entire classroom (or age-graded group) without differentiation. The tradition of progressive education had developed parallel to, and nourished by, three other tendencies: social Darwinism, behaviorism, and pragmatism. Social Darwinism claimed that while individuals inherited certain characteristics, these characteristics could be acted on and altered if properly identified and understood. The ideology of social Darwinism led to studies of human heredity, to problems of individual differences, to work on intelligence and mental testing, to classroom groupongs and the process of classroom instruction itself. Behaviorism as an ideology and practice came into play both at the level of testing and measurement and of instruction techniques. Dewey's own ideas were nourished by behaviorist thinking, as were his followers.[4] Paradoxically, Dewey's emphasis on "the whole child" led others to rely increasingly on a system of tests and measurements which segmentized the subjects' thought and action.

Dewey's ideas had also been influenced by the pragmatism of William James. Truth was no longer to be an abstract fact learned or held in a vacuum; rather, the truth quality of a thing or idea could only be

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[4]See Cremin (1961:90-126) for a good discussion of the interplay among these modes of thought.

discovered in the process of its interaction with the world. Truth worked. The Gazette's ironic treatment of the person who knows the psychology of James and Titchener, but cannot control his own temper, emanated from this line of thinking.

The parallels between the theories developed in the teacher training institutes, the notions of education implicit in state directives, and the system of beliefs about education expressed at a local level, in Green Valley, are not difficult to draw. From the editorial and articles in the Gazette, one senses that many of the ideas developed in the academies and in the state bureaucracy remained relatively intact, although the theoretical underpinnings were often left out. For instance, the newspaper may argue that individuals learn by doing, on the one hand, and that one may test them to see if they will be good at a particular kind of learning, on the other. But no connection is made within the confines of the newspaper between these two seemingly unconnected conceptions of the nature of learning. In many instances, the Gazette editorials appeared like rather accurate, but simplified versions of the more "scientific," "scholarly" or bureaucratic discussions of the problem and its solution that were being issued at other levels.

Still, progressive education was a broad notion, subject to many interpretations. It may be this very breadth, in fact, which made the ideas subject to use in so many directions and toward so many ends. That it became embedded in the educational arguments that were being used to promote centralization in Green Valley and elsewhere is not surprising. Progressive

education expanded the notion of the school's responsibility for the child, thus implying new curricula and extended services unavailable in the rural schools.

In the case of Green Valley, the relative closeness of four teacher training institutes may account for the articulateness and richness of the ideas on education that were being expressed at the time. One neighboring college for women had just inaugurated one of the first early childhood learning centers in the United States in the late 1920s, and contact between the college and the Green Valley school system was continual. Teachers went to the college once or twice a year for one-day training programs, and the college sent up speakers, such as the ones who lectured at the PTA meetings. Two other institutions, a State Normal School across the river, and a State Teachers' College seventy miles to the north in the state capital also provided continual feedback, as teachers went there—women generally to the former, and the few men to the latter—for the new required courses and returned with "the latest ideas." Teachers College in New York City, which for a long time had been the center of progressive education, was less than a three-hour trip away, and several members of the faculty who sought extra prestige attended summer classes there. Finally, communications and networks between Teachers College and the Normal School were strong, with one-half to two-thirds of the Normal School Faculty in any one year trained at Teachers College.

But neither the ideas surrounding progressive education nor the

notion of centralization were new when Green Valley began to take them on in an active way in the late 1920s. As Blanche Morton told me, "The state said, we've waited forty years for Green Valley to ask for this." This was probably somewhat of an exaggeration. But James, Thorndike and Dewey had all written seminal works as early as the 1890s, and arguments for rural school reform (in particular consolidation and centralization) had started at the turn of the century.

The configuration of ideas I have described were developed in an urban context and were largely responses to a changing urban situation. Legally, the state had replaced the family in its responsibility for education with the compulsory education act of 1874. As urban life made the family a less viable institution for socialization, progressive education provided the ideological flesh to fill in this structure. Moreover, as others have shown, centralization in the cities was part of a move to wrest educational decision-making out of the hands of working-class immigrants. Larger schools and a more professional staff meant the possibility for extended services and curricula; but it also meant a greater removal of educational decisions from the layman. Finally, Swift has pointed out that the ideology of progressive education fit into urban school consolidation by allowing new administrative and curricular flexibility in an increasingly overwhelming educational picture.

> It gave school executives freedom to devise methods of coping with troubles as managerial problems. Faced with the mounting pressures of large, complex organizations, some adjustments had to be made. It was no longer possible to concentrate upon the clearly stated aims of

> the traditional school; other problems also had to be met, even though they were not specifically educational in nature. Something had to give, and room for adjustment was provided by the broad goals of progressive education, permitting the school to shift its emphasis away from scholarship, from mastery of subject, and even from education in any form toward other urgent issues which confronted it [Swift 1971:66].

Thus progressive education and centralization had been closely knit solutions to urban problems. The logic of their transfer onto the rural sphere is a complicated one, difficult to discern without knowing those in the teacher training institutes and the State Department of Education who worked out the theories and programs for the rural areas. One theory of bureaucracy is that its need to rationalize for efficiency leads to homogenization and standardization. That urban theories and methods became transferred onto rural education, and not the other way around, is not surprising in the light of the numerical and cultural dominance of the cities. But the analysis of the teacher training institutes and the State Department of Education is outside the scope of this document. Rather, what concerns me here is the configuration of economic and ideological pressures which led Green Valley, and other rural districts like it, to accept urban solutions to problems which they themselves had never experienced—and had no reason to believe they would ever experience—at the time.

The 1930-31 Teachers College Bulletin lists seventeen courses in "rural education." One of the courses, presented in greater detail than the others, announces that five topics will be covered, among them "consolidation

and administration of rural schools." The description of the unit goes as follows:

> The rural school unit; rural school administration and finance; consolidation as a factor in the solution of the rural school situation; its history, present status, and future trends. Chief problems of consolidation—transportation, supervision and instructional improvement—and suggestions for their solution /Teachers College Bulletin 1931:105/.

The course description indicates one of the forces which one must understand if one is to understand centralization in Green Valley: that is, the influence of the teacher training institutes. Another was the State Department of Education, with its apparent need to make rural and urban education of the same cloth. A third was Green Valley's need for an economic and ideological solution to a dying agricultural way of life. This made it particularly vulnerable to ideas and solutions which were colored with notions of modernization and progress. In 1928 the Gazette had asserted the need for "farm plus factory" (Green Valley Gazette 12/6/28:4). People in Green Valley hoped that a central school would give their village the injection of new economic vitality it needed.

Chapter V

FORTY YEARS OF CENTRALIZATION: THE CHANGING POLITICAL-ECONOMY OF GREEN VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

There are two official records of the Green Valley Central School District: the annual district budgets and the minutes of the board of education. Both stand as parts, as well as symbols, of the system's accountability to the district residents, on the one hand, and the state on the other. Inadvertently, these records also provide an invaluable source to anyone interested in the history of the school district. This chapter focuses on these two types of history. Through the foci of the budgets and the school board minutes, the chapter outlines the relationship of the school district to outside bureaucratic forces, largely emanating from the state, as well as describes the development of structures within the district. Because the school board stands in a crucial mediating position in terms of both the flow of influences from outside the district, and the changes within it, much of the chapter is devoted to the changing nature of the board of education itself.

A budget of any organization is not merely an objective record of expenditures, categorized into objective types of spending. Rather, like any record, it both reflects and creates or recreates the ideology of the institution of which it is a part. School budgets do not simply list the amount

spent for teachers, books, light and heat. Categories of expenditures have become increasingly more general, leaving it to an assumed (even if not in the end achieved) agreement as to what is meant by such headings as "instructional materials," "maintenance," or "debt service." Moreover, some categories are more difficult to visualize than others: "interfund" as opposed to "employee benefits," for instance. And still other categories of expense that one might expect to find—"administrative costs," for instance—do not appear at all, or at least only under camouflaged headings and in initially surprising places. Thus the budget of a school reflects its ideological history, and one must sometimes extrapolate from this history another one about what "really" happened, what really was spent.

The purpose of centering a history of the changing structures inside and out of the school district in an analysis of the budget is twofold. In the first place, the budget provides access to one very important dynamic in this changing character of power relations through its itemizations of financial aid from the state and federal governments, on the one hand, and through its designations (or lack thereof) of changing administrative costs within the budget, on the other. In the second place, the ideological aspects of the budget are rich sources for analyzing the relationship between values and ideals concerning the allocation of power and responsibility for schools and what may, in fact, at times occur.

Like the budget, the minutes of the board of education reflect an ideological viewpoint. However, whereas the budget reduces the annual

operation of the school to specific categories of expenses, the minutes of the school board abstract the monthly or bi-weekly discussions and decisions about school operations into unemotional, curt statements. The typed, single-spaced pages of the school board minutes convey almost cryptic summaries of what must often have been long and difficult situations: "Mr. Olan reported that he talked with Janitor O'Conner relative to the complaint received at the meeting of September 25" (GVCS Board 10/18/30). From the onset of the district's recorded minutes in 1918—when the school board administered the Union Free School—discussions, arguments, complaints and even compliments and sales pitches are never spelled out. Rather, the reader is allowed to witness the fact of their having been one of these without however, being allowed in on its intricacies. "Mr. Treadwell spoke of the advantages of a central system" (Ibid. 7/9/35). Or, when the state was beginning to clamp down on the conflict of interest among board members: "Albany called to the Board's attention the matter of the preparation of an honest budget" (Ibid 11/5/34). Or, more recently, "A new grading system, new criteria for honor rolls, and a 10-week report card period were discussed and are to be put into effect as soon as the mechanics can be worked out and publicized" (Ibid. 12/15/65).

The characteristically dry, "objective" tone of the school board minutes reflects both ideological and practical considerations. The role of the board of education is unlike that of any other organ. Robert Bendiner has said that a:

> . . . school board is really neither legislative nor administrative in function, and only in the most limited way, judicial. Almost entirely outside these normal categories, it has homier and less precise functions, not usually to be found in civics textbooks at all: It is local philosopher; it is watchdog, and it is whipping boy [Bendiner 1969:3].

Although I would agree with Bendiner's assessment of the ambiguous role of school boards, even in a rural district like Green Valley the board of education was far from "homey." Rather , it saw itself predominately as an administrative or managerial organ[1] and in most instances operated according to administrative ideology. That is, like other administrative organs, the school board's discussions and decisions implied a belief in efficiency, in scientific objectivity as well as scientific research as a means of coming to administrative decisions, and in the backwardness of a value-based system of action. Technology per se was seen as a good by the three farmers on the school board as well as by the three IBM employees who served during the 1972-73 school year. (For example, although it was unclear to what use a computer terminal would be put in the school, the board supported the science department chairman's request for one. The only arguments I heard against this or any other new technology was their expense.) Finally, in line with

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[1]In an interesting book on administrative ideology in China, Franz Schurmann makes the observation that in the West administrators have generally been to public enterprises what managers have been to private ones (F. Schurmann 1966). Except for one recent book, The Management of Education by Umans (1971), which explicitely attempts to improve educational planning through the adoption of business techniques, this distinction appears to hold true.

the advice given in the Education Law book published by the New York State School Boards Association, meetings emphasized "business-like" procedures and tone (Hageny 1972).

Equally important, the tone of the school board meetings and minutes reflected practical considerations. Meetings and minutes are open to members of the school district as well as higher authorities such as the state, making it less conflict arousing if both are completed in as brief, synoptic and dry a manner as possible. In fact, when an active PTA asked for a representative at all meetings in 1949, an institution called "the executive session" was adopted in Green Valley, enabling the board to prohibit district residents from participating in what went on unless they chose to do so, as well as freeing them from having to record even the outlines of the content of these sessions. After several years, PTA interest in board meetings declined, but the institution of the executive session continued. As one school board member described it in 1973, "Executive sessions are where we take our gloves off and really hack things out with one another." Executive sessions are devoted to such items as reviewing a specific teacher's or administrator's performance prior to either promotion or negative sanction; or discussing disciplinary actions toward students whose offenses have led school administrators to seek a school board hearing on possible expulsion; or deciding on potentially inflamatory expenditures such as administrative salary increases, which do not fall under the contract negotiations conducted for teachers and civil service personnel and may therefore be considered unearned.

Although the final decision on any of these matters must be made in "open" session, all preliminary discussion can be dispensed with during "executive session," before the board comes out. Thus all board decisions are also ultimately placed into the minutes to become part of the permanent record.

Despite the value-free tone of the minutes, they are a good indicator both of the changing nature of the school board as well as of its relationship to other constituencies, from the principal to parents to the State Department of Education. They provide an accurate record of the kinds of items which are dealt with by the school board, as well as the decisions made. At times, the very restricted nature of the description itself provides a clue that some possible conflict lies underneath. Often when I checked out cryptic statements of hirings, firings, or pupil expulsions, to name the most obvious, I discovered that complicated and emotion-laden stories of these incidents had been retained in the memories of those who had been there.

The heavily-bound Green Valley School Board minutes run from 1918 to the present, but an important break occurred with the onset of centralization in 1931. Before 1931, the minutes reflect merely those decisions made by a board for the Green Valley Union Free School. There are no remaining legal records at the local level for the nearly thirty rural districts, each with their own elected trustee, which eventually fed into the centralization. The trustees, as I have said in Chapter III, were responsible to the county superintendent, who in turn was responsible to the state. But within this hierarchy, the trustee was left a good deal of

discretion to make his own decisions. He could, even in the twentieth century, raise monies for improving the school or buying equipment either from his local parent group or from the superintendent; he could hire and fire the teacher—presumably with the consent of the parents involved; and he could offer the school building and its equipment to nonschool groups for their events. Budgets were kept individually for each rural school; often they included little more than the teachers' salaries, and a few dollars for fixing things and buying equipment, since the trustee and the parents took care of much of the maintenance and repairs, while the teachers and students took care of firewood, water and other daily upkeep. Still, all of these responsibilities had to be coordinated, and it was a good trustee who ran a well-kept school.

With the initiation of a centralized school system the position of the trustee vanished. Instead, in Green Valley five members were elected as the board of education. Much like the trustees, the board would be in charge of the budget, of school building and maintenance, of hiring and firing, although new areas of decisions such as transportation would be added. In the first decades of centralization the school board members were informally elected to represent different geographic areas within the district, which was an attempt to retain the representation which had accrued under the district system. But the number of lay individuals participating in school decision-making was cut to one-sixth of its previous number.

This decrease in the number of lay people making school decisions

was not unique to Green Valley; nor was it unique to rural school districts. Rather, the decrease in number of lay citizens on school decision-making organs had begun in the cities throughout the country in the late 1890s and early twentieth century. It had taken place coincident with the introduction of professional commissioners and as part of an ideology of school administration which stressed efficiency in school management as well as in the processing of pupils. New York City—the closest major metropolis to Green Valley—had been one of the latest to streamline its board of education, because of pressure from various immigrant groups to maintain control at the ward level. Its forty-six member board had finally been reduced to seven in 1918, and then only after the Flexner Report and much political agitation had pushed for such a reduction.[2]

In Green Valley, the reduction in the number of citizens participating in running the school took place without any developed ideology. The rural schools were closing; their trustees would no longer have schools to run. A new central school would be opening, which would require five members to run the school board. That was all—at least as it stands for the historical record in local memory and the Gazette. In the spring of 1931, a banquet was held for the rural school trustees, in which they were urged to support centralization if they had not, and thanked for bringing their districts into the centralization, if they had done so. The newspaper records that

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[2]For an interesting summary of the history of School Boards in six major cities, see Cronin (1973).

after a series of speeches, a guest from an already centralized district "summed up the remarks of the evening by saying, 'You are here because you think centralization is the best thing for your children, and ten years from now you will KNOW it'" (Green Valley Gazette 5/21/3/:1). Other than this one symbolic end to a system which had lasted more than a hundred years, there seems to have been no transition.

One of the changes which centralization immediately brought about, then, was to collapse the chances for any individual of participating in school politics. The five men who formed the first Green Valley Board of Education had worked on the centralization and were among the more economically influential persons in the school district. Two men, Mr. Walters of the feed-coal-lumber store, and Mr. Morton of the bank, had been on the school board of the Green Valley Union Free School prior to centralization. A third man also had a feed-coal-lumber business in a village to the north, and would alternate with Mr. Walters in supplying the school its heating and equipment needs during the next decades. A fourth was president of a construction company in a village to the east of Green Valley, from which the school would also buy supplies and services in the next years. And the fifth was a farmer from a hamlet toward the northwestern end of the district, the only region in the district which would, in fact, resist closing down its rural school for nearly thirty years to come. While these men gave a semblance of geographic representation characteristic of the old system, they certainly did not cover the range of either hamlets or economic groups which

had previously been represented. Small farmers, for example, a group which had predominated among the trustees, never appeared on the list of school board members; nor did men or women of the numerous semi-skilled occupations which were and are important in the area.[3]

In addition to these five elected individuals, a Green Valley man who had been retired from the collapsing railroad was appointed district clerk. Mr. Amsley held the job of district clerk for the next twenty-eight years until 1959. His wife, Rachel Amsley, became cafeteria manager in 1934 when the school instituted a lunch program and continued as manager until the same year her husband retired. Finally, a man from the southern part of the district was appointed as a combination attendance officer and bus head, a job which he held until 1950. These three individuals were paid for their

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[3]The overrepresentation of businessmen and professionals on school boards has been noted by several critics of education (Counts 1927) but it was widely accepted in the early years of the twentieth century that "men of large affairs" made better school board members than did "cranks or extremists, women, . . . politicians of a low sort, saloon-keepers and kindred spirits" (Callahan 1962:150). Ellwood P. Cubberly, in one of the most widely used textbooks, Public School Administration, wrote that among those who make the best school board members that:

> . . . men who are successful in the handling of large business undertakings—manufacturers, merchants, bankers, contractors, and professional men of large practice—perhaps come first. Such men are accustomed to handling business rapidly; are usually wide awake, sane, and progressive; are not afraid to spend money intelligently; are in the habit of depending upon experts for advice, and for the execution of administrative details; and have the tact and perseverance necessary to get the most efficient service out of everybody from superintendent down [Cubberly 1916:124,125].

work, although initially not a living wage. The Amsley's, in fact, added to their joint income for many years by taking in unmarried teachers as boarders.

The school board itself remained substantially the same for the next decade, and until the 1950s represented the same geographic and economic influences, even when specific individuals changed. School board members consistently came from the four corners of the school district, as well as from Green Valley, and represented such economic concerns as the bank, the farming constituency, and the feed-heating-lumber businesses. In addition, a minister and two Green Valley dentists also had short terms during this twenty-year period.

With the onset of centralization it appeared on the surface that Green Valley had caught a new political-economic life-line that other neighboring villages and hamlets had missed out on. Symbolic of the power of this life-line, the central board of education would be making larger-scale decisions than had any or all the trustees. Instead of an individual trustee deciding on the life of one teacher and a dozen or so students, the joint decisions of five would effect thirty-two teachers (twenty in the central school and twelve in the rural schools still open) and 490 students. Instead of allocating a total of less than $1,000 a year—or even a total of $30,000, as all the trustees might have, if they had ever grouped together—they would be making decisions concerning $54,000 in the first year, double that in the second, and substantially more each year thereafter. There would be new

groups of personnel to decide upon and administer: a clerk, a truant officer-bus head, a growing number of bus drivers, janitors, cafeteria people etc.

What gave the appearance less than reality was the fact that through centralization the school had entered into a qualitatively new relationship with the State Education Department. This bureau would increasingly regulate the context, the process and the content of the decisions made at the local level until much of what would come to be called school board decisions would, in fact, merely be a formal ratification of decisions previously made at the state level.

The manual of Education Law published by the New York State School Boards Association compiles the web of state laws on student, teacher, administrators and board rights and powers, on school building use and insurance, on keeping records, local finance, state aid, etc. In a list of thirty-five "duties of a board of education of union free or central schools," the boards are told that their purposes include the establishing of rules and regulations for discipline; the prescription of pupils' courses of study (within state guidelines); the provision of medical inspection to all children attending; the purchasing of sites, furniture, etc.; the furnishing of lighting facilities, janitorial care; the raising of taxes, and so on. The description of duties allows for little free range in creating new activities, and such explicitly stated duties as "providing milk for school students" have the effect of trivializing the entire list. The union free or central school board appears

as little more than elected office managers or administrative assistants.

And yet the ideology remains strong in the American educational tradition of the local school board as "one of the strongholds of democracy" (Hageny 1972:iv). The preface to the 1972 edition of Education Law reflects the attempt to reconcile this tradition with the increasingly vast amount of authority emanating from above. While it calls the school board "one of the basic local units in American society which must continue to function with increasing effectiveness if the democratic control of our society by the people is to be preserved" (Ibid.:iv), it devotes several paragraphs to the issue of state and federal authority:

> This nation-wide coordination of American education must come primarily through our boards of education working toward common ideals in serving common needs. It must also come through those common educational laws and regulations of our state and national governments which constitute the "ground rules" by which the board operates.
>
> As our society becomes more complex and the scope of education broadens, these "ground rules" become more involved. The board must constantly guard itself against permitting them to handicap instead of facilitate its primary function of determining educational policies. The burden of looking up the laws and regulations needed and the uncertainty when information is incomplete may seriously hamper a board in its decisions [Ibid.:iv].

The manual then offers itself as a solution to the problems of increasing regulations. But despite its attempt to locate the problem in the difficulty of keeping up with regulations or looking them up, the State Department of Education's authority is in direct contradiction to a school board

"function of determining educational policies." In the spring of 1973, the Green Valley school clerk estimated that in preparing the budget for the coming year he had approximately $50,000 which was not constrained by state regulations out of a total of nearly $3 million. While there might, in fact, have been kinds of autonomy which the school district was not taking—for instance, a district can write a proposal to the State Commissioner to be exempt from the standard curriculum requirements, including regents—few schools use this or other options for autonomy. It may be that by now many of the state regulations have become internalized as educational "essentials," and that without an equally powerful model it is too difficult for most administrators to break loose from even optional constraints. In Green Valley, the clerk's estimate of the district's degree of financial autonomy was, in fact, rather close to the sum by which the 1973-74 budget was cut after being voted down by district residents.

Whatever its political results, in 1931, the village had received an economic plum—and one it sorely needed. Since the mid 1920s, the Union Free School had been hard pressed to pay its expenses. As with other institutions in the village, including the railroads, it had been increasingly difficult to make ends meet. The school board minutes of these years record almost monthly loans from the local bank "to pay teachers and other expenses." At first these loans were for $500 to, at most, a thousand dollars. But toward the end of the '20s they consistently ran over $1,000 and often went as high as seven to eight thousand dollars. Thus the state's offer to

finance half the cost of transportation and one-fourth of the cost of constructing a much needed new building, in addition to maintaining its past level of financial commitment, was an important incentive to centralize. In 1931-32, the first year of centralization, money received directly from the state as a result of centralization, as opposed to through its traditional line from the county, more than equaled the latter. Of a total budget of $54,000, $30,000, or fifty-five per cent would come from state money (with $24,000 from property taxes); but more impressive to the voter, of the $30,000 in state funds, $15,275 represented new sources of funding for transportation and other costs directly related to centralization.

But even as an economic plum, this new source of monies had its drawbacks. What in fact occurred was less of a financial relief to the running of the school itself than the paper proposals had promised. State finances were tight in the early 1930s, just as they were at every other level of the economy. State monies were arriving late at Green Valley more often than not so that borrowing at six per cent or more interest continued simply to meet the cost of even reduced teachers' salaries and other routine expenses.[4] School construction plans as well as scheduling were altered periodically to meet state restrictions to reduce spending or delays in funds. Like other areas

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[4]For several years starting in 1933, ten per cent was deducted from teachers' salaries to keep the school running. Such a deduction was apparently not unique to the school. Even Mr. Walters deducted ten per cent from his employees' salaries during this period.

throughout the country, both Green Valley and the state had to be bailed out through federal relief. Between 1934 and 1939, a TERA project provided immediate assistance for the total cost of labor and one-third the cost of materials on much of the outside work done on the new central school, including sidewalks and landscaping, as well as several masonry projects on the inside. It was during this period, too, that the federal government began to provide a small annual sum "with the approval of the State Education Department" for vocational education, one of the new courses brought in with centralization.

While the amount of state funding for education has skyrocketed in the years since 1931, federal funding directly to Green Valley has scarcely increased to meet even the rate of inflation. Rather, it has remained oriented to specific subjects or skills, maintained at a rather even level of support: vocational education in the 1930s, vocational education and "defense classes" as well as a lunch program in the '40s, vocational education again in the '50s, and in the 1960s special "Title" funds for low-income students and for programs to help students with reading difficulties. Starting at around $1,000 in the 1930s (not including relief financing), the level of federal funding has never run much over $3,000 annually, and it has usually been around $1,000.[5]

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[5] In fact, federal investment in education has increased markedly since World War II, some monies being issued directly to communities or even individuals, while other monies are directed through the states (C. F. Camp-

In contrast, state aid to education has been based on complicated formulas structured around numbers of pupils and days of attendance, with additional formula-based funds available for specific services or programs. In New York State, the base rate of the formulas has gone up dramatically, making education one of the state's largest expenditures. State aid to Green Valley increased by over seventy-five per cent in the first year of centralization, from $30,000 in 1931-32 to almost $47,000 in the 1932-33 school year. It increased at a slower rate after that, reaching approximately $75,000 in 1942-43, $200,000 in 1952-53, and $375,000 in 1962-63. It then made dramatic increases in the 1960s and early '70s, to the point where state allocations budgeted for the 1973-74 year are over a million and a quarter dollars.

However, despite this gigantic increase, the proportion of funding from the state relative to the total revenue used for school operation has, after an increase, come back to its initial level. The table shown on the next page indicates the rate of state support at ten-year intervals.

As the table implies, an increasing sum has had to be raised from other sources to meet the total revenue needs. Among these have been the

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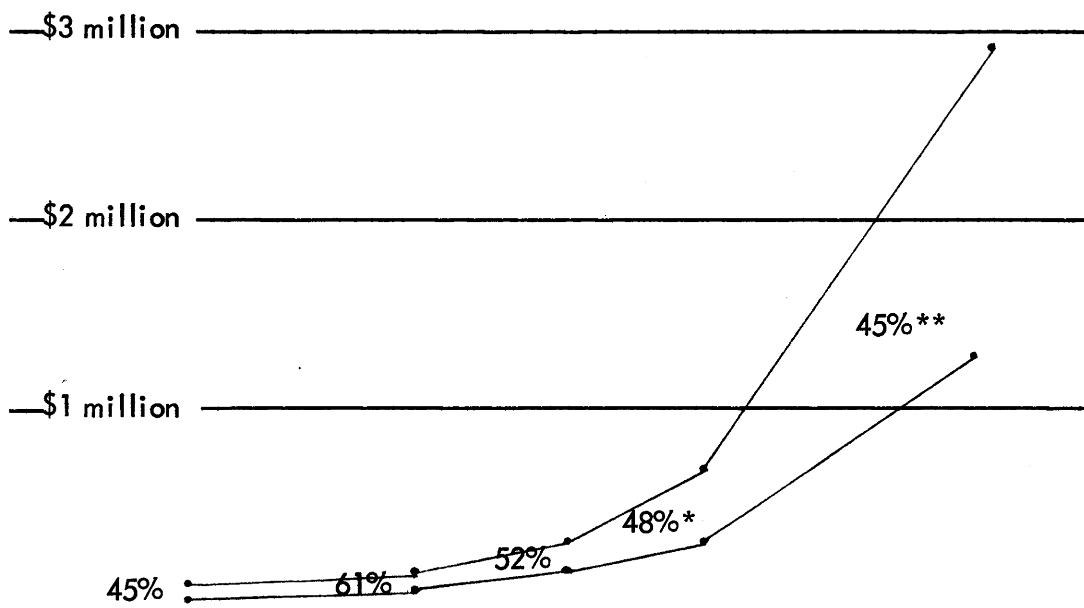
bell and Srouffe 1968). However, federal funds in general in New York State comprise a smaller proportion of the total educational expenditure than they do in other states. For example, in 1968-69, federal funds supplied 4.2% of the revenue for public education in New York, while they supplied as much as 11.6% in Texas, 15.1% in New Mexico, and 15.9% in Oklahoma (Campbell 1971). Within New York, much of the federal funding goes to urban, rather than suburban or rural areas like Green Valley.

TABLE III

STATE AID RELATIVE TO TOTAL BUDGET

	1932 -33	1942 -43	1952 -53	1962 -63	1973 -74



*The 1962-63 state aid includes 2% for building.
**This includes state aid to BOCCS.

sale of school property, revenue from athletic events or rental of the school to local organizations, and tuition from "nonresidents" early in the school's centralization and later from adult education classes. But far more important than any other category has been the tax levied on district property. As state aid has generally stayed just under fifty per cent of the total school revenue, property taxes have increased from thirty-four per cent of the revenue in

1932-33 to around forty-seven per cent in 1973-74. Table IV below shows their proportionate increase by ten-year periods:

TABLE IV

PROPERTY TAXES AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL BUDGET

1932-33	23%
1942-43	27%
1952-53	17%
1962-63	33%
1973-74	47%

Clearly, the initial promise that centralization would not put an additional financial burden on Green Valley tax payers has not held.

Given the dramatic increase in responsibility for revenue from district residents during the last two decades, the question can be raised about the relationship between this change and the structure of control over the life of the school. By analogy with business where any investor who controls the largest percentage of stock controls the corporation, one might expect that there would have been a changing dynamic of control to match the changing economics of funding. Or, if not, one might expect some form of struggle to gain control by the district as its proportionate contribution has come to the point of matching the state's.

As I shall demonstrate in more detail in the remainder of the chapter, hierarchical forms have emerged which, in fact, have diminished the many possible aspects of local control while increasing those emanating from the outside, even as the proportion of local funding has also increased. However, without any new information, it is clear that local control has not increased relative to the district's increasing responsibility for educational funding. The fact that there has been neither local consciousness of this fact nor any kind of concerted resistance against it stems from two factors: First, resistance to increasing property taxes does exist in the district, and has accelerated during the last several years. After only one vote-down of the budget in its entire history, and that for symbolic reasons when a rural school was closed in 1960, two annual budgets were voted down since 1970. The 1973-74 budget met with unprecedented resistance: after being voted down three times, the district was forced into an "austerity" or "contingency" budget. That is, according to the state, which defined "proper expenditures" under such a budget.

> The following have been ruled in the past to be contingent expenses: teachers' salaries, janitors' services, lights, office supplies, water, telephone service, school transportation (when within the state mandate of two and three miles) etc. /Hageny 1972:1:19/.

But votes against the budget in Green Valley were against tax increases as such. There was no overt discussion of the relationship between property taxes and state support. The vote against the budget took place

merely on the premise that school expenditures should be cut.

Second, resistance against property taxes is diffused by the large differences in tax rates among the nine townships in the district. For example, in the 1972-73 year, the assessed rate for school taxes per $1,000 in property values ran from $20.78 for a township at the northern end of the district to $136.40 for a town at the southern end. These differences are prominently displayed in the annual budget publications sent to all voters, where each township's rate is itemized for all to make comparisons. In contrast, the state's contribution is listed in another part of the printed budget along with all other sources of revenue, as if it were of equal importance as, for example, a thousand dollar income from athletics.

Comparisons made among property owners of different townships are not the only ones which distract from the state-district comparison. When talking among themselves, property owners in the district focus much of their attention on the legitimacy of different categories of property assessment. There is much bitterness on both sides towards the differential assessment of agricultural and residential lands. In the 1972-73 school year, many arguments arose among teachers, some of whom had farmers as spouses or parents, as to the justness of the far cheaper agricultural rates. Individuals sympathetic to the farmers pointed out that farms were closing because of increasing taxes and that their land was essential to their production. On the other hand, some teachers bitterly complained that they worked as hard as the farmers for their money and, having finally purchased their "little acre," they didn't

want to be taxed more for it.

Older people in the area often complained that a property tax which was estimated across the board on the basis of the value of the property without respect to other factors discriminated against those on social security and pensions. They argued that their homes and land had been paid for long ago, that they were not responsible for the increased assessed value, that it had been years since they themselves had had children in the school, and that they simply could not afford the taxes. It was some of the older district residents, in fact, who were most active in promoting resistance against the 1973-74 budget. They were the ones who had kept budgets from preceding years, could compare expenditures, and were vociferous against any increases. Not surprisingly, the board of education counterattacked by asserting that these elderly people could not understand changes which left education a different sort of enterprise than it had been when they went to school.

If the diffusion of focus is one factor militating agains consciousness of a district-state relationship either on an economic or political level, ideology also plays an important part. In fact, "the state" as a reified funding category makes little sense, since state money is also raised from local people. There is no room in the ideology as constituted for an argument—which would be logical in the business world—that political control should follow economic investment. This may be because schools traditionally are not considered businesses. Certainly the district's property owners do not consider themselves stockholders, nor do they expect any of the rights which would accrue to

stockholders. It is not up to them to determine their level of investment, i.e. the level of property taxes, nor the kind of expenditures made from their investment. At most they hope that by voting down the budget as a totality, cuts—not decided upon by them in content or extent—will keep their property taxes down.

The fight over the 1973-74 budget was interesting not only for illustrating that the district residents had reached a point of economic frustration high enough to vote down a budget three times in one year, but also for the clues it gave into long-standing sources of tension. One of the prominent irritants which contributed towards the residents voting down the budget was a substantial three-year salary increase which had been awarded to each of the three principals in the district. The increase had been decided on by the board of education. But since the principals always attended meetings, sitting amidst the board, it was assumed that they had all talked over the increase together. Residents complained that this was unfair since teachers and other school staff had to negotiate their increases year after year; they did not win them while sitting around a table "like buddies." A second common complaint was the fact that the initial budget contained two new lines for "administrative assistants." These two potential staff members were to act as vice-principals, although without the title in order to save the district the cost of special principal credentials. The combination of the salary increases and the two administrative assistants amounted to an additional $34,000 in an almost three million dollar budget, but they were widely talked about and several letters

appeared in the local newspaper on the subject.

Although it was never talked about as such, I believe that a third irritant to the voters was the fact that more than half of all administrative expenses, including the new "administrative assistants" were hidden within the budget. A general budget category called "Central Administration" contained the salary of the district principal, labeled "Personal Service, Instructional," and another individual labeled "Personal Service Non-instructional" as well as an unidentifiable number of individuals under the heading "Salaries, Business Office." These salaries added up to $55,300. But even more frustrating to the voter trying to understand the district's expenses, the general category, "Instruction, Regular Day School," also contained the salaries of several administrators and secretaries, again under the labels "Personal Service, Instructional" and "Personal Service, Non-instructional." The salary of the district clerk was listed overtly under the general heading, "Board of Education," and sub-category, "Personal Service, Clerk & Treasurer" and given the salary of $1,000. Yet everyone in the district knew that the district clerk was making around $12,000 so that most of his salary had to be listed elsewhere. During the 1973-74 budget hearing, there was a good deal of confusion and aggravation among audience members as they tried to decipher the meanings of the categories as well as discover where people whom they knew worked for the school were listed.

I do not believe it was malevolence or conspiracy on the part of those who prepared the budget that caused the obscuring of administrative costs.

An ideology which justifies high and numerous administrative costs in education has scarcely been developed in urban areas, where top-heavy personnel expenses have existed for over half a century. Rather, administration is always collapsed into notions of "leadership," on the one hand, or of technological necessity, on the other. In the textbooks for prospective administrators one sees the alternation of these ideologies. For example:

> The administrative leader in the elementary school has both an opportunity and responsibility for influencing the quality of the educational program. . . . A vital element of productive leadership is the ability to illuminate. Through enlightenment it becomes possible to look beyond the status quo to potentiality [Hicks 1956:76].

Or, in a more technological vein:

> As we see it, the central purpose of administration in any organization is that of coordinating the efforts of people toward the achievement of its goals. In education these goals have to do with teaching and learning. [Campbell 1971:120].

In Green Valley, the notion of administrative leadership is one which people once held to more than they do today. People often speak of a principal who ran the entire district until the mid-1960s as having been "a real leader." But leadership has become diffused with the addition of new administrative personnel, and the notion of the technological necessity of coordination is only now coming into the area—and not being well received, at that! It has been many years since the "salary of principal" was a subcategory of instructional services, along with "office supplies," "teachers salaries" and textbooks. Bureaucratic language has entered the budget along with the

bureaucracy it describes.

The second 1973-74 budget presented to the voters had cut expenditures by $24,000. The two "administrative assistants" had been eliminated, but the salary increases for the three existing principals had been retained. As the district clerk informed me, "Once an increase is voted on by the board of education, it can't be taken out of the budget." In a newsletter sent to district taxpayers, the board explained that everything in the budget "was necessary for the proper operation of the system next year" and that further reductions "just do not appear to be feasible"(Green Valley Gazette 1/12/73: 1). Summarizing the board's newsletter in a first-page feature story, the local paper stated:

> The biggest items in the budget are salaries and operation costs and the salaries have been negotiated under the Taylor law and cannot be changed. The administrative salaries, stated the newsletter, "have been established for the next three years at what seems a high level, but which is much lower than our neighbors." "Operation costs, for the most part, are beyond our control."
>
> The only items that could be cut, the newsletter said, were those that most directly affect the education of the children, like library service and the health education program.
>
> The board said it could reduce the custodial program, but that it is already inadequate to care for the District's $8 million investment in buildings and grounds.
>
> It also could reduce part of the music, art and physical ed programs but the district is already below state recommendations for a minimum program [Ibid.].

Finally, the board argued: "'What is really wrong is the PROPERTY TAX [caps theirs]. This should not be the basis for paying for education. It is not a fair tax. The school board cannot change this, but the State Legislature

could" (Ibid. 8/30/73:1) .

The Board's arguments centered on the issues of necessity and constraint: necessity on the inside in terms of what *had* to be in order to keep a school running, and constraint from the outside in terms of such binds as the Taylor law state recommendations, or, more generally, property taxes as a means of funding education. But voters do not accept the doctrine of necessity and constraint, even if they do not know how to act against it, except through a no vote. The second 1973-74 budget was defeated, although by a slightly smaller margin than the first.

The third budget was given the warning title, "austerity budget." Cut $61,428 from the initial amount presented, it included nine propositions to be voted on separately for such "extras" as an interscholastic athletic program, purchasing $10,000 worth of library books, funds for student field trips, money for maintenance equipment, and transportation money for children within a two to three mile radius of the district school. The propositions also included two items on the hiring of administrative assistants, so that they might be voted on separately. All in all, the propositions amounted to $61,428, and if approved of in *toto* would have brought the budget up to its initial level.

Like the other two budgets, however, even the third was received with resistance. The base sum was not negotiable, but out of the nine propositions offered to the voters seven were defeated. The items on the administrative assistants were the most badly beaten. The two approved items were passed by a narrow margin.

> The only items approved were, Proposition I, to provide instructional supplies to students free of charge (although no cost factor was involved, the item required voter approval since it was included in the contingency budget) and Proposition 7, a $5,000 appropriation to provide maintenance of a full transportation program, which will increase the estimated true tax rate by seven cents [Ibid. 8/30/73:1].

It is not uncommon among individuals not directly involved in high schools to wonder why so much emphasis is given to interscholastic sports. Americans from the President on down are well known sports fans. Sports have been an important component of social solidarity, whether the unit is the family, the school, the state or the nation. Yet I believe that the traditional importance of sports and its functions for creating social solidarity are insufficient to explain adults' reaction to the loss of interscholastic sports in Green Valley. This is particularly so since Green Valley students were not that involved in interscholastic athletics. The Green Valley school budget had scarcely been voted down for the third time when a petition began to be circulated to hold another referendum on the athletic budget alone. The one hundred required signatures were quickly gotten and increased to over 1,300, after which there was a period of debate among the school board members about whether or not to attempt to add three more proposals—for equipment and books—to the referendum. Due largely to a fear that the athletics budget would go down if the other propositions were attached, the former was finally voted on and accepted alone.

Several months before the series of votes on the school budget I had

had a long talk with the district clerk who, at that time was preparing figures for the initial presentation. His desk covered with the many state forms and instruction sheets and innumerable calculations, he looked toward the annual vote with ironic amusement. The figures on the budget presentation would only be guesswork, he said, as one never knew until after the vote how much money the state would be giving the district. Moreover, he said, there was little that anyone in the district had the power to decide on, since state regulations established rules and restraints on almost every item in the budget. The only decision a district could make, according to him, would be to go on an austerity budget, which would cut transportation and eliminate interscholastic athletics. (In fact, even those two items were legislated as the ones to be curtailed on an austerity budget.) As he saw it, in early spring some $50,000 out of the total budget was really open money. "They might as well abolish district elections," he said, "and stop fooling the people."

School board members also seemed to feel a kind of impotence. While they wanted to think of themselves as doing good and new things for the school district, they felt caught between what they saw as the initial constraints on any budget, largely having to do with state regulations, and the unwillingness of the taxpayers to spend beyond that base figure. At times, they spoke of the district residents as not understanding the importance of education or the dynamics of what it takes to run a school. And they felt the district to be particularly ignorant of the new innovations which made education better each

year, at the same time as it became more costly. But there were also moments when they recognized that the spiralling cost of education was pinching even their pockets. Most of the board members considered themselves "conservative," cautious with the district's money. As the district principal said when he stood up before the residents at the annual budget meeting, "The present board is the most conservative I've ever had to work with, but has been more involved and worked harder than any board I've ever known."

The administrative staff ended up as the group most under fire in the 1973-74 budget elections. While the district anger at their increases had not been directed at them personally, the three principals felt personally attacked and out of favor. During the summer months a note of nervousness pervaded the district principal's office where the three gathered almost daily to rework the budget and make plans for the following school year. If the budget had been "theirs" and the board's to present to the district voters, the final referendum for interscholastic athletics had reversed the order of things, making them in this preparation for the new year much more like servants of the people.

Finally, the votes of the district residents can be seen as emanating from both anti-hierarchical and anti-bureaucratic impulses. From the perspective of the district taxpayers, the vote for interscholastic athletics, coming as it did on the heels of a series of votes against the budget—but particularly against administrative costs—was a positive thrust toward putting the school back in their own hands. Whatever cynicism teachers, administrative personnel or the board may have felt toward the emphasis on interscholastic

sports, the number of signatures on the athletics petition far exceeded the number of voters who had turned out at any one of the budget elections. To be sure Green Valley people have always been sports fans. But athletics also represented the one area of school life that had been left to the people. Thus, after having voted down all the budgets, as well as money for interscholastic athletics when it had been presented as part of the board's budget, the district residents set about building school sports through their own voluntary efforts.

The impulse to regain some control over one's school has at least two origins: (1) an ideology once common through the country, but more intact in rural and even suburban than urban communities, that education should be of and for the people—in fact, that all institutions should be; and (2) a memory which still remains in the minds of most individuals over forty and thus in a secondary form in their children of a time when the Green Valley schools did seem to be more a part of their lives and more within their grasp. Symptomatic of the increasing distance between the school system and the district residents is the decrease in use of any of the three school buildings for the activities of local voluntary organizations. Although part of the ideology of school centralization was to make the schools more integrated in the lives of the people related to them, centralization, at least in Green Valley, has brought with it increasing goegraphic distance and bureaucratic regulations, both of which have made the schools less accessible to residents.

School board minutes record each time an organization has requested the use of the school for any activity, organizations often making a request

once for regular use through the school year. Although the absolute number of requests has not declined significantly through the years, remaining at about half a dozen annually, there has been no growth which would match the growing population of the area, particularly in the last decade. Moreover, the requests reflect a dramatic constriction in the variety of groups linked into the school. Some of this is due to the dying out of the groups themselves, such as happened with the local Sportsmans Club or the Green Valley Athletics Association. Significantly, men's voluntary associations have dwindled in recent years, as men's work lives have brought them into contact with men from other towns and villages, and it is only the local women's clubs that thrive in active form to this day. But some has also been due to a loss of connection between the organizations and the school. Among the wide range of groups which used the school regularly until the late '50s were such organizations as the American Legion, the Grange, the Green Valley Garden Club, the Lions Coub, the Women's Auxiliary, the Historical Society, the Civic and Business Men's Association, and the boy and girl scouts. Of these, only the Garden Club and the scouts are regular users of the district schools today. Equally significant, when requests are granted, they are invariably for the old Frank Farley School. The new junior-senior high school has remained virtually free of voluntary association activity. When the local historical society requested the use of the new school's auditorium in the spring of 1973 for a large anniversary celebration, the request was denied but after much discussion the society was finally granted the use of the Frank Farley facilities.

It is not conscious malice of school people toward the town that has caused this increasing separation. Rather, insurance costs and state regulations have made it more and more difficult for the school to maintain an easy interchange with the community. Fire, theft, burglary liability and vandalism insurance did not begin to play a prominent role in either the economics of the school or the considerations of school people until the 1950s, and when it did attitudes changed rapidly toward having "outsiders" in the school. A common expression in Green Valley, as it is in any school system, when a request is made having to do with school property is: "Will our insurance cover it?"

The first bureaucratic regulation emanating from outside the school system which made for a separation between the school and the local voluntary associations was the enforcement of the separation between "church and state." It took place in small ways in Green Valley, from a regulation that year-end exercises should be called "commencement" rather than "baccalaureate," and that if religious matters were included the exercises should not be held in the school "on account of the ruling by the Commissioner of Education that such a service is illegal" (GVCS Board of Education 7/11/51), to a rule that the school could not be lent to religious organizations for their meetings. In 1950, a request by International Harvester to use the school gymnasium for a farm machinery show elicited a new rule that the school was not to be lent "for commercial purposes" (Ibid. 9/6/50). The struggle to define what was and was not correct or legal usage of school facilities seemed not to get resolved,

however. As late as 1966, a request from the Green Valley Youth Group to use the gym for a dance elicited the following entry into the school board minutes: "The School Attorney suggested the Board carefully define educational and charitable purposes, exercising care not to be discriminatory. All like organizations are to be treated equally (Ibid. 10/12/66).

The growing emphasis on regulations caused the school board to take two steps in the 1960s: for the first time, the board purchased McKinley's Educational Law Book, a document containing all legal decisions in the field of education in New York State, and it began to include an attorney in its annual budget as legal consultant.

Concommitant with the increasing regulations which have blocked an easy flow between the school and local voluntary associations, organizations outside the school district have demanded more and more of the school board's and administration's attention. The minutes record an increasing assortment of county and state education organizations with their meetings, seminars, study groups, luncheons and conferences: a country-wide school board association, a tri-county study council, county and state teachers' and supervisors' associations. Specialization of teachers has brought with it countrywide organizations and meetings for math teachers, guidance personnel or reading specialists. Similarly, the demand for increasing educational credentials to match this growth in specialization has forced teachers to spend more and more time during after school hours in one of the the teacher training institutes within a ninety mile radius. In the 1972-73 school year, more than half the

teachers in the Green Valley system were spending one or two evenings a week in "upgrading" their credentials. Moreover, a new state ruling to the effect that teachers had to be certified in every subject they taught, rather than in just one, would force a number of teachers to increase their course load during the 1973 summer and the following school year.

In the late 1960s the specialization of educational functions had merged with the increasing interrelatedness of different districts within the county to result in a special county-wide vocational school and school for students with learning disabilities. With the opening of the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) Center at the southern end of the county, a significant part of the school community moved geographically outside the school district and structurally outside of any direct control.

Started with the initiative of federal and state funds in the early 1960s, BOCES was originally a coordinating institution which sent specialists to the various districts in the county to work with students having "learning disabilities." Then in 1969, state and federal financing helped build a campus style school some thirty miles south of Green Valley which housed two buildings for students with "severe learning disabilities" as well as a huge vocational training center for such trades as automobile mechanics, small and large machinery, data processing, draftsmanship, nursing and cosmetology. Symptomatic of the changing economy of the area, BOCES offered an agricultural machinery course, but no agriculture course as such. A latent function of the new campus, which began to draw over one hundred Green Valley students and

similar numbers from other county schools, was to provide the school systems with a dumping ground for troubled students. In Green Valley, students who attend BOCES are conscious of being stigmatized even when they themselves feel they have chosen to go for a specific skill.

Like other school districts in the county, Green Valley buys a "BOCES package" each year, which includes "services" for a certain number of vocational and learning disability students as well as a part-time psychologist, a reading specialist, and several special education teachers who work full-time with students who remain in the Green Valley schools. The package is included in the budget in toto, although some explanation is given at the annual budget hearings as to its breakdown. Parents interested in observing the BOCES program in action may ride the school bus from Green Valley on one of two days a year when the local PTA sponsors a tour of the facilities. However, even with a BOCES budget breakdown and a tour, no individual can make even the kind of critique against administrative growth which residents made of the schools in Green Valley. In the 1973-74 budget hearing the district principal used an overhead projector to exhibit a well-composed chart (probably done by BOCES drafting students) whose purpose was supposed to be to illustrate how $245,500 of the district's money was to be spent for BOCES services during the following year. The chart was broken down into categories based on the types of students to be helped by the packqge: "mentally retarded educable - fifty students," "mentally retarded trainable - six students," "hearing - four students," or "occupational program - sixty-five students."

The district principal gave the cost of several of these categories as he went along, although it was not on the chart. However, as the breakdown was constructed based on per-student costs, it obscured the fact that real decisions had been made by real people about real people, materials and job allocations—both teaching and administrative. The categories themselves, almost frightening in their scientific determination of the categories of learning problems in the district, added to the illusion of necessity. Despite the audience's generally critical attitude, no one asked questions about the BOCES expenditure.

The institution of BOCES represented merely the last stage in a long process of increasing specialization and decreasing autonomy and control among school people and the school district. Centralization was initiated to bring with it specialization, and it fulfilled its promise in this area. In the fall preceding centralization, in fact, a note from the school board minutes records for the first time that "No teachers shall be janitors" (Ibid. 9/9/31). The first courses to be set up once centralization had occurred were commercial, homemaking, physical training and vocational education, all of which were begun the first year. The following school year, with the assistance of federal monies, the school set up an agricultural course. Its teacher instantly became the highest paid faculty member in the school, since the entire salary and forty per cent of the cost of the course were paid for by the government. The third year of centralization brought a cafeteria manager to the school; the fourth, a secretary to the principal as well as an assistant cafeteria manager.

Notes on the fifth year record the entrance of a school nurse and a "supervisor of buses." By 1939 a librarian had been added to the staff as well as a formal list of "substitute teachers" and a regular "medical examiner."

With the beginning of US involvement in World War II, the federal government offered money for an industrial arts course as well as defense classes. These courses were established in the school with one teacher for both, the man again becoming the highest paid member of the faculty. The government also offered money for a "food conservation course," but the course was never instituted. Similarly, an art course was "encouraged" by the State Education Department in 1941 but was not introduced until some time later.

What is important about the subjects introduced in the beginning decades of centralization is, first that they were without exception nonacademic, and second that they were introduced as a result of state or federal pressure and not local demand. (See Table V.)

TABLE V

GENERAL OUTLINE OF SUBJECTS OFFERED
GRADES 9-12; 1922-23; 1932-33; 1972-73

1922-23 (pre-centralization)	1932-33 (2nd year of centralization)	
Art	Agriculture	Latin & French
English	Art (drawing)	Mathematics
History	Commerical	Physical Training
Latin and French	English	Vocational Training
Mathematics	History	
	Home Economics	

TABLE V—Continued

1972-73	BOCES—1972-73 (incomplete list; includes only those subjects taken by Green Valley students)
Art (including sculpture and ceramics, mechanical drawing	Air Conditioning
Business (typing, shorthand, business law)	Auto Body
Drivers' Education	Auto Mechanics
English (including Shakespeare, public speaking, American literature)	Building Maintenance
French (four years)	Carpentry
Health	Cosmetology
Home Economics (cooking, sewing)	Data Processing
Industrial Arts (including shop, auto mechanics, plastics)	Distribution and Merchandising
Math (including geometry, algebra)	Drafting
Physical Education	Electro-Mech. Assembly
Science (including earth science, chemistry, biology, physics)	Exploratory Occupations
Social Studies (including geography, American studies, world history, psychology, sociology, African studies)	Food Services
Spanish (four years)	Heavy Equipment
	Home Management
	Machine Shop
	Masonry
	Nursing
	Office Practice
	Printing
	Small Engine/Appliance
	Technical Electric
	Trade Electricity

Rural students who had left their one-room schools for a more modern education found themselves with more mundane subjects than they had ever had before. Moreover, by introducing vocational-technical subjects in the curriculum, the federal and state governments were taking on educative functions once maintained by the home and industry through the traditional institutions of learning from older siblings and parents or from formal apprenticeships. Industry might save on apprenticeships and training programs, but the people would pay through property and other taxes which financed what they believed would be the new, modern education.

True, centralization later came to provide for other subjects of an academic nature: Spanish, physics and chemistry (with their richly equipped laboratories) and more recently sociology and even African studies. But the dynamics of specialization have remained the same. On the one hand, the introduction and funding of specific courses from governmental sources has led to an economic and political inequality among teachers emanating from the outside. Teachers who have been able to attach themselves to outside funding, such as for industrial education in the 1930s or the physical sciences in the 1960s and "special education" in the late '60s and '70s have had access to resources outside the school which have increased their ability to manipulate and move within the school environment. But, unlike the athletic coaches who can better their position inside the school through power gained from the local community,

these teachers have won their position through resources stemming from the state and federal level.

On the other hand, specialization has been followed by an increasing routinization of teachers' functions. Despite an ideology of professionalism which has risen since the 1960s, teachers in fact operate more and more in a routine fashion as their sphere of teaching is increasingly constricted. Where teachers in the rural schools once had an entire day to organize and teach within as they saw fit, specialization has brought with it well-defined periods even in the elementary grades, and specific subjects to be taught often five or six times a day in the same manner each time.[6] In 1972-73, most junior-senior high school teachers in Green Valley taught at most two subjects a day, with one subject being repeated at least five times.

The new certification requirements will, in fact, increase the proletarianization of teachers' functioning. By making a teacher have certification in each subject that he or she teaches, teachers will generally be forced to do away with the remainders of variety that prevail in their jobs.

But specialization has not only created monotony and repetition

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[6]The ideological origin of the blocked-out day with students passing from class to class is, in fact, much more similar to its result than was the justification for it in terms of a progressive ideology by the time it reached places like Green Valley. Originally called "the platoon" system, it was developed around 1910 after the efficiency theories of F. W. Taylor had hit educational administration. Modeled after the assembly line, the platoon system overtly held students as the parts to be processed and teachers, each in their own classes, as the workers processing them until they emerged at the other end, theoretically, a finished product (Callahan 1962:129,130).

for teachers. Another latent byproduct has been to decrease their power and authority in the school. As teachers have become more specialized, it has become necessary to hire an increasing number of guidance and administrative staff, the former because only they can understand the totality of the child and the latter because only they can see the totality of the institution. The growth of guidance and administrative personnel is not related to the growth in population of teachers and students in any one-to-one manner; rather, it is related to the growth of specialization. If a French teacher's sphere of competence is French and a physics teachers's is physics, then there must be someone who can understand and make decisions concerning the totality. This, then, is the competence and sphere of the administrator. But administrative totality has been lost through segmentation and specialization. The single principal in Green Valley first split his function with an "elementary supervisor" in 1946, and then in 1969 an elementary principal and junior-senior high school principal were created with functions directed toward their specific schools, while a district principal became the individual concerned with the relationship of the school district to other districts and funding agents such as the state and federal government. Similarly, the functions of discipline, counseling, and preparation for further education or future careers once held by a single guidance personnel have become divided among nearly half a dozen individuals in Green Valley: a part-time psychologist; a woman who keeps attendance records; two men with training in guidance, one who focuses on college-oriented students and the other on vocational students; a secretary

who handles minor disciplinary infractions; and the principal who deals with graver ones. In fact, the principal himself can refer disciplinary problems to the board of education whose prerogative it is then to act toward suspension or expulsion. Thus even those whose job it was initially to view the totality no longer do so, and while teachers in Green Valley feel a diminution in their power as do teachers elsewhere, administrative staff feels no complementary increase. Those decisions not made outside the school district altogether still seem to have no real power source inside the district.

Chapter VI

CHANGE AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY IN GREEN VALLEY

The discontinuation of the railroads in Green Valley had caused a qualitative change in the area's economic and social life. But change had not stopped once the area readjusted to the lack of rail transportation. Rather, a slow process of transformation had begun which continued into the 1940s, '50s and '60s. By 1960, out of 704 workers in Green Valley, only 169 or twenty-four per cent were in the agricultural sector. But by 1970, the number of workers had shrunk by one hundred, despite a total population growth of around two hundred, and the number of agricultural workers had declined to eighty-four or twelve per cent of the total working population. This decrease paralleled that in other townships in the district, although it was more severe at the southern end. In Martinville, for example, the southernmost township in the school district, agricultural workers had declined from eleven per cent of the working population in 1960 to less than five per cent in 1970.[1]

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[1]The year 1960 statistics compiled from U.S. Bureau of Census in Dutchess County Data Book (1969); 1970 statistics from U.S. Bureau of Census special printout for Dutchess County Planning Department.

Simultaneously as agriculture had declined as the major industry, the largest growth had occurred in the general area of services (hospitals, educational services, etc.). In Green Valley, the service sector had increased from twenty-five per cent to thirty-eight per cent of the working population between 1960 and 1970. In Harmondale, another township at the southern end of the district, the service sector constituted forty-three per cent of the working population by 1970. In fact, the County Planning Department predicted in 1960 that "jobs will increase thirty-nine per cent by 1980; manufacturing will grow significantly, but service trade will be greatest with a 92.5% rise" (Dutchess County Data Book 1969:91).

The following tables represent a tabulation of those parents of junior-senior high school students whose occupations were listed in the students' personal files. The first illustrates the distribution of fathers' occupational sector by grade level of the student, the second by the students' home township.

Within the private sector, fifteen seventh graders, nine eighth graders, seven ninth graders, four tenth graders, seven eleventh graders and six twelfth graders had fathers who were listed as IBM employees, or a total of forty-eight. (This number is actually somewhat under-representative, as it does not include those fathers who were listed as "engineer" or "foreman," and who were therefore not clearly IBM employees.) Those fathers clearly identifiable as employed by IBM constituted over twelve per cent of the fathers working in the private sector, and over eight per cent of all the total popula-

tion. Of the forty-eight students whose fathers worked at IBM, twenty-seven or fifty-six per cent lived in Martinville and Harmondale, the two southernmost townships in the school district, and another nineteen or nearly forty per cent lived in Green Valley.

TABLE VI

OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR OF FATHER BY STUDENT GRADE LEVEL

	Agriculture		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total Number
7th	17	17%**	16	16%	67	67%	100
8th	21	18%	21	18%	71	62%	113
9th	22	21%	18	17%	63	61%	103
10th	12	15%	15	19%	49	64%	76
11th	12	11%	12	11%	81	77%	105
12th	14	17%	14	17%	53	65%	81
Total*	98	17%	96	16%	384	66%	578

*Total does not include fathers who were retired, deceased or who did not show an occupation. The total student body varied between 700 and 725 students at different times of the year.

**Represents percentage of students by grade level.

The changing configuration of work in the area had not gone on unnoticed. Nor had the changes which had occurred in land usage or in the people who lived in the area. In 1972-73 when I worked in Green Valley, people of all ages talked a good deal about change. Students and teachers

alike gossiped idly about farms which had become inoperative, the influx of city people as summer and weekend home owners, the widening roads and thruways, and the destruction of the old, historic homes and other sites.

TABLE VII

OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR OF FATHER BY HOME TOWNSHIP OF STUDENT

	Agriculture		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total Number
Martinville	8	16%**	10	20%	32	64%	50
Harmondale	17	9%	26	14%	140	76%	183
Green Valley	24	14%	32	19%	109	66%	165
Venice	10	16%	16	27%	33	55%	59
Grantville	6	31%	2	10%	11	57%	19
Northrup	3	37%	0		5	62%	8
Lucaville	4	8%	7	14%	36	76%	47
Holden	15	42%	4	11%	16	45%	35
Lundenberg	13	81%	1	6.25%	2	12.5%	16
Total	98	17%	96	16%	384	66%	578

**Represents percentage of students by township.

About five miles outside of Green Valley, the owner of an expanding franchise had gradually bought a dozen neighboring farms and was building a "residential paradise" with golfing, swimming and other recreation facilities.

His argument to the town when he asked for a rezoning ordinance had been that the new development would provide the school with an additional tax base without putting an added burden on it. Since he expected mostly vacation-owners and retirees, few new children would use the district schools. During the winter months as I drove past the area to and from school, I could hear advertisements for "Splendid Acres" on a major eastcoast radio station. But the only sign of progress on the development was the growing network of dirt roads which cut through the farm lands. A few homes had been built, and the golf course had been landscaped, but for months nothing seemed to be going on. People said that the man was now having trouble with sewage permits, that he was in arrears on his taxes and was moving dirt back and forth as a tax loss, that he was crazy and did not have rational plans. Some time around Christmas, his home, which was situated on one of the farms, burned down. People in Green Valley seemed pleased to hear the news. While some insinuated that other developers had been discouraged in similar fashions, I also heard talk that the man had just renewed his insurance.

People of all ages felt change about them and it made them ill at ease. The retired Principal, Mr. Hodge, and several retired teachers came to the junior-senior high school when substitutes were needed; they complained bitterly of the inadequacy of their fixed incomes and of the inequity in their paying the rising property taxes. In their day, they often noted, it did not cost so much to run a school. People who lived alone spoke of locking their doors for the first time, although there were no specific incidents to provoke

this change. Teachers and other staff, whose husbands, fathers or siblings worked on farms, talked about the new "equalization" law which was making land too expensive to keep. They argued with other teachers over the wheat sale to Russia and the rising cost of soy beans and other feed, all of which made it nearly impossible to maintain livestock, they said. If their families could not hold onto their farms, they would sell to real estate developers, and with the reduction in farm land they warned that agricultural prices would go up even farther.

Several teachers who lived in a neighboring village just outside the district were involved in stopping developers from building "model villages." These businessmen had presented their plans for rezoning and development to the town board three times during the winter and spring months, draining the energies of residents who were faced with one battle after another to preserve their land. Finally, in late spring in an ingenious move to preserve themselves and their township, the residents declared a moritorium on development proposals until they had updated and secured their own zoning laws. One day during this period an argument sprang up in the teachers lunchroom between one of the residents of this town and several teachers who considered themselves liberal and forward-looking. The latter analyzed the efforts of the town as racist, saying that what they really wanted to preserve was the all-white constituency. Although, in a somewhat rare instance of tact, I said nothing during the argument, I sided with the man who had worked to stop developers; whatever his or the town's racial attitudes, the village in which

he lived was a lovely one with many historic buildings and beautiful farm lands surrounding it. I found the county planning office's resigned acceptance of an "inevitable" growth rate of 100% in the next ten years difficult to take.[1]

Teachers and other school people talked about changes which had occurred in the kind of student who attended Green Valley. Many spoke of a decline in student ambition. A brochure put out in the early 1960s showed that Green Valley students then went on to "Ivy League" schools.[2] Now only one prestigious school, a college some thirty miles away, received at most one Green Valley student a year. Explanations for this change were

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[1]County Planning Offices are interesting places, as is the profession of planning. I visited the Dutchess County Planning Department several times during my fieldwork to get maps and other demographic material which their offices put out—most of which was quite detailed and excellent. The employees sat amidst multicolored and textured maps, always assuming the inevitability of expansion, and only trying with their colored magic markers to find spots amidst their already congested designs where growth "would not be as damaging" or where development would not tax beyond endurance the available land, air and water resources. Having never conceived of an advocacy position in terms of stopping development, the employees were openly resigned to having even their small-scale suggestions ignored. And so it seemed, their maps got increasingly colorful as the county began its trek toward choking itself with thruways, developments and industrial sprawl.

[2]The brochure, Green Valley: A Place to Teach, A Place to Live, A Place to Grow (1962), states: "Green Valley graduates have made excellent records at such schools as Princeton, Dartmouth, Brown, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Yale, Colgate, Amherst, Lafayette, Southern California, Notre Dame, University of California, RPI, Wellesley, Wesleyan, Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Smith, Russell Sage, and many others. Several students each year are granted advanced placement credits in these institutions."

usually formed in terms of the initiation of community colleges, and in particular of a county community college about forty miles south of Green Valley which offered admission to any high school graduate. People said that since a student could be assured of college entrance, there was no longer any reason to excel.

The head of the science department was fond of describing the posts now held by his former graduates—they ran from doctor to physicist to medical writer—and he was openly sardonic about the lack of interest which his present students showed in science courses or science careers. Although I could not corroborate how good things had been, I was aware that few students had career plans of any professional nature, and fewer still had any in the sciences. Of the entire senior class, only one student was operating with a science career trajectory, and that was a girl who intended to become a doctor. Teachers were capable of spending whole lunch periods discussing the decline in the quality of students. The older ones each had their stories of students who had done special things which no current student would ever think of or be able to do, while the new teachers gave examples of the current lack of student quality and listened patiently to stories of better days.

Students were also considered to be less interested in nonacademic aspects of school life than ever before. An older teacher complained that boys were allowed to play football and basketball with long hair because the

coach was afraid that he would have no players if he kept to the earlier dress code rules. The coaches themselves talked about the difficulty of recruiting boys for different sports and keeping up their interest during the practice season. When a prominent athlete in the school broke his wrist ice skating just before basketball season, a number of teachers were incredulous: would boys no longer even take care of themselves in order to participate in sports? In a similar vein, the music teachers complained that students had stopped taking private lessons, so that any learning of an instrument that occurred did so in the school; moreover, Mr. Weaver, the band teacher often said that he had lost the support for band he had once had—among the students as well as administration. On the one hand, uniforms and instruments were rundown, while on the other he found it difficult to get students to put in extra work and time for performances.

Male students, in particular, were aware of the demoralization of faculty because of the decline in interest in interscholastic sports. At times, they played off the situation to their advantage, consciously participating in a sport in order to assure themselves of good grades, for instance. One student used the music practice rooms as a hang-out smoking area, as he said to me, "because Mr. Weaver needs me. I'm his only sousaphone player, and he wouldn't dare kick me out of the band."

On the other hand, the negotiation for grades and freedom from harrassment through contributing to extracurricular activities could also backfire for students if they themselves were unable to come through. For

example, one day in late winter I walked into the principal's office just as a senior, Rick O'Donnell, was standing at the front desk, arguing with the secretary over a charge of being in the hall without a pass. "Mr. Sears would never have pulled me in," he was telling the school secretary, "If I hadn't just told him yesterday that I wasn't going to turn out for his f...... track." The secretary told him to watch his language and assured him that Mr. Sears had nothing personal against him, and that if he just had the right attitude he would not get into trouble. In contrast to the secretary, however, I assumed that Rick had some grounds for his assertion. Later he told me the following story:

> The year before last I didn't go out for football because I had busted my arm the year before and it was still a little fragile. And then I was walking down the hall to go to the gym and it was during lunch period, and Mr. Flannegan came out and started giving me a hard time about being in the hallway without a pass the same as Mr. Sears did. So I had a fight with him. He ripped up my shirt. I had a brand new turtleneck and sweater on. He ripped the neck right off the turtleneck, put two big holes in the sweater.
>
> He'd told me to go to the office, so I said "Okay" and I turned around and I said "Jesus" when I turned around, and he came up and grabbed me, you know, and my Irish came out. I have a bad temper and my temper went off and I guess so did his. And he said I hit him, but I never hit him, 'cause I said, "If I ever hit you you'd be sitting here with a black eye." And so the next year I went out for football. And when I went out for football I made best friends with Mr. Flannegan and, you know, nothing goes wrong. I can go down and punch him in the mouth and he won't say anything, do anything, because I go out for football. And the same with Coach Morse. I get along fine with Coach Morse because I play football and Coach Ferguson

> because I play football. But see, Coach Ferguson isn't as bad as some of the other ones, because like I told him a couple of times I was going to go out for wrestling, and then I decided I couldn't because I had to work and he got mad at me for two or three weeks and then it didn't matter.

The problems of protecting oneself through offering the school something can become complicated when priorities and power relations among teachers intervene. For example, when a band member was taken to the office by one of the coaches, he tried to get his band teacher, Mr. Weaver, to intervene. However, despite Mr. Weaver's defense, the coach's complaints held sway. The boy who told the story said it showed how sports were more important than music in the school.

"Old timers" in the school often talked about how it was increasingly difficult to discipline students. There were a number of reasons given for this, including a lack of consistency in punishment. Before describing these reasons, however, I want to insert a story related to me about the "good old days" which may illustrate that unruliness among students had not changed as much as had the structure of authority in which discipline took place. One day Mr. Jameson, the drivers education teacher, told me a story of his days in the Frank Farley school just before centralization:

> Some of the things that happened were . . . in the study hall one of the boys had thrown three eggs at one of the study hall teachers. As he walked across the front of the study hall, the boy stood up and threw the eggs at him. He missed, but they went all over the wall. This type of thing existed. And we had an assembly once every week, every Friday morning, and the boys . . . someone put erasers inside the piano, so it wouldn't

> work. Once they put three or four cats in there in the piano, and when the lady got up to play, she sat down to play and it wouldn't play. Once they had a rooster in the piano. And things like this. Pranks. Turtles, and snakes and frogs. When a teacher would open a drawer to get out work or something, a snake would be in there or turtles. Every once in a while a skunk; they'd catch a skunk and put it in there.

Perhaps there was something more innocent to Mr. Jameson about these "rural" forms of fun, although the following story also told by him did not seem particularly innocent or rural:

> When I started in Frank Farley in the first—they didn't have a kindergarten then—that was in 1919. But these boys, I remember, they were expelled from school, so they came back and the principal, he was only there for a year or two, by the name of York, they went into his little office and hung him out of the window by the legs. And that was a high building; it was only the second story, but the rooms were over twenty feet high; he was way up in the air. And they held him out and said they'd be glad to pull him in as soon as he reinstated them. Which he did do after a couple of minutes. He said, "Okay, boys, you can go back to school," and they hauled him in.

Still, Mr. Jameson, like other long-standing members of the Green Valley school system, insisted that discipline was an increasing problem. He was unusual among the old-timers, however, in that he still remembered cases of discipline problems. Many former students and teachers in the Green Valley system maintained that in their day there had simply been little or no problems of aggression among students or from students directed at adults in the system.

In addition to blaming the inconsistency in punishment for problems

in maintaining discipline,[3] a common object of blame was the parents—"the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." Teachers and administration alike pointed to the meagre support which parents gave to school authority. There were periodic stories about parents coming in to defend their children: the father of a girl who had been told not to wear clothes which left her midriff bare came in the next day to insist that his daughter could wear whatever she wanted as long as she did her school work. The principal often joked that these days he had to fight both parents and students. In contrast, the teachers who had worked in the district for many years remembered times when a student was afraid of being punished at school because it meant that he or she would be punished once again, only doubly hard, at home.

On the other hand, the principal also complained that parents had come to demand that the school take entire responsibility for training and disciplining children. He said that parents want you to take over their responsibilities, and gave one example of a student who had gotten all 60's on his report card and the parents called him and asked him what they could do.

I said, well, there are several things to try, but I can't

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[3]In fact, punishments for cutting class or smoking were handed out rather bureaucratically. Two days detention were given for every class cut; five days were given for being caught with a cigarette. But within this system, students could obviously avoid being caught, or receive help once caught, through the system of negotiating their resources with the school.

> give you a sort of nice, neatly programmed package because it would be all over. I could put it on computer bank and there wouldn't be any need for me because you'd just have recipes for handling kids. So I talked to the parents and said well, one of the things you could try is either punishment or reward. One of them might work or a combination of them might work. I said, for instance, you could deny the kid use of the car, of your family car. I asked whether the kid had a car or not. They said two weeks before they had bought him a car, a brand new car. So I moved from reward to punishment and said why don't you just lift the kid's car keys and say that the next time marks come out, if they're appreciably better, you can have them back. The parents said, oh, what a brilliant idea, but why don't you call him into your office and take the keys from him. So of course I said, I can't do that. He's not my kid. That's your problem and you deal with him at that level. The parents said, well, we just simply can't do it. There's no way in which we can lift the keys from the kid. You see what I mean, this is the kind of thing you're dealing with, that you haven't got any base of home support. No wonder the kids are misbehaving.

A common object of blame for the decline in discipline among older teachers was the growing legalism which permeated school life. School people complained that the law left them with their hands tied. One not only could no longer hit students, but one could be sued if one so much as touched them. Teachers complained that the principal was always saying, "You can't do it legally"; their complaint seemed to carry a double-edged criticism—against the legal system for having permeated their lives, and against the principal for shifting responsibility from himself onto the law. One teacher asserted, "When I talk to Mr. Wyatt, legal, legal always goes back to law! You can't do it legally. But I'm sure that Mr. Hodge didn't have the legal backing either." Whatever the principal's personal reasons for explaining

his actions or lack of them in legal terms, the law was being called into play in new ways to limit the school's power. For example, the year before I got to Green Valley, one of the younger teachers had had a suit brought against him for shaking a student. And in the winter of my fieldwork, when two male students were suspended from school for smoking marijuana, they surprised the school board, administration and teachers alike by getting themselves a lawyer who argued their case using the impossibility of detecting marijuana and the school's illegal actions on technicalities surrounding suspensions. When the board refused to reverse the suspension, the lawyer took the case to the Commissioner of Education, where it was eventually reversed at the state level. While the school was forced to take one boy back, it had in the meantime used its own legal weapons to keep out the second boy: reexamining the road where he lived, they decided that his address was outside the district.

Some school people also spoke of students' increasing consciousness of the law as an additional factor in the breakdown of discipline. And the defense initiated by the two boys caught with marijuana was certainly an example. But there were other, more common, examples given. A bus driver complained that when he tried to take water pistols from students on the bus they refused to hand them over saying, "You can't take it, it's not legal." When they said that, he said, "I just showed them whether or not I could take the water guns."

To many teachers, students were also acquiring an abrasive sense

of their own rights, in both a legal and an extra-legal sense. When the drug bust provoked the administration into searching a number of student lockers, the older students discussed the legality of this, and several student council members who attended a seminar on "Student Rights" at another high school questioned the specifics of the law on the school acting *in loco parentis*. Later in the school year when a campaign was instituted to stop student smoking, many students were quite vocal about their belief that "what's fair for one is fair for all" and that if they were going to have to give up smoking, so should the teachers.

Although there was less discussion of a critical nature on the issue, teachers too had become more conscious of their rights in a legalistic sense. Older teachers remembered sponsoring activities because they wanted to and felt it would benefit the students. Some remembered working without pay when finances were held up. And some recalled spending time and money to make things for their classes. Miss Anderson, who had retired in 1970, told me how she had been discouraged from giving Christmas presents to her second grade students:

> When I was teaching over here, I always got them something, you know. A comb, a nail file, that kind of thing. Girls beads, or some little thing. I did it up to the very end because they liked it. And I always felt I didn't care anything about them giving me a gift. But he [the elementary school principal] thought they shouldn't because they couldn't afford it. Parents often talked to me about it, and they *wanted* to give me something, give the teacher something, some little thing, you know. And I could see their point of view, too. But he didn't allow it. And he didn't like my giving them either, but I just did anyway.

Changes had occurred to make an easy interchange of gifts and assistance between teachers and students threatening to faculty and administration alike. The advent of insurance coverage for people and things in the middle fifties had contributed to a decline in teachers volunteering as drivers and sponsors of student trips. Older teachers remembered the time when they had taken students to concerts and plays in neighboring colleges, but now most said that they would never take the chance. The few trips that occurred during the 1972-73 year were done with the use of school buses and drivers. Only one teacher that I was aware of invited a class of students to his house. He had ordered a copy of the movie, The Loved Ones, for them and, as he had expected, was chastised the next day both for paying for the movie and for taking the chance of thirty students at his home.

Although the Green Valley teachers were not in a union *per se*, they were part of the New York State Teachers Association, and the legalism of more urban school systems had had its influence on their understanding of their own rights. Teachers could not sponsor an extra-curricular activity without special pay for it, since to have done so would have meant a kind of rate-busting. Most came to school and left at the contract-designated times. During their period of contract negotiations, they worked "by the rules" for over a week, which meant that they came and went with almost factory precision and did not take papers or other work home. But even once they had received their contracts and were back on a more relaxed schedule, they retained a workers' consciousness of the number of classes they should be

teaching, the amount of time off they should have, and so on. The only situation in which this consciousness seemed to wane was during a battle to stop student smoking in the bathrooms. I will describe this in more detail in the next chapter; here it is sufficient to say that teachers cut into their free time, apparently with no organized resistance, in order to form a surveillance squad for the various student lavatories.

Still, people remembered with such a rigid defense of their own rights. Even teachers who had been in the system only ten or fifteen years could recall the days when the board of education had acted "like a father" to teachers in the school. New teachers had been helped to find living quarters, and if a teacher were ill he might appeal to the board for financial help until he got back on his feet again. Although this paternalistic relationship had ended, most of the older teachers still remembered it with nostalgia and complained that the younger ones saw everything they got from the board —health insurance, sick and personal leave, tenure, extra pay—as a right. The librarian who had been with the school almost fifty years—except for a fifteen year leave of absence during which she raised her children—said to me one day:

> The school board used to be part of us and we were part of them and we were all doing a job together. But it doesn't seem that way anymore. Now, haven't you noticed it as you go around? The school board is on one side of the fence and the teachers on the other side of the fence.

To her, relations with the school board had deteriorated. The board members no longer knew the teachers (she told me angrily how she had been passed by

one in the street; he apparently had not recognized or noticed her, while she felt that after forty-nine years in the school she should not have to speak first), and the teachers no longer went out of their way to be warm and courteous to the board.

> Now, they have a public relations committee on the Teachers' Association, and I say it won't do any good. I said to them, "You have ruined every chance at any public relations between you and the board. A public relations committee won't do it." It is just the thoughtless things and getting mad about five hundred or two hundred or one hundred or any amount of money. There are things you can fight about, but I don't believe in fighting about money.

To the younger teachers, and particularly to those teachers who had come from more urban areas, this Golden Age family of school people which included everyone from service personnel to the school board seemed unrealistic and not even especially attractive. Younger teachers tended to have a combination of fear and condescension toward the school board. Although fear was the smaller component, it existed because it was the board (with a symbolic signature of the district superintendent) which ultimately ratified their tenure or agreed upon salary increases and extra pay or money for supplies. Until the early 1970s, tenure had been granted after three years, but it had been increased to five which gave newer teachers a sense of prolonged "good behavior" and waiting. Their condescension stemmed from their belief that as laymen the board could not understand the urgency of specific needs in the school. For the younger teachers, the older teachers' nostalgia for the days of benevolent paternalism was a periodic source of irritation. For example, during the period of contract negotiations, several

teachers complained that the lack of militancy among their colleagues was a result of there still being paternalist expectations.

However, the dichotomy here was really less between the younger and older teachers than between those with and without experience in urban systems. There were, in fact, a number of teachers under thirty who had grown up in Green Valley or other comparable villages who reacted with equal fear and distaste toward any actions which might be taken as hostile toward the board of education. Presumably, the nature of small town life, with its need to restrain breakouts of inter-group hostilities was as important to their attitudes as were any principles of good teacher behavior they might have received at the training institutions.

For the last several years, as if symbolic of the new economic base of the school district, the composition of the board of education had included three farm owners, three IBM workers at a technical-managerial level, and one housewife whose husband was a writer. Despite the woman's generally conservative vote on issues which came to the board, it was she who maintained the reputation of being the "flaming liberal" on the school board. The male members, on the other hand, were generally considered uniformly conservative in either a complimentary or derogatory sense. When teachers were angry at the board for not coming through with financial support, a common exclamation was: "Well, what can you expect from farmers." This was the case, for example, when the board voted down a computer terminal for the science department—a gadget which other schools in surrounding

districts were purchasing. In contrast, when the board changed its mind on an issue, it was commonly reported as "Mrs. Hawthorne, who last week was for a smoking lounge, is against it this week." But Mrs. Hawthorne also received compliments when they were not due her: when the two students were suspended for smoking marijuana, liberal teachers and students alike spoke about how Mrs. Hawthorne was trying to get them back in. Had they come to the board meetings or looked up the record of school board votes, however, they would have seen that Mrs. Hawthorne's role was a much more passive one.

Certainly, for people of all ages the tensions caused by rapid change had become collapsed (and often distorted) into a number of words heavily laden with emotional connotations. To say that the school board was "a group of farmers" connoted a world of implied insults when talking among school people, while to say that someone was a "city person" could be equally derogatory, although in another direction. In the school, teachers used the comment, "his father's a farmer" or "his family works on the Brenner farm" to infer and explain, without saying it, that and why a particular student was not bright, did not perform well in school, seemed slightly naive, and did not receive support at home for school work. On the other hand, if a teacher described a child as "from the city," one immediately knew that the student was considered rowdy, unmanageable, provocative to other students (he or she should be the one reprimanded if a group of students were caught misbehaving), and perhaps even the source

of life style changes such as sex and drugs. On my first day in Green Valley, a science teacher took me into a study hall and, pointing to a boy sitting toward the back of the sloped row of desks, told me how his older brother had come from the city as a junior and had been so unruly that he had been kicked out of school; that he had come as a ninth grader and was "simmering down"; but that his younger brother, now in the eighth grade would be little problem because of having moved away from the city at an earlier age. Since all three Puerto Rican and most of the half dozen Black students in the school had come from a large city, bringing with them the urban rhythms of walking and talking, the connection between city life and foreign ways was reinforced. Other than the few black and Puerto Rican students in the school, the largest ethnic group with roots in the city were the Italians. The Italian students and their families had come to the area around Green Valley largely as skilled workers—mechanics, carpenters, masons, and the like. Many of them had settled in Lucaville within the last decade, and the earlier reputation of Lucaville as the home of obstinate Germans who had not wanted the last rural school to be closed, was now being layered over with stories of Italian urban emigrees. To say that a student was from Lucaville, therefore, was to say a host of largely negative things about him or her. Lucaville students were from "ingrown Italian families," which meant that their parents did not appear to give first priority to school. A periodic irritant was a group of Lucaville girls who got notes from their parents to take off from school for Catholic religious services. Since their behavior was not

particularly devout, it was assumed that the girls used the opportunity to gossip, smoke and simply have free time. Lucaville students were believed to smoke marijuana, and the girls were considered to have wanton sexual habits while the boys were supposedly thrown into jail for drinking and drunken driving. The following section of my fieldnotes records a conversation which took place in the teachers lunchroom: it gives a flavor of the kind of descriptions of Lucaville girls which were passed about:

> Rhoda was out of school today, as she has been for more than a week. Someone at the table asked what's wrong with her and Mr. Green answered: she has a kidney infection.
>
> Mr. Lloyd: She got a cold in her kidneys from lying on her back on the wet ground.
>
> Mr. Olson: Doesn't she and her friends have a tent and everything all set up over there? I have heard they even charge.
>
> Mr. Lloyd: No, they can't charge. Who would pay?

Some of the girls in Lucaville did have older boyfriends, and a number of them spent their free time hanging around a motel-inn where local bands played on Saturday night. Several girls were devotees of a local band which imitated the black magic scenario of Alice Cooper, including mock murder scenes. Still, they were most often shy sexually and generally quite confused by the reception they received in the junior-senior high school. No Lucaville girl was a member of the cheerleading squad, for example. It was said among the girls that the home economics teacher who chose the squad

thought they were not the right sort of girls. All ten cheerleaders came from either Green Valley or Harmondale, the village to the south.[4] Few teachers and probably no students seemed aware of the possible connection between the long battle over the rural school, which had initiated hostility between the Green Valley school system and Lucaville, and the hostility which was now being perpetuated as city people moved to that area of the school district.

Looked at from one perspective, the antagonism toward Lucaville by residents of the other towns in the district was one of the few remaining signs of localism left. As I have said in Chapter V, when the Green Valley Central School District was formed, representation from the different townships in the system had been an important part of how the school board was constituted. Teachers had been recruited largely from within the school district and, until the 1950s, were expected to live within the township of Green Valley. As late as the mid-1960s, a newly hired principal aroused a great deal of antagonism by buying a home outside the district, and was fired after only a year in part due to the anger this had aroused.

Despite periodic examples of local feeling, however, the tendency has been toward the substitution of bureaucratic credentials for the earlier personal or geographic ones. Where once district teachers were largely

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[4]Actually, Harmondale also was receiving its share of urban emigrees, but the families who moved to this area tended to be those of IBM workers, often people in low or middle management positions.

recruited from villages within it, teachers have increasingly come from outside the area. In 1972-73, of the thirty-eight secondary school teachers, eight were graduates of Green Valley Central School, three more were from other school systems in either Dutchess or Columbia county, and thirteen were from other small and medium-sized communities in upper New York State. Although only four faculty members were from New York City, this was as a result of self-selection, rather than because of any policy of the school.[5] Green Valley was not a well-paying school system; nor was it one from which one might easily career jump.

The tendency for teachers not to be of local origin has been matched by a tendency for teachers not to live inside Green Valley or to be active in locally-based voluntary organizations. In 1972-73, of the thirty-eight faculty members, seventeen lived outside the school district and several lived as far as thirty or forty miles away. Only thirteen lived in the township of Green Valley. Of the thirteen Green Valley residents, in fact, eight had taught in the school system more than ten years—most of them significantly more—or were of local origin.

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[5]This self-selection process resulted from a number of variables. One of the most obvious was the educational background of the teachers. Of the secondary school teachers, more than half had attended state or city teacher training programs in one of the many campuses which dot small towns throughout New York State. The remainder received their BA degrees in either state universities and colleges outside New York—particularly in the South—and in small, private, relatively unknown colleges in New York and Massachusetts. Only one teacher on the entire faculty had a degree from an elite college.

Finally, teachers have increasingly tended to separate themselves from the life of local voluntary organizations. Two teachers (both of local origin) were members of the Grange, and half a dozen men participated in a Lions Club group whose membership spanned several townships. But while these groups could color informal relationships in the lunchroom or during free time, teachers were equally likely to associate along departmental lines or simply according to bureaucratic structures such as the coincidence of free time periods.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the decline in local relationships among teachers has been their removal from direct local pressures. Only in rare instances were teachers involved with the families of their students outside the school, and thus pressures from the "community" were generally mediated by the principal or the board of education who had formally taken on that function. Teachers appeared to be glad about this freedom from community pressure. It was part of the "professionalism" which they saw themselves as having gained. Similarly, the administration preferred having non-local teachers. "You can't fire a local boy," I heard several times. Teachers who were recruited from outside the district had no alternate loyalties; the school administration believed them to be easier to deal with.

If local identity had become almost nonexistent among teachers, it was still a source of confusion among students. The following interchange, which occurred among students in one of their meetings to put together the

1972-73 year book, illustrates this confusion.

> The seniors were trying to arrive at a theme for the yearbook. Mr. Ashley reminded them that it had to be something that could hold the book together, "tie it together," he said, and "help the reader move from one page to the next." They talked for a while about the idea of "a journey," but no one seemed particularly interested. Then Susan said that in an earlier meeting they'd thought of the idea of "our town," but realized there were too many towns feeding into the school. Michelle responded, well we could take pictures of the different towns, but right away this was put down by half a dozen students. It was not that they thought it was uninteresting; they seemed too angry for that. Mr. Ashley said, "Well, what you want to do is see the school as a community." He said this a few times in different ways and then was interrupted by Mark, who reintroduced the journey idea, this time suggesting a space ship as a symbol. Mr. Ashley responded that this seemed a little remote from the school.

After discussions at several other meetings, "the game of life" was decided upon as the theme. "The game of life," as it emerged through the composition of the yearbook, combined the influences of computer game theory with a strange sense of removal, as if all that the students had gone through in their years in the school had been a game—and perhaps not that amusing a one. Since the covert rules concerning what types of sentiments are permitted in yearbooks are very strict, suggestions to describe different towns—or different cliques, as also happened in one meeting—were always tense. Anything which might allow conflict to emerge through the pages had to be eliminated. Discussing town or village life seemed to have the same taboo as discussing racial cliques would have in an urban school.

Whenever I directly asked students whether their friendships were with students from the same town, I got answers like "Oh, I hang around with everyone." Once I told them this was physically impossible, however, I began to get other answers: most of their friends were from their home villages, although differences in scheduling sometimes made it difficult to spend a lot of time with friends once at school. In fact, bus routes preserved some of the friendship patterns and geographic solidarity which would have existed had there been lively village life, and seating patterns in the cafeteria were largely based on town of origin. But the ideology among students emphasized solidarity among the school as a whole and denied any segmentation by towns or other demarcations.

The sarcasms aimed at Lucaville and Lucaville students occurred among teachers, not students. Among adults, the taboo on mentioning of local roots and ties did not seem as strong. Discussions about Lucaville people, in fact, seemed to represent a more generalized anger among adults in the school toward anything urban. Since the district was moving toward a kind of rural industrialization which had characteristics of urban situations, people of urban origin were seen almost as "carriers" of the new disease which was threatening to change every sinew of everyday life.

Green Valley and its environs combined a complicated combination of rural and industrial qualities. To anyone merely driving through, the area looked much like a traditional farming or agricultural topography. Without a careful eye, few would see that many of the farms were not operating, and

large differentiations in skill, pay, responsibility and authority. Similarly, school life had developed from the relatively uncomplicated and open day of the rural school into one divided by forty-three-minute periods, demarcated by bells, with each teacher offering a rather specialized curriculum four or five times daily[6] and with students learning to categorize their interests in terms of specific time slots and well-differentiated subjects.

The proliferation of subjects offered by the school—a common justification for the budget increases over the years—had also paralleled the proliferation in kinds of (or at least names of) jobs in the work world. Whereas each farmer once did a variety of tasks, all farmers did much the same variety. But industrialization of the farm as well as of the production of goods and services had created a greater heterogeneity of tasks while decreasing the range of tasks accomplished by any individual worker.

Many of the confusions in the school had resulted from the changes which had occurred, as well as from the discongruity between the developing characteristics of urban life and the retention of an agricultural demography. In many instances, conflict seemed to arise because agrarian symbols had persisted despite the new rural-industrial environment. People of all ages

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[6]When I discovered that teachers taught exactly the same subject four or five times a day, I was naively surprised, assuming that it would be just as easy and more interesting to arrange the school's curricular offerings with each teacher presenting a variety of subjects. My suggestions along this line to several teachers were greeted unappreciatively. Their focus was on the elimination of preparation time, rather than with the overcoming of boredom.

and sectors seemed in one instance or another to have expectations which would have been appropriate to an agricultural economy, but which were no longer viable under the new conditions. And yet, the ideological changes were particularly hard to make because the demography had outwardly remained so much the same.

School people were continually in conflict over the relative responsibility of school and home for the socialization of the district's children. The principal, in refusing to take the car keys away from the student, was insisting on an older image of the school, one in which the home and family were the prime sources of socialization. The student's family had moved to a newer, more urban, understanding of the role of public institutions as socializing agents: in the principal's eyes, the parents expected the school to do their dirty work; but in their own eyes, they were simply handing over to the school what legal and informal sanctions have long been moving toward in urban areas.

The paradox of the school taking on more of a socializing function even as relations between teachers and students (as well as between teachers and other school staff) were becoming more legalized was not one that could be resolved on either a logical or a day-to-day level. In a sense, child-rearing was being turned over to bureaucratic apparatus, which made it good preparation for the adult world. But the bureaucratization of education also tied the hands of any specific educator and often left the child protected by laws rather than people.

In the next chapter, I will discuss responsibility for authority in the school in terms of the structure of power and authority in a bureaucratic institution such as the Green Valley Junior-Senior High School had become. I will show how, what is often called "buck passing" results from the particular power and authority structures of such bureaucratic institutions. Some of the "buck passing" which went on in Green Valley—such as responsibility for discipline—also had to do with the transition period the school district was in. In specific areas ideology lagged behind technological and economic changes that had occurred, and agrarian ideology superimposed itself on an industrialization process.

Chapter VII

THE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY: DAILY LIFE IN THE SCHOOL

Plans for the modern Green Valley Junior-Senior High School had originally allocated the entire street-side of the main floor to administrative offices. There was to have been the secretaries' outer offices, the principal's office, the guidance offices, counseling rooms, a conference room, and the nurse's quarters. Somewhere along in the building process, however, space for two classrooms was created at the end of the row of administrative offices, pushing them together and eliminating the office of the district principal. When the high school faculty and staff moved into their new quarters in 1970, the district principal remained in his office in the old Frank Farley school, now relegated to the elementary grades. From certain perspectives, it seemed inefficient that he sit over in the elementary school; it meant that the junior-senior high school principal and other staff were always driving over to Frank Farley for conferences with Mr. O'Reilly. One day I asked the man if he felt handicapped being exiled, as I saw it, to the elementary quarters. "Not at all," he looked at me wryly to indicate that I had obviously misunderstood the system. "But don't you miss out on a lot that's going on?" I continued. "Yes," he smiled.

Mr. O'Reilly had an interesting, although not unusual, career history. The school board minutes indicate that he had originally come to Green Valley Central School in 1956 as a social studies teacher, and that his wife, Mrs. O'Reilly, had joined the staff as a teacher of foreign languages several years later. While Mrs. O'Reilly seems to have been accepted as a competent teacher, Mr. O'Reilly engendered complaints by parents that he was excessively uninteresting. In the early 1960s after parents came to the school board on the matter, Mr. O'Reilly was removed from the classroom to the position of guidance counselor. Here again, he seemed to have provoked criticism—children could not talk to him—and this time parental complaints instigated his removal to the position of principal. When a new position, that of district principal, was created, Mr. O'Reilly moved up once again. His wife had by now become the chairman of the Department of Foreign Languages.

At school board meetings, Mr. O'Reilly sat quietly, most often with a slight smile about his lips. Unlike Mr. Wyatt who had moved from guidance counselor to junior-senior high school principal in 1970 and who often spoke agitatedly and with conviction to the board members present, Mr. O'Reilly stayed removed from the struggles which were part of the meetings. At times he presented the board with a memo requesting one thing or another, but it was always in a mood of dispassionate objectivity, and with such introductory remarks as "this came across my desk so I thought I'd pass

it on to you." And yet I had seen him work with the school clerk for hours to put together financial and other statistics for presentations.

Mr. O'Reilly's days were devoted largely to paper work interspersed with leisurely conferences with other administrators. Once a month he traveled down to the BOCES headquarters to meet with the district superintendent, and periodically he attended luncheons, meetings and conferences with various supervisory groups. In contrast, Mr. Wyatt's working hours were crowded by student and parent conferences largely on questions of discipline, emergencies such as stuck elevators or a lost set of keys, and hurried conferences with teachers and service professionals. Every morning, during first and second periods, Mr. Wyatt meted out disciplinary measures to the lists of students turned in for cutting classes, smoking, skipping school or otherwise misbehaving on the previous day. Although the secretary could informally present small offenders with one or two nights of detention, she directed larger offenses to Mr. Wyatt just as she sent him those students who objected to her sentences. Once Mr. Wyatt had caught up with the daily list of offenders, he had his conferences with parents and teachers, as well as his longer discussions with students. Sometimes he dashed out toward the end of the morning for a chat with Mr. O'Reilly, and every Friday he spent the morning in Mr. O'Reilly's office. It was clear that the two men talked a great deal together; during the period when I was researching school board records and spending nearly every afternoon in the office next to Mr.

O'Reilly's, a common joke between the two men was that I might have conveyed some piece of information before one of them got it to the other. Mr. Wyatt's respect for Mr. O'Reilly seemed unequivocal: he was enthusiastic in his declarations of how much he had learned from the older man. Perhaps because Mr. O'Reilly's office provided a haven for him from the traffic and aggravations of his own work, Mr. Wyatt never evinced a sense of bitterness about the difference in stress between their two jobs.

For two weeks in January of 1973, I sat in the outer office with the two school secretaries, keeping a flow chart of the activities which took place there. Although Mr. Wyatt did not want me to sit with him in his own inner office where he talked privately to parents, students and faculty, by sitting in the outer office where all traffic to his office had to pass, I was able to get a fairly accurate sense of what went on in both places. The following twenty minute slice taken between 9:00 and 9:20, gives a representative picture:

9:00 Wyatt comes out with Rita and Morene (having talked to them) and asks Becky Brown to come in.

9:02 Mrs. Parenti (a secretary) is checking off the daily absentee list, filling in her computer forms.

9:03 Mrs. Corey (the other secretary) goes out and comes right back in.
Mr. Wyatt says to her: "Give Becky ten nights detention and take her off unstructured time for a month."

9:04 Mrs. Miller, one of the paraprofessionals, comes in to change a dollar and chats with Mrs. Parenti.
Mrs. Williams, the nurse, comes in with her coffee.

9:05 Bill Haggerty comes in and asks to see Wyatt; Mrs. Corey calls Wyatt on the intercom.
Mrs. Williams is going over who had notes for absences with Mrs. Parenti. She says that Eileen had an illegal absence yesterday, that Richard was tardy (he came in late and did not report) and that Mrs. Parenti should also mark Phillip, Jack and Ellen Lantz tardy.
Teachers are going in and out, stopping at the boxes for their mail.
Mrs. Miller goes out.

9:08 Mrs. Corey is working with her book, taking kids off unstructured time.
Wyatt comes in to ask where Coleen Wakefield is.
Mrs. Albertson, the English teacher, comes in to see Mr. Wyatt and he takes her right into his office.

9:10 The nurse stops to chat with me about the rip in her stocking and then goes out, glancing at the announcements on the board.
Mr. Olson comes in and goes out—no clear purpose.

9:12 Mrs. Albertson goes out.
Mr. Wyatt asks Mrs. Corey for Elizabeth Klein. Corey says she's in study hall, and Mr. Wyatt turns to me and says sometimes he doesn't even try to chase after kids because you waste so much time trying to find them. He asks Mrs. Corey to come into his office.

9:14 Mr. LaRue comes in for mail and goes out.

9:15 Marilyn Foster comes in; Mrs. Parenti tells her to sit and wait.
Martha comes in and goes through to the PA room to make an announcement (she's a senior, often in charge of this).
Mrs. Corey comes out of Wyatt's office.
Wyatt comes out and calls in Marilyn.

9:18 Marilyn comes out.
Wyatt comes out and calls Mr. Cook on the intercom.
Intercom rings, and Mrs. Corey answers.

My observations of the front office became part of an increasing self-consciousness on the part of Mr. Wyatt and Mrs. Corey and Mrs. Parenti about the difficulty of their jobs. During the weeks when I was in the office from early morning until the end of school, they liked to joke with me that I could hardly move my pen fast enough to keep up with them. In early spring, both Mr. Wyatt and the secretaries asked to use my flow charts as levers for getting the board to put new positions in the 1973-74 budget—Mr. Wyatt wanted a vice-principal, and the secretaries wanted a receptionist. I gave them the notes, while offering my own opinion that smaller changes, such as rearranging the intercom (it was high on the wall, so that the secretaries always had to get up to reach it) might also facilitate their jobs. I did not tell them what I was already beginning to sense: that the criticisms levied at Mr. Wyatt in comparison to the old principal, Mr. Hodge, were due largely to the fact that Mr. Wyatt had another principal over him, as Mr. Hodge had not, and that a further hierarchical proliferation would probably only increase people's feelings that decisions were not being made with authority as had once been the case. As it turned out, the district residents voted down the "administrative assistants" which the board finally put in the budget, so that the system of task allocation in the front office remained largely the same in the 1973-74 year.

Meanwhile, despite Mr. Wyatt's feeling of harrassment by disciplinary responsibilities, the teachers often complained that there was no one

in the school who could be trusted to discipline students. Some complained that Mr. Wyatt returned students to the classroom, having let them off the hook, or that he referred them back to the teacher for punishment. Like many of the parents, the younger teachers particularly believed that it was the principal's or counselor's duty to discipline students, not theirs. Since the two counselors were busy doing vocational and college guidance, which they explained conflicted with being disciplinarians, the job continued to fall to Mr. Wyatt and Mrs. Corey.

Whatever view one took, the issue of disciplining students was crucially important to everyone in the adult age group, from parents to faculty and administration. But the concern with discipline did not take place in isolation. As I have suggested, the fear of an increasing discipline problem was partly related to the changing structure of power and authority in the school. As with the fear and concern, so with the actual instances and processes of disciplining: they too were directly related to aspects of the power and authority structure. In brief, teachers generally hesitated to act as disciplinarians within the classroom. However, once outside the class, their attitude toward this sphere of potential responsibility was more ambivalent. Teachers often engaged in disciplinary actions as part of a group behavior that increased their own solidarity as teachers, or, on the other hand, as part of power struggles which occurred within their own ranks. The following descriptions of the beginnings and ends of class periods illustrates

the hesitance of teachers to act as disciplinarians toward a group of students when they themselves were isolated in their own classes.

During the 1972-73 school year, I observed the beginnings and ends of over fifty class periods. I had become interested in these few-minute segments after I heard that Mr. Wyatt's attempt the previous year to do away with a bell system had been strongly resisted by the teachers. To state my thesis in advance: bells provided an alternate authority system, separate from the teacher, which allowed the teacher to remove him or herself from the responsibility of supervising the students. With bells as the anonymous, outside authority, teachers could differentiate themselves from their own authority and act, instead, as either a granter of favors or just one of the kids.

Classes began in one of two ways: either the teacher, having received the degree of quiet and attention needed, could enter directly into the lesson, or, if not, the teacher had to begin by quieting the class down. The most common means of directly quieting a class was to say: "The bell has rung." However, more often classes were begun with some intermediate mechanism, so that a direct call to quiet was unnecessary. For example, teachers took attendance during the first few minutes, which served as an activity for them while the students settled down. Teachers also often began with a joke or story relating to something completely outside their subject: the score on the previous baseball or football game; an announcement of

forthcoming entertainment, scholarship or job opportunities; or a story or comment directed at one student in the class which, however, could be used to draw the others in. A few examples from my daily notes will suffice:

> 9:47. Senior Physics. Bell rings. Mr. Green begins by talking about ordering physics sweatshirts for the physics team. He has a book in front of him of types of sweatshirts they can choose and has apparently decided that they should order short sleeve sweatshirts. He says, we're not ordering through the school, so we can do whatever we want. There's a general laughter, and then he says, "within the realm of decency." This is apropos of what they'll write on the sweatshirts. Then he begins to talk about the experiment that they had been doing the last time, and then he interrupts himself and says, "I'm sorry, Miss Cook (a student), for interrupting you while you're talking." She says, "I'm through," and he continues with the description of the experiment.
>
> Bell rings for Mrs. Albertson's seventh grade English class. She stands over her desk, taking attendance while the class talks quietly. Some students open their notebook, some finger through Light in the Forest, which they're reading. Then Miss Albertson settles herself on her desk and begins to ask specific questions about the book, such as the Indians' attitudes toward the whites, etc.
>
> 12:50. Mr. Curtis's seventh grade social studies. He's setting up a film strip as the kids come in. "All right, class, the bell rang," he says absent-mindedly, as he continues winding the film in the machine. The class becomes quiet, the kids sitting watching him for a few minutes. Then he tells a boy by the door, "Put out the lights."

In other words, the bell defines the beginning of these classes as their outer limit, but the teacher is given another opportunity to set her or his inner border. The bell also takes the responsibility off the teachers'

shoulders for having the students there—and quiet. Students are rarely, if ever, told to be quiet because the teacher has something he or she wants to teach. Rather, they are told to settle down and pay attention because "the bell" has rung. The teacher, too, then comes under the control of this authority, becoming more like one of the students.

Teachers' use of the bell to alleviate themselves of the authority of retaining students is even more clear when it comes to the end bell of any period. Here, "The bell hasn't rung yet" is used to tell students that they are still under the teachers' control, while not taking on the responsibility in a personal manner. Teachers can also become "good guys" by letting students out "before the bell rings," thus becoming pranksters along with the kids.

> At 11:33, a couple of minutes before the bell rings, Ralph asks "Can we go to lunch?" And Miss Albertson says "OK." They all close their books and are out of the room before the bell rings. Then two students, Kathy and Donna, come back in to tell Miss Albertson that they may go to a play at a nearby college tonight. I come up behind them as the two girls leave, and Miss Albertson stops to tell me that she often lets the kids out early to go to lunch, as she doesn't see the point of keeping them until the bell rings.

In all my observations of the end segments of class periods, a teacher only once actually taught until the bell rang, and then he, in fact, held the students after the bell, saying that they wouldn't be able to go to lunch until they sang "Happy Birthday" to one of the students in the class.

In other words, a mood of boisterousness was created which would obscure any irritation students might possibly feel toward being held after class. Here is the description of how the period ended from my class notes:

> Mr. Reynolds continued describing how the electoral colleges operated, keeping up a tense pace. The students took hurried notes, stopping him periodically with a squealed: "Just a minute!" He kept saying, "Now get this" or "This is important" or "You've got to keep up." His pace had been so fast that no students had even begun to put away books before the bell rang. When it did, there were the sounds of books and notebooks suddenly closing. Mr. Reynolds stopped them: "Nobody's going to leave this room until we sing happy birthday. It's Jean's birthday. Hold it, hold it. We've got to sing happy birthday." He started in singing it, the students falling in after the first couple of words. Then midway in the song, he said, "Alright, that's good. You can go," and everyone went out of the room.

Other classes which I observed did not continue through to the bell. Rather, teachers seemed to unconsciously plan the lesson to be over some three or four minutes before the bell was to ring. The last few minutes, then, were taken up by students beginning their homework, a rearrangement of chairs, or simple friendly story-telling among the teacher and students. In fact, most often when a teacher would tell students that they should start in on their homework until the bell rang, the instructions would immediately be obviated by the teacher beginning a friendly discussion with one or more of the students.

> At 10:45, Mrs. Albertson gave the homework for Thursday. She said, "Read through chapter ten for Thursday, and then for tomorrow you have to memo-

> rize the rest of the verbs. . . . She read a number of verbs which were on the assignment, and then wrote the two assignments on the board. While she was writing, the room became somewhat noisy. She said, "You have how many minutes—3 or 4. Well, open your books and start reading." Then she immediately said, "Well, how many saw movies this weekend? and someone said "'The Godfather,'" and someone said, "'The New Centurion.'" She asked the boy who said, "'The Godfather'" "How did you get into that?" He said, "The State," (a nearby theatre), and then changed and said "I said I was fifteen." . . . Then they go on to talk about a couple of movies which were on television last night.
>
> Mr. Norton said, "Now I'm going to let you start working on these assignments. But then he went over to point out cartoons of various Presidents on the board. They are cartoons with inappropriate quotations under them, such as "My God, this is a hell of a job" under Harding's picture. Reynolds quoted this, and then said, "If you go home and say the teacher swears, just remember this is a quote." Then he talked about Harrison who died of pneumonia and said supposedly it was wet and rainy on inauguration day. . . .

Sometimes teachers simply ended early, but did not fill the three or four minutes before the bell rang. In this case, students entertained themselves while the teacher did his or her own work while waiting for the bell to ring. Both students and teachers then were put in a passive position of waiting:

> At 10:02, Olson put on his jacket. He said, finish these up for tomorrow (i.e., math problems). Low talking began in the room, people waiting for the bell. By 10:04, the room had become quite noisy. Students were putting their books away and looking around and talking. The bell rang at about 10:06, and the teacher and students filed out of the room.

A further way in which teachers commonly separated themselves from the authority of designating class periods was by asking students what time the period ended. Although teachers appeared to be clear about the times of class periods when they met together in the lunchroom for coffee— they were always saying, "I've got three minutes for a cup of coffee" or "Just enough time for another cigarette"—in their own classes, teachers commonly seemed to forget the exact time slots in which their classes were held.

> At 10:12, Mr. Green asked the class "What time is this period over?" Roger answered, "Sixteen after." Green: "Sixteen after?" General: "Uh, huh." Students were still turning in their tests. Green then said to the class, "I do have the announcements from the engineering colleges. Several boys by the window were talking softly. Green said, "Gentlemen, you may talk if you have handed in your test, not that you'd talk about them, but with my thinking, I might think you would."

By creating a situation in which the class defined the end of the period, teachers seemed to place students closer to the designation of class periods, than they were themselves. Their presentation was as if they not only had nothing to do with keeping their students in the room for the standard forty-three minutes, but hardly knew when these minutes began or ended. Students, by admitting to knowing, on the other hand, became further embroiled in the responsibility for staying. If they and the administration knew the class schedule, then they had the responsibility for following it. The teacher was merely the passive receiver of each new group of students, neither forcing

them to come to his or her class nor insisting that they stay.

It would seem from this kind of evidence that teachers felt there were enough reasons for student antagonism without the bureaucratic one of class containment. They thus freed themselves from this area of responsibility, in order to become more closely allied with students and enable themselves to focus on areas of responsibility assumption—such as homework or other assignments—which were more central to their teaching.

In sharp contrast to their reluctance to set themselves up as disciplinarians inside the classroom, male teachers especially used their confrontations with students outside the classroom and in the company of other teachers as a means of creating solidarity or jockeying for positions among their peers. For example, although there was no formal rule for doing so, in assemblies male teachers invariably stood around the edges of the auditorium, chatting with each other and keeping order among students as they talked. Sometimes they pointed out to each other a student who was talking, and then both together went to the student to quiet him down or to pull him out of the auditorium.

In the lunchroom or the teachers workroom, a common topic of discussion among male teachers was the misbehavior of their students (usually male) and what they had done or were going to do to stop it. For several teachers, a characteristic entrance remark as they settled themselves was a complaint about a student. "If that Ricky shows up in my class tomorrow,

I'm going to knock his brains out," one would say. Or another would pantomime: "You know what I did to John Klyde today: by the collar and out of the room!"

It was after watching such scenes for several months that I began to realize how important they were. Sometimes the conversations turned into simple itemizations of who was "tough" or who was an unruly or "poor" student at a particular grade level, and as such I believe they were important in forming the life chances of students. But even confined to rundowns of students, the conversations seemed to have a second function: that of helping teachers to establish themselves among their peers through passing on opinion-forming information. When the teachers focused more specifically on their role as punishers, emphasizing how tough _they_ had been, a second aspect of the climate was created—a set of ideals for strength and authority in the classroom. Finally, certain teachers played the role of guide, censor or provocateur when others were talking about students or grading student tests and papers. "You're not going to give him a B?" one would say, looking over the shoulder of another. Or, as I once heard one teacher say to another who was complaining that he felt compelled to pass a student who always did well on exams but rarely attended: "Fail him anyway!"

Although this kind of provoking behavior occurred mainly among male teachers, it also took place between certain male teachers and the principal, Mr. Wyatt. For example, one afternoon I was sitting in the

teachers' lunchroom having coffee with Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Lloyd, the chemistry teacher.

> Mr. Wyatt had just come in from having conferences with students, and was leaning over his coffee the way he does when he's had a difficult day. "I'm going to suspend Jimmy Adams for two days," he told Mr. Lloyd. "He's been acting out in Mrs. Clark's class this time." Lloyd said, "Give him five and give Mrs. Clark a rest." Wyatt laughed and said, "I might just do that, I might just do that."

The fact that this behavior occurred mainly among male staff suggests that it may well have been an unconscious reaction to (a) the female definition of the teaching role, and (b) the decreasing sphere of their own authority. The jibbing had a quality of machismo about it—a cry of weakness.

Mr. Harper and Mr. Connally

The story of Mr. Harper and Mr. Connally takes place over the span of the 1972-73 school year. In general, the story illustrates the connection between the power relations among teachers and the disciplining of students. More specifically, it describes: (1) how one teacher, Mr. Harper, may have lost his support from other teachers and thus his capacity to teach for reasons outside his own control; (2) how teachers used the issue of discipline to band together against Mr. Harper; and (3) how a teacher, new in February, Mr. Connally, used the same issue, discipline, as a means of rapidly rising to power among his colleagues.

The year before I came, two teachers in the science department had been fired. One had had a drinking problem and had often been hot tempered with students; the other had apparently been a "hippy," who dressed unconventionally, rode to school on a motorcycle, and made no effort to hide his alternate life style. But both had been loved by many students and well-liked and respected by a number of teachers. Their release from the school had provoked considerable distrust toward Mr. Green, who, because of his position as department chairman, was considered to be the one responsible for their being fired. When I first entered the school, I was told by several teachers to be careful of what I said to Mr. Green, and that whatever reached his ears was passed on to Mr. Wyatt. But Mr. Green had tenure and had been in the school longer than most. While teachers often seemed to be getting back at him through either ostracism or hostile joking, there was nothing that they could formally do to him.

When Mr. Dickie and Mr. Harper arrived in September of 1972, other teachers, especially in the science department, seemed particularly reluctant to befriend them. Mr. Dickie took in the situation stoically, and by volunteering first to be clock-watcher for basketball games and then girls' tennis coach, began to move into an accepted position by the middle of the year. Mr. Harper, around whom the difficulty began to focus, had been hired as the seventh grade science teacher. The first intimation I got that he might be having trouble was from Mrs. Albertson, one of the young women on

the faculty. Both she and her husband had applied for the seventh grade English teacher position two years earlier, but she had gotten it, as she explained to me, because she was "a great talker and could put one over on anyone the first time," whereas her husband really knew the material in a more profound way than she did but could not present himself as well. In early October, Mrs. Albertson told me that she was going into Mr. Harper's room during her free periods to give him tips. He was like her husband, she said (the two did look alike), the type that people would not appreciate because of his initial shyness. She said she was afraid that the little seventh graders were taking advantage of him. Mr. Harper never appeared in any of the teachers' areas—which was not startling since it was traditional in Green Valley for new teachers to stay out of the teachers' gathering areas for as long as their first year in the system.[1] (Sometimes treating me as one of them, teachers wondered that I was being so open and vocal right away, rather than spending my months of hazing in relative seclusion.) But it meant that Mr. Harper was isolated from everyone except a teacher like Mrs. Albertson who might drop by.

In November I sometimes caught elliptical conversations among teachers about Mr. Harper. "How's the new teacher making out?" one

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[1] In fact, this configuration of behaviors is not unique to Green Valley. Many institutions set up informal semi-avoidance patterns between newcomers and the continuing staff.

would say. Teachers outside the science department rarely used his name, as if not wanting to relate too closely to him until he was proven adequate. But those who seemed to know—the eighth grade science teacher next door to Mr. Harper, or the math teacher across the hall—were not reassuring. It seemed that Mr. Harper was having trouble maintaining students' attention, and I heard that someone had complained to Mr. Wyatt about the noise emanating from his room. Mr. Dickie, in the meantime, had progressed from reading the newspaper quietly in the teachers' room to having conversations with other teachers. Whatever initial resistance had occurred among the science teachers toward the new teachers no longer applied to Mr. Dickie and had taken on its own dynamics with Mr. Harper.

By December there was open talk that Mr. Harper would be replaced in the spring term. In the days before Christmas, one could see Mr. Green taking prospective seventh grade science teachers on the standard introductory tour through the school, while I and the other teachers noted their characteristics and tried to figure out if this one or that one would be chosen. (There was a speculation, for instance, that Mr. Green would not be able to hire an Italian, as there were already "too many" Italian teachers in the school.) In the few remaining days of the semester after Christmas, Mr. Harper stayed in his room more than ever. He never came to the cafeteria even to pick up food, as he had once done. He arrived at school early in the morning so that he would not meet teachers in the halls, and only left school once the other

faculty had gone home for the day. When I finally talked to him for an extended period a few days before he was to leave, he was strangely resigned to what had happened; he felt that a few teachers had tried to give him pointers in the beginning, and he did not think it strange or wrong that they had shrunk away from him entirely when his classes had continued to deteriorate. Conversely, he seemed unwilling to entertain the idea that the total loss of support by other teachers might have contributed to his failure in teaching. To me, on the other hand, Mr. Harper's failure seemed to be at least in part the result of an unconscious retaliation for the loss of the two previous science teachers.

In any case, the new teacher, Mr. Connally arrived on the first day of the second semester well armed with information on the failures of Mr. Harper. On his second morning of teaching I found him in Commons, checking bathroom passes and warning students that things were going to tighten up. "Now you watch yourself, I'm not Mr. Harper," were his exact words to one student. Students, not unexpectedly, noted the difference. They seemed to stay away from him in Commons, not hanging around to talk as they did with most supervising teachers; and there were no signs of disorder from his room.

Sometime in February, Mr. Connally made a coup which was part of his rapid rise to a position of security among the male teachers. The seniors had a good-sized room on the second floor by the main staircase which

was called "the senior lounge." They were allowed to spend their free periods in it, and they generally listened to music, talked and snacked there, although eating in the lounge was formally illegal. The lounge was also across the hall from the girls' bathroom, so that there was constant traffic between the two rooms; the girls would take a cigarette into the bathroom to smoke alone or share, and they would go in to comb their hair and freshen their makeup. Mr. Green, in addition to being science department chairman, was also senior class advisor; he was therefore in charge of the lounge, but nothing really got out of hand, and Mr. Green tended to let things be.

Mr. Connally's strategic act was to note that students were eating in the senior lounge, and to tell Mr. Green that he was not taking care of <u>his</u> seniors. Mr. Green, being attacked where any teacher was most vulnerable—i.e., for not maintaining discipline—felt compelled to report the seniors to Mr. Wyatt, and the two, in turn, apparently felt obligated to do something about it. The senior lounge was closed down for one week. But here the story got more complicated. From other teachers, I heard that Mr. Green had said he wanted Mr. Wyatt to "come down heavy" on the students, but that Mr. Wyatt had felt that a week was enough. From the students, however, I heard that Mr. Green had told them that he had "tried to save their senior lounge," but that Mr. Wyatt had not been moveable. Everyone, teachers and students alike, knew that Mr. Connally had provoked the whole incident. Some seemed to get pleasure out of the fact that he had put Mr.

Green in such a bind; no one could deny that it was a coup for a new teacher to pull on his own department chairman.

Mr. Connally continued to gain power and prestige after the incident, and his security at Green Valley seemed established. People joked that he would get tenure by the end of the year. But some time in late spring, Mr. Connally announced that he would not be back. He had been interested in rising to an administrative position, and did not see one opening up in the system. He would be going back to school.

The question of why an appeal to discipline could have played such an important role in both the careers of Mr. Harper and Mr. Connally may not call for a simple answer. However, I believe it can be at least partly answered in terms of the increasing centralization of power and authority in the school which has left teachers—as well as personnel in theoretically better positions of power—relatively devoid of it. Teachers and administrators alike, as the next story will point out even more, felt themselves to be without the power or authority for decision-making, except in relationship to the disciplining of students. Since the only locus of authority over students lay in the classroom, such discipline became the sufficient ground for considering a teacher or an administrator, for that matter, good or bad. This was all the more so as the students themselves seemed to be more challenging of authority. The following analysis of the fight to stop smoking in the bathrooms illustrates the way in which a much

longer term "discipline problem" related to adult power struggles and the authority structure of the school.

The Battle over the Bathrooms

The battle over the bathrooms had begun the year before I entered Green Valley Junior-Senior High School, and it was in full swing in the fall of 1972 when I started observing the school. Not phrased as such, the fight was ostensibly over whether or not students ought to be allowed to smoke in the school. Official state law, as I often heard school personnel remark, makes it illegal for anyone under eighteen to purchase cigarettes. Since most students bought their own cigarettes, if the school allowed smoking on its premises, it would, in fact, be condoning an illegal act. But students were smoking inside the school, and particularly in the bathrooms, so that the decision to "come down hard" on smoking meant the drive to eliminate what had already developed into a flourishing item of student culture.

In 1970, the junior and senior high school grades had moved from their old quarters in what had been a central school for grades kindergarten through twelve. The old school, Frank Farley, had been a three-storey red brick building, just across the street from a coffee shop hang-out right inside the village. The new, sprawling beige brick building lay back from the highway outside the built-up part of the village. From all accounts, smoking had been part of school life since the advent of cigarettes. Students smoked

across the street from the school in the coffee shop, while teachers smoked there or, in earlier times in the school boiler room and later in the teachers' lounge when a small addition was built. If student smoking also occurred in Frank Farley, it never reached the point where it had to be openly acknowledged. The coffee shop served both as a physical escape for student smokers as well as an institutional escape for school personnel who could free themselves from the problems of smoking in their quarters.

Plans for the new school included two teachers' areas—a cafeteria and a workroom—where teachers were allowed to smoke, as well as a number of informal areas, such as the teachers' prep rooms and administrative offices. But they did not include any legally designated area for student smoking, and the geographic distance between the school and the nearest potential student hangout prevented them from the other illegality of leaving school premises during the school day. Some time after moving to the new building, complaints apparently arose from two groups of people: first, from underclassmen who said they were afraid to go to the bathroom because the facilities were filled with older students sitting around chatting and smoking cigarettes; and second, from custodians who were irritated at having to clean up cigarette butts, matches and other residue of this new "club" life. Complaints grew. People began to notice that whereas in the old school, only upperclassmen had gone off to smoke, the bathroom smoking scene had brought cigarettes down to even eighth and seventh graders. In the spring of 1972, letters on

the smoking problem were printed in the town newspaper, and the problem was formally brought to the attention of the school board, ostensibly by the principal.

The fall semester began with the student-faculty senate's request to meet the school board on the subject of smoking. Although the board did not give them an interview at this time, the smoking issue was discussed. The local newspaper reported the reaction of one board member as follows:

> Once again the problem of smoking was brought to the attention of the Board. Mrs. Hawthorne last week asked that the Board recognize the "ugly problem of smoking" within the school, and she hoped that some solution could be passed to help the nonsmoker from being paralyzed and abused by those who smoke in the school lavatory. This week, however, Mrs. Hawthorne made a complete turn-around and stated that if the smokers could not be given some sort of permission to smoke in school, then the lavatories should be monitored and violators caught and punished. Since the Board has not met the student faculty senate to discuss the matter, it was decided that nothing would be done until the two groups had a chance to talk it over /Green Valley Gazette 9/28/72:1/.

What was interesting was the fact that Mrs. Hawthorne, the only woman on the board, and the only member with a liberal reputation, was already reported as responding to some force against instituting a legal smoking area. Since Mrs. Hawthorne's two high school age daughters were known smokers, and one had been caught smoking in the school, the news that she might not remain an active supporter of the legal smoking area seemed particularly ominous. Stories about the "community's outrage" at the existence of

smoking in the school circulated. A logic was developed to the effect that a smoking lounge would mean administration and board of education approval of smoking—or worse, their active support and assistance of it—and that "the community" would never tolerate this.

A few weeks later, in mid-October, an emissary from the student-faculty senate met with the board of education. The group brought with them two student smokers to represent the smokers' viewpoint. The students admitted to smoking and to their need for a smoking area in the school. The group told the board that there had been an attempt to put signs and ashtrays in the bathrooms as a way of keeping them clean and helping the custodians. The board was outraged to discover that the teachers had been aware of the ashtrays and had done nothing. The local paper reported the president of the board's reaction to the students' openness about what was going on: He was "shocked at the frankness of the students." "They almost demanded to smoke in school," he stated (Ibid. 10/5/72:1).

The president's response to the meeting evoked a series of letters by both teachers and students during the next few weeks. The letters, largely in defense of the students, appeared in the local newspaper and were sent to the school board, where they were read aloud in the "correspondence" section of the meetings.

The initial confrontation between the student-faculty senate and the school board was exacerbated by the fact that it occurred just as the teachers were in the midst of a prolonged struggle for a new contract. The issue of

smoking was used by both sides to further their ends in the negotiation: by the school board as an indication that the teachers and the administration had lost control, and by the faculty as yet another sign of how "out of touch" the school board was with the times. The faculty, the majority of whom smoked, talked continually about how specific members of the board and administration were heavy smokers. In fact, most of the board did smoke heavily, as did both the principal and the district principal. The faculty blamed the principal for the issue even coming up. They remembered better days with Mr. Hodges, the old principal at Frank Farley, who, they said, did as he wanted and knew how to take control, because however much he pampered the board of education he always kept them out of the daily events of the school. They considered it largely Mr. Wyatt's poor leadership and management skills that he had gotten himself, and them, into this mess. Mr. Wyatt had also gotten himself into another mess, which they did not talk about, at least in front of me. He had accepted Mr. O'Reilly's request that he be an observer in the contract negotiations. While this seemingly was not a prominent part of their conversation, his additional role may well have strengthened the teachers' irritation toward him during this period. There was also talk for about a week of a petition with the signatures of three hundred parents urging the dismissal of the principal. All this was going on during the last weeks of the Nixon-McGovern campaign, and I remember one of the teachers' aides telling me confidentially that, "like with the President,

people ought to give a man a second chance."

Mr. Wyatt himself seemed more concerned with his bind as observer in the negotiations than with the crunch that the smoking issue might place him in. He told me he had been pressed into the role, and was assuring himself that at least he would only be an "observer." He said that his father had been a manager and his mother a "union woman," so that he had a lot of feeling for the problems of both sides. The one thing he had always felt he would never do, however, was cross a picket line, and he wondered if he might see himself doing just that in the next few weeks. On the issue of smoking, he mocked the board's lack of realism in much the same tone as did the teachers, acting at times almost as if they were children who had gotten a bee in their bonnet but would soon get over it if left alone. He often joked with the teachers that if smoking were ever forbidden in the school, he would have to leave by 8:30 in the morning because he'd be having a nicotine fit by then. As the smoking and contract negotiation issues became hotter during the late fall weeks, the principal spent more and more time in the teachers' lunchroom, where in a heavy joking manner he attempted to be "one of the boys." He sat mainly with a group of men who were active in the teachers association, but as he dropped in for a few minutes during almost every period of the day he also sat with many other teachers. If this socializing schedule kept him informed of what the teachers planned to do and helped prevent some gross outbreaks of hostility behind his back, it also

produced minor irritation among a number of male teachers who saw in his attempt to become "one of the boys" a further indication that he was incapable of maintaining the aloofness fitting an administrator.

Meanwhile, needless to say, smoking continued in the student bathrooms, as well as in the special faculty and administrative areas. Bathrooms provided space for students to meet in semi-privacy, away from the supervision of the faculty and administration. They were hide-outs to spend time in when one skipped classes, since the school building contained no other such unsupervised space, nor did it open out onto such space as would an urban school or as even the old school had. Students stopped in the bathrooms for a quick drag between periods, and cigarettes were passed around much like a marijuana joint before they rushed on to their next class. Even at lunchtime, the bathrooms were full of students, not only smoking (and only rarely using the toilets) but also eating their sandwiches and just sitting around talking in the privacy of "their" place.

If I say the bathrooms were the one place in the school that students had as their own, this was only so in the context of periodic raids by a small number of teachers and by Mrs. Corey and Mrs. Polenti, the two school secretaries. But the students knew which teachers could be trusted to pass a bathroom without looking in, and which could not. Bathrooms situated near teachers' rooms who were more relaxed about smoking and cutting were always more active than were those next to the rooms of teachers who could be

expected to make a raid.

The only systematized bathroom surveillance at this point occurred during assemblies, when two teachers were specifically assigned to check out bathrooms for cutters and smokers. However, the two men who had volunteered for this job for the past two years had done so because they disliked assemblies, thought them boring, and enjoyed the forty-three minutes of peace to sit and smoke by themselves. Thus their bathroom patrol was done from a sense of a passable quota, rather than from any rigorous attitude toward the job itself. If they found someone during the first assembly of the year, for example, they felt they could relax for the next couple of times.

Moreover, the students had developed a system of signals. One student was placed by the door as a sentry and would say in a loud voice as a "dangerous" teacher drew near, "Hello, Mrs. J. How are you today?" which enabled the others to put out their cigaretts, get off the floor and act like they were just using the lavatory. At this point in the year, an unflushed cigarette in the toilet was only rarely used as evidence against a student or group of students, and only if they were already categorized as troublemakers.

Still, students were caught, some of them quite often. One boy, for example, had been caught eight times by the middle of November, although he admitted to me once right after having been caught that he had made it nearly impossible for the teacher not to report him as he had ignored the courtesy of putting out his cigarette when the man came into the bathroom.

Students who were caught had one of two options as punishment: they could either stay after school in "detention" for an assigned number of days, or they could help the custodian clean bathrooms for a week. My impression is that students tried to get the latter, since detention meant sitting still in a supervised study-hall situation for nearly an hour, which most of them did anyway for two to four periods a day during school hours.

Between the middle of October and January, the issue of smoking remained tabled at the level of the board of education. Although one reason for their initial inaction must have been the desire to focus their battle on one front, they did not resume work on the smoking issue when the teachers accepted their contracts at the beginning of November. Feelings were raw in the community. The valves had been cut on two teachers' tires, and air had been let out of the school bus tires during the period of negotiations. School board meetings during the fall, usually attended by at most two or three people from the district, had been filled with over a hundred parents and teachers for whom the letters about the smoking problem had only been more fuel for their irritation, no matter what side they stood on in the contract negotiations.

When the teachers received their contract, the energy directed at what had come to be called "the smoking problem" also seemed to die down. Although no resolution had occurred, there was almost a feeling that things would go on as they had with implicit acknowledgement of an illegal situation and only periodic raids to keep the structure of authority intact. Perhaps the

situation might have reverted to its pre-crisis position had the student-faculty senate not continued to push the issue. But the student leaders in the school had been severely chastised for apathy by the teachers on the senate, and the smoking issue was a logical outlet for their directive to do something.

In January, after three more letters from students asking for a meeting and several small cases of vandalism in the bathrooms, the school board appointed a Smoking Committee made up of parents, faculty and students. I did not attend the meetings of this group, but from those who did I learned that the three or four meetings which were held focused around (a) the necessity of stopping smoking in the bathrooms, and (b) the ever remaining option of a smoking lounge. The parents who had been chosen for the committee were apparently against the idea of a lounge, and "research" by the Committee during this period showed that such a lounge had been tried in a school some thirty miles away and had had to be discontinued because the students had let the room deteriorate. Despite student pressure for the lounge within the Committee, it was voted down. On the other hand, once students were to be forbidden smoking in the school, the Committee felt compelled to restrict smoking areas for adults too. Moreover, the Committee apparently felt that a monitor or patrol could not be hired to patrol the bathrooms and were divided as to whether teachers could be asked to patrol. However, in the middle of March the Smoking Committee issued a report which contained the following four recommendations:

1. To prohibit (a) smoking or loitering in the bathrooms; (b) no more than one person in a cubicle at one time.

2. That the entire staff (administration, faculty, office personnel, custodians, bus drivers and any other person employed by the Green Valley Central School System) shall abstain from smoking in front of students.

3. That there shall be no physical evidence of smoking (no ashtrays, no smoke wafting through offices, corridors, etc.) to set a smoking example or otherwise tempt a student to smoke.

4. That the entire staff be responsible for enforcing regulations, and that the word of the staff is law (if a staff member says a certain student was smoking, the staff member is right, and the student is disciplined) [Green Valley Monitor 3/22/72:2].

As the teachers were quick to observe, three of the four recommendations were against them.

After writing a scathing letter about the Smoking Committee's recommendations, the president of the Teachers Association offered a detailed proposal for eliminating student smoking, and controlling faculty and administration smoking. The proposal, as it appeared in the local newspaper, called for such changes as the removal of bells so that students would not know exactly what time it was and a decrease by one minute in the time allotted between classes in order to cut down the possibility of smoking or loitering time. It called for stricter attendance taking, and for constant surveillance of the bathrooms between periods by the teachers. The proposal acknowledged the administrative problem of patrolling the girls' barhrooms since there were only eight women on faculty, and suggested that the women teachers would

simply have to work a little harder.

This proposal, which became the official recommendation of the Teachers Association, had not been written or even discussed by most of the teachers in the school. Few were particularly interested, in fact, when it appeared in the newspaper, except to joke that their president was taking care of them again. There seemed to be little concern that the proposal would be accepted and, if so, about how if would affect them.

The Teachers' Association president's letter had hardly been noticed in the daily life of the school. From my observations, smoking in the bathrooms continued in the way it always had been, and there was none of the excitement or taking sides on the issue which had occurred during the fall months. Then, in the beginning of May, the principal presented his proposal for handling the smoking problem to the board of education. The proposal contained none of the passion which had been part of the Teachers Association recommendations. Instead, it was simply a memo presented in bureaucratic simplicity, including definitions of "smokers," "loitering," "sentries," and disciplinary measures to be administered for first, second and third offenses in each case.

The memo stated that students would be forbidden to bring cigars or cigarettes into the school, and that staff members would be charged with the responsibility of confiscating them. It warned that, starting a week from then, all bathrooms but two sets would be closed during the school day, and

that the open ones would be monitored by staff members between classes. The problem of too few women faculty members was to be solved by using the cafeteria workers for patrolling the girls' bathrooms. Students would have the choice of cleaning with the custodians after school for five days or being suspended for five days, lose unstructured time and be placed on social probation for three months on the second offense; and they would be suspended pending the results of a disciplinary hearing on the third. With the exception of asking that doors be closed when adults were smoking, the principal's proposal left the teachers and the teachers' areas alone, as it did the administrative staff and their areas. The proposal was simply aimed at students.

Mr. Wyatt received a round of compliments from the board for his proposal, and it was immediately accepted without changes. Five days later, the same memo was given to all homerooms to be read to students. Simultaneously, a schedule was passed out which gave teachers their time for watching the bathrooms when the new program was instituted.

The proposal was headed "to the secondary staff" "from Mr. Wyatt, secondary principal." It began with the sentence: "The following procedures will be instituted . . . to administer the Board of Education policy on smoking." When teachers talked about the memo, they attributed the proposal to the school board, not the principal. In fact, in the senior home room where I observed both the reading of the memo and the discussion afterwards, Mr. Green responded to student complaints about the new rule by saying,

"Don't complain to us, don't complain to anyone in this school, go straight to the top. Complain to the school board. They're your board. Your parents elected them." And his colleague, Mr. Flannegan, continued by assuring the angry class: "I'm sure you'll say, 'my parents didn't vote for the board,' but somebody's did," thus bringing responsibility for the smoking rules round once again to the students' parents. I heard much this same line of argument later in the day as teachers discussed the new regulations among themselves. In no discussion did I hear any attribution of responsibility to the principal, and most negative statements about the school board were also linked to the idea that "what can you expect in a community like this." Responsibility was pushed outside the school.

If the teachers had once laughed at attempts to stop student smoking in the school as absurd, the new regulation with its increased work load for them brought only a few irritable remarks. It was as if, imperceptibly during the year, their attitudes had changed. One teacher, who had strongly supported a student smoking lounge during the period of contract negotiations, now seemed perfectly content with the logic that, "if you are going to ban smoking from the school, this is probably about the best way to do it." Some teachers showed their ironic attitude toward the whole endeavor by calling their new duty "potty patrol," and a number of teachers were heard to tell their classes that they did not like the idea of "potty patrol." Yet for all the irony which permeated teachers' discussions with each other and with students

about policing the bathrooms, there were an equal number of discussions among teachers in which one or more repeated the "hard line" he or she had given to a class: "So I told them, now they really better watch it!" And within two weeks of the new rule, I had watched teachers several times talking about trying to catch specific students. In one of these conversations, where a teacher had coaxed another into going into the bathroom to "catch" a boy, a third remarked sardonically, "Isn't that entrapment?" and the three laughed together a moment before the entrapper left the room to do his job. Whatever the irony, it was clear that the teachers had rapidly adjusted to their new line of duty. One teacher, a pacifist, told me several times that he felt he would have to tell the principal that he could not do this particular task, but this was the only considered resistance I heard of.

The students had balked when they first heard the new rules in homeroom. They had had a week before the rules would go into effect, and for several days there was militant talk about "making the teachers stop too," about a sit-in, a walk-out, a parade through the school with a coffin filled with cigarettes, and so on. But as the day arrived, only a dozen or so students stood outside at 7:30, and with one admonition from the principal that he would call the police, they came inside. The principal told the "protestors" that they could write a petition or a proposal to give to the board, but he did not think it would make much difference. Several girls worked on a petition for a few days, but they were working in isolation, and their efforts dwindled to nothing.

While the teachers were adjusting to the new routine of "potty patrol," the students were finding loop-holes in the not quite air-tight system. Within a couple of days, it was discovered that one could go into the bathrooms without surveillance while classes were in session, and many did so. Students also moved into other, previously less used areas of the school, such as backstage in the auditorium, behind the curtains. The incidence of smoking obviously was down, since getting caught had become more likely and the repercussions of being caught were more severe. But it was certainly nowhere near to being stopped.

What confused and irritated the teachers more than anything else, in fact, was that every time they came into a bathroom for their patrol period, they saw cigarette butts floating in the toilets. "Why don't they at least flush them?" they would ask each other. But the students continued to leave the little war signs that they had come and gone. The teachers tried to become enthusiastic about how the bathrooms at least were much cleaner than they had been, and often took it upon themselves to flush down the butts. Still, as long as the little white cigarette ends lay floating in the toilets at the beginning of each patrol, it was clear that the teachers and administration had not won a total victory.

Within a week after the new smoking rule had been instituted, two acts of vandalism occurred in the school. The first was a break-in into the school store. The store, a small cubby-hole across from the auditorium, sold

notebooks, pencils, pens and lifesavers. It had been robbed several times earlier in the year, at a time when there had been no means of actually locking it up. But in spring, a wooden front had been built with a plexi-glass window and only a small opening, like in a bank, to pass across goods and money. Thus, for the first time, the break-in involved vandalism in addition to stealing. The senior boy who ran the school store said he was disgusted—he had been the one to recommend the new front. He and the faculty sponsor got together with the principal, and the next day the school store was closed down.

The second act was a firecracker set off in a mustard jar in the cafeteria during lunch. When the firecracker exploded, the mustard sprayed the ceiling, splashing several tiles. In this case, it was the cafeteria manager who felt personally attacked. He immediately sent out notice that he would give a twenty-five dollar reward to anyone who told him who had set off the firecracker. Within hours, literally dozens of students had told on someone. But it was more than a day before the younger brother of a student who worked as a cafeteria helper came out with the real name. The boy who had set off the firecracker was popular among a large group of students, and the younger boy was afraid of retaliation.

This incident occurred during the Watergate testimonies, which were being broadcast on a television set in one part of the teachers' workroom. Most of the teachers had not been interested, but the cafeteria manager had been

an avid watcher of the hearings. When I asked him how his paying a bribe for telling coincided with his outrage toward the Watergate burglers and plumbers, he said, "That's different. It's the last three weeks of school, and I can't afford to let things get out of hand in my cafeteria."

Although the fragmentation of thinking by school personnel always startled me somewhat, I believe now that it is a necessary concommitant of the role specialization and bureaucratization of work that exists in all such institutions. The exigencies of carrying on everyday work meant that connecting the strains of law and order inside the school with other tendencies outside the school, in the county, the state or the nation, would only bring stress on the individual. Similarly, connecting their own behavior with that of the students could only render them conflicted and perhaps impotent in carrying out the tasks that were assigned them. I remember one afternoon when Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Green sat with me for over an hour, each one telling the raucous things he had done as a youth, until Mr. Wyatt had to leave to discipline a student for something much less impressive than the stories he had just recounted. Finally, connections between the acts of vandalism and the bathroom surveillance would have led to conclusions about the totality of the system which would have made their participation in it without attempting to work for change shrouded in bitterness. Thus they isolated their understanding and saw the acts were merely another sign of how the students were out of control, lacking all sense of responsibility, and so deserved "no special

privileges." The mutual fear and hostility between school personnel and students, which is so typical of an urban high school, seemed to have entered Green Valley.

In the fall, Mr. Wyatt had spoken of himself as a "progressive," struggling to institute a modicum of change in an extremely conservative community. By spring, he had settled into what he considered a "realistic" approach, running the school as he felt the board of education and the teachers thought proper. Perhaps he even believed that the students would think better of him now. In fall, the faculty had complained that it was no good sending a student to him for punishment, as he invariably returned the student, either finding the offense unworthy of any action, or shifting the responsibility for punishment back on the teacher. Teachers had also complained that he gave no direction to the school, that he was not a good leader. Students had been bitter that he was whimsical, duplicitous, and did not protect them against their teachers. Some talked about his smoking while he sat them down to mete out a punishment for exactly the same thing. They did not believe he deserved any privileges they themselves did not have.

It was not my impression that the principal had gained respect from either teachers or students for the tightening up which had finally taken place. The school board had received formal responsibility for the bathroom regulations, and only the schedule of staff patrols could be attributed to him. Although students certainly focused their anger on him for having nowhere to

smoke—teachers generally made sure that they did not receive it by indicating their reluctance to police the lavatories—their anger did not seem to include new respect for authority. Still, the principal like other categories of school personnel were freer of that amorphous category called "blame." No one could accuse anyone of not having "done something" about the smoking problem, and few seemed willing to suggest that the wrong thing had been done.

The "smoking problem" in Green Valley pinpointed several structural factors which may be common to most public schools, and, in fact, to most bureaucratic institutions, but which were particularly conspicuous in Green Valley where the bureaucracy was still rather small, allowing one to trace the course of decisions within the geographic confines of the district. Moreover, the bureaucratic proliferation was relatively new, and many people in the system still remembered days when decisions were made in a more simple manner. The Green Valley Central School District had once been composed of about thirty one-room rural schools, each with its own teacher. Teachers rarely saw one another, and were visited by a district supervisor once or twice a year at most. Their decisions were, therefore, largely autonomous, and when a decision was made it was generally clear that the teacher—or at most the teacher and her trustee—and no one else had made it. With district centralization in the early 1930s, the rural schools closed down one by one and by 1970 the district consisted of the junior-senior high school and two elementary schools. Moreover, a hierarchical proliferation had

been created which, within the district, included teachers, counselors, two principals, a district principal, a school board, and a district superintendent. But to understand the totality of the hierarchy, and thus to understand the quality of decision-making, one would, in fact, have to go outside the district to a state and federal level, where funding and legislation emanated and where much of the configuration of the district's education was determined.

Because of the both geographic and vertical spread of the hierarchy, when decisions were made at one level, there was both a psychological and a structural tendency for the responsibility for the decision to begin to float up and down the hierarchy. Moreover, since no one (perhaps excluding the Commissioner of Education, in some instances) ultimately <u>was</u> responsible for the totality of the situation, individuals, probably quite rightly, resisted assuming responsibility for any single part.

On the other hand, this general tendency toward an obfuscation of responsibility had the corrolary of a loss of respect for the authority of most individuals throughout the hierarchy. I believe that teachers felt this loss, for themselves as well as for the principal and other administrators, and that the feeling was the source of much of their joking about their toughness and strictness with their students. In Green Valley, because the memory of the rural tradition was still strong, people recalled the days when the principal was a "real man," as if the nature of individuals' capacities to assume leadership had changed, rather than the structure of authority itself.

In a sense, the battle over the bathrooms symbolized the struggle of individuals at different points in the educational hierarchy—from students to school board members—to control one kind of space within the school. Bathrooms, because they were not formally delegated as adult-controlled spaces, were particularly susceptible to such a struggle. The smoking issue, it seems to me, was only a symbol for a broader, more structural problem in the system of educational power relations. The final decision to have teachers guard the student bathrooms against students was not really a victory for anyone, including the school board, partly because no one inside Green Valley ultimately does control the bathrooms, or any other part of the school. In fact, because the hierarchy is so extensive and diffuse, decisions on any specific issue tend not to be satisfying to anyone, generally seeming instead to slightly miss their mark. Had the students been more sophisticated about what the attempt to legitimate smoking would lead to, they probably would have retained their *sub rosa* bathroom activities. I suspect urban students would have known better, having long grown used to manipulating bureaucracies by the time they reach high school. Many students in Green Valley, however, had little understanding of bureaucracies and hoped somewhat naively that their activities would receive respect from their elders and be allowed to exist above board. Perhaps a lesson they learned from the year's experience was that the school was not a family, the teachers neither good or bad parents, but that the dynamics of the system moved impersonally, largely outside their control.

Chapter VIII

NEW INSTRUCTION IN GREEN VALLEY

In the late 1960s, the cities of America were hit by an experimental education movement. Free schools, alternate schools, and schools without walls began to fill abandoned store fronts, church basements and supermarkets. People began again to read A. S. Neill's descriptions of Summerhill in England and to gather literature on the Lancaster "open day" method. They talked about individualized instruction, about letting students learn what they wanted to learn, when they wanted to learn it. New pieces of technology emerged on the horizon which would permit students to learn without the "authority" of the teacher. Talking typewriters, self-testing instructional devices, recording machines, closed circuit television, slide strips, and so on, all advertised the freedom which students gained once outside the confinement of the teachers' directions. Some teachers and teachers' groups balked at the possibilities for automating their profession, but their resistance soon died when they discovered that their jobs would not be threatened and that, in fact, many of the new devices saved them time and the headaches of planning. Even in the old-fashioned, red brick fortresses characteristic of small city streets, new kinds of life seemed to appear on the inside. Walking through the halls, one found students sitting or lying on the floor with their pads and pencils. Despite the janitors' resistance, "open

corridor" methods were providing an ingenious approach to overcoming the presses of overcrowding. In some schools, the old desks nailed down for decades came loose and students were placed in genial circles or encouraged to work in groups. Women teachers began to wear slacks, while their students were allowed to come in their long-loved dungarees. Everything seemed to have become so open and friendly.

Green Valley missed much of the educational enthusiasm of the late '60s and early '70s, and it missed as well the discouragement and desolation of failed experimental schools and curtailed teaching experiments. By the time that the new educational methods and theories were reaching Green Valley, teachers and administrators, they had already been modified and commercialized by the publishing houses and film and video companies, all of whom had suddenly discovered a new market for profit. "Individualized" reading kits, programmed math instruction, self-activating tape cassettes for science and math, learning games for social studies, and film strips (with scripts for the teacher to read), movies and records for everything from history to health (some of them free) filled the teachers' shelves and the general supply cupboards. Each morning, sacks of brochures and pamphlets arrived in the front desk, all containing advertisements of the latest instructional sets, kits, series and devices. At times, the brochures seemed to make a kindergarten playland out of junior high and high school learning. At times, it seemed that anything and everything could be taught in a cinema atmosphere—which the school, with the exception of jujubees and popcorn,

seemed to be acquiring.

But the onslaught of commercial advertising would not by itself have been sufficient to create the kind of change that was occurring in Green Valley. Since classes had not become impossible to discipline or teach as they had in urban schools, the impetus for change had to come largely from outside the school. The state teacher training institutes provided the vehicle. Here, in their methods and curriculum classes, Green Valley teachers learned the latest theories and techniques of teaching and classroom management, so that when the promotions from the commercial publication and film companies arrived, their "need" for these materials had already been created. Most teachers in the 1972-73 school year attended courses one or two nights a week, generally at the site of the old State Normal School which had evolved into one of the campuses of the State University system. Not surprisingly, their courses stressed "team teaching" and individualized instruction. They also discussed more controversial ideas such as ungraded classrooms, non-grading, and greater integration of subjects. In a repetition of the 1930s, new ideas in discipline stemmed almost entirely from behaviorism, now under the more modern term "behavior management," and teachers seemed generally enthusiastic about the possibilities for creating behavior change—if only they could control their own negative responses to students' misbehavior.

Like the experiments of progressive education, those of the new era of open education were hitting Green Valley in altered form and changing

the days of everyone in the school. One of the first impressions that struck me about the junior-senior high school was the amount of time that many teachers and students spent in the dark. In any given period, at least half a dozen classes would be held in darkness, with the projector shining a movie or film strip onto the front canvas. Some teacher had projectors and recording machines loaned out to them on a yearly basis, while others borrowed them from "audio visuals," which was supervised by one of the school's two paraprofessionals. (The second paraprofessional manned the zerox machine.) Since the paraprofessional kept a record of machines lent out, I was able to get a sense of the percentage of class time that specific teachers spent with a film strip or movie providing the day's instruction. The following table shows the first three months of the school year. Because of vacations, it includes a possible total of six hours a day for three weeks in September, four in October, and three-and-a-half in November, minus two single-day vacations, or a total of 290 teaching hours. Of thirty-eight teachers, seven spent twenty hours or more, and more than half spent over ten hours showing movies, slides or film strips on an hourly loan projector. While this list is accurate in terms of recording the number of periods which teachers signed up for machines it does not give a true picture of the total number of hours of teaching time in which audio-visual devices were used. Twenty-five teachers had some kind of audio-visual equipment leased out for the entire year; many of these are teachers who show up in the 0-10 categories, since they had their own

TABLE VIII

NUMBER OF HOURS TEACHERS USED FILM OR MOVIE PROJECTORS IN A THREE MONTH PERIOD

Number of Hours Using Film or Movie Projector	Number of Teachers
0	11
1-9	9
10-19	10
20-39	4
40-59	3
120	1

machine for the media form they tended to use most often. The one teacher who was recorded as using audio-visual equipment 120 hours during the three month period was a social studies teacher. Social studies teachers tended to use audio-visual devices more than others, and they most often showed movies or film strips, many of which came to them free in the advertising promotions of film and publishing companies.

One day as I was sitting in commons with a group of students, I suddenly saw the students from an entire class file in. I went over and asked them why the class had been canceled. "The zerox machine is broken," said one. "Mr. Harting couldn't zerox the lesson." The students, most of

them seniors, thought of this as an ironic joke. Most teachers made heavy use of the zerox machine for running off assignments, copying out sections of books, or duplicating suggested examinations given in their teachers' manuals. The teachers themselves were somewhat self-conscious about it, partly because there was almost always a backup at the zerox machine, and whenever it broke down—as it did almost once a month—there was a general feeling of distress. Both teachers and students talked a good deal about the importance of the zerox machine in the school. To the seniors, the class cancelation seemed to imply that the school would simply grind down to a halt without it.

While teachers expressed ambivalence toward the zerox machine, on which they felt themselves unhealthily dependent, they claimed to be annoyed with another piece of technology, the overhead projector, which had come to dominate their lives. The overhead projector is a machine built to place in the middle of the room: teachers can write horizontally on it or simply lay slides on it. The machine then projects the image onto the blackboard, but the teacher is saved the necessity of turning her or his back on the class. It is not clear to me except in a general way how or why this projector began to play such a role in the school. But courses were offered to teachers in the use of it, and the teachers could get three in-service credits for learning to make the slides. Moreover, teachers, particularly in the math and science departments, claimed that their chairman was pressing them to

use the projector. Although they seemed to feel perfectly capable of turning their back to the class or writing on the board while maintaining the classroom momentum, there was clearly pressure to use this new device. Thus one often saw teachers in the lunchroom or in the upstairs workroom, drawing detailed and brightly colored numbers, words or diagrams on the slides with ironic care and then passing them around for everyone's sardonic approval.

Two other types of technological innovation need further discussion. The first, which goes under the general name of individualized instruction techniques, played an important part of teaching in every discipline in the school. The health teacher had a pre-packaged instruction kit, which highlighted the important ideas to be gained and then gave specific ideas for individual project alternatives. The math teachers had tape cassettes which students could play at their own pace to learn number theory. The English teachers in the junior-high school grades had SRA and other standardized reading projects, all of which worked on the assumption that a student could read a particular item, then test himself, grade his own test and move onto the appropriate next assignment. These various individualized instruction devices left the teacher in the role of advisor, often free to do administrative tasks or what he or she wished for much of the period. They were, however, far removed from the original meaning of individualized instruction, which entailed a teacher working out a program with each student, and not merely allowing students to proceed at their own pace along the same general program.

If the individualized instruction techniques removed the teacher from the role of authority figure, the techniques also took away the collective bargaining potential from the students. In the "traditional" classrooms, students often could regulate assignments by collectively deciding that they were too difficult or too long, and teachers most often had to comply. But when individualized instruction techniques were used, students were theoretically not competing against each other, since they were supposed to be simply working at their own pace. Thus it was meaningless for students to ally with each other against the assignment and/or the teacher. Finally, the pre-packaged devices turned assignments into a kind of technological necessity; a long or short assignment, an interesting or dull discussion, a difficult or easy test, was no longer the teacher's responsibility. It was simply the logical implication of the previous assignment, discussion or test, decided upon outside the realm of the school.

The second kind of innovation was generally known under the name of learning games. These games were quite popular with students, and the teachers who used them were generally well-liked for it. In particular, a social studies and an English teacher who often combined their classes and "team taught," used the learning games. During October and early November, when the national elections were taking place, the teachers gave their combined classes of eighth graders a complicated monopoly-type game whose result was supposed to be that the students would learn the electoral process,

including electoral colleges, popular votes, etc. The game took two days to explain, but once the students understood the mechanics of it, the boys in particular were very good at it. The classroom had the aura of a bingo salon as the youngsters came steaming in, energetically got to work, and hardly heard the bell ring. The teachers were enthusiastic. But besides the latent learning of competitiveness and of the one interesting fact that a candidate could win on popular votes and lose on electoral ones, I wondered how much the students had gotten out of over a week of classroom periods spent on the game.

The male teachers themselves, in fact, had their own games. They played them whenever they had free periods and often stayed after school to play. The most common were scrabble and the myriad of word games such as ghost, battleships, and so on. But one teacher also owned a series of TIME-LIFE games, which he frequently brought in. These included games on the law, as well as other professions, and demanded both a knowledge of isolated facts and quick thinking. Some teachers were quite excellent at these games, and among the men there was a hierarchy of excellence among players for each specific game.

To the older teachers, and especially to the older women, I think that the game mentality was often oppressive. First, women (with the exception of me) did not join in the teachers' games, and while the younger women could sit at the side and joke, the older ones really had no place.

And second, the necessity of turning learning into a kind of entertainment seemed exhausting and alienating to those teachers who had believed that one could simply "teach." Mrs. Clark, for instance, who had started out teaching all subjects in a rural school and was now teaching math, said to me one day:

> I think that children have to be entertained nowadays. And this is my difficulty. I find very little I can entertain them with in math. For instance, this math puzzle, now they worked like crazy on this thing! And actually, it doesn't mean a darn thing as far as getting through eighth grade math is concerned. The good ones, the poor ones, quietly, no problems, they worked in study hall, they worked over the weekends, they worked on that thing. And they didn't lose it. Whereas I'll give out this work sheet and half of them will lose it. And you see the difference. Now I have a crossword puzzle; they'll work on that, too. They're going to work like crazy on this thing. They're going to have a lot of fun with it. And, of course, there is some math in here: "$3 \times 10^5 + 3^o$." They've got to know what they're doing in order to do this. "$3 \times 49 \div 7$"; "the base of our number system"; "the weeks per year"; "the first three even numbers"; "the first four natural numbers." They have to know some of their basic math in order to do this. . . .

Science classes, too, while not usually conducted through games per se, often had a game-like quality. Since a large percentage of classes in biology, chemistry and physics were laboratory experiments, there was a heavy flavor of "learning by doing" in the classes, and often the manifest goal as set out in the lesson plan was subverted into a latent one which had more to do with students "playing" around with dials, weights, measuring beakers, chemical solutions and plastic anatomical sections. A young biology

teacher in his first years of teaching complained to me: "The kids really just want to do the manual, assembly-line aspect of the experiments and keep their minds free. They don't care what it means." While students generally seemed in good spirits during the laboratory periods, it was often quite clear that the theories behind the experiments had completely by-passed them.

Perhaps some critic of the open school techniques will one day herald the idealism which informed their developments, analyzing the perversion which occurred once the theories and methods became commercialized for mass consumption. This person's article or book will sound much like the volumes which hailed the ideology of progressive education while despairing of what happened to its practice.

Like progressive education, the techniques of open education were developed largely in urban contexts, where discipline and learning problems among students were making it more and more difficult for teachers and administrators to maintain their traditional school structure. On the surface, the ideology of open education was to give more power to both teacher and students. Coming on the wings of decentralization and community control, the open education movement attacked the formalism and bureaucracy which had stultified teaching. Teachers would begin to plan for their classes without the aid of cumbersome texts, students would be able to learn by doing whatever interested them. Like the advocates of progressive education, the educational reformers of the 60s argued that education had become too removed from the

daily lives of the students, and that it needed to be made more "relevant."

But, it is important to note that the tremendous emphasis on classroom reform came _after_ the move to dislodge educational bureaucracies had failed. It was the panacea to distract educators from the fact that the preceding panacea, "community control," had not been allowed to work even to the point where it might be proved a failure. Teachers and students who had not been able to gain control over the structure of the educational system, were now to get redirected into "doing their own thing."

The problems of apathy and violence which would remain unsolved through structural reorganization were to be resolved at a lower level. But even while the new kinds of instruction were being developed in the teacher training institutes and the commercial publishing houses, the collective and individual powers of teachers, students and administrators were being further encroached upon. I have already shown how packaged individualized instruction became a means of taking away the informal collective bargaining power of students. Teachers in Green Valley often seemed more like retail sellers than like teachers. Their boxes full of brochures, pamphlets and catalogues of the latest reading sets, learning kits or film series, it was common to see teachers during their free periods browsing through the course options which they might buy. But the power of a purchaser is not the same as the power of teaching or of creating one's own lesson or series of lessons.

Few teachers gathered their own materials, thought out their own learning sequences or worked out what they thought was important about specific subjects. With many of its bookcases still empty, the Green Valley junior-senior high school library had never acquired even the number of books it was originally designed for. But teachers' shelves were filled with the debris of unused educational devices, and the stock of audio-visual equipment was a source of pride to the school.

Like the innovations of the progressive era, the technologies of the open school period hit Green Valley before it had developed the bureaucratic, administrative and management problems which had inspired their creation in the cities. Now, forty years later, it seemed that once again Green Valley education might, in fact, be pushed by these innovations into the very problems which had inspired them in the urban areas.

Chapter IX

COMMUNITY, BUREAUCRACY AND SCHOOL DECISIONS

A few years ago one might easily have said that there were no good monographs on public schools, and one would have been partly right and partly wrong. It was true that few researchers, good or bad, had focused their entire attention on a single public school, ferreting out its structure and nuances. But a lengthy tradition did exist in which discussions of schools and school life played a major part. This tradition, generally known as "community studies," had begun as early as the 1920s. Modeling itself on the anthropological tradition of total society studies which were being done of "primitive" peoples, the authors sought to depict the totality of a single American community. _Middletown_ (1929) by Robert and Helen Lynd, and the long and ambitious series of volumes on _Yankee City_ (1941-1961) by Warner, Low, Lunt and Srole form the beginnings of this tradition. Later examples include Seeley, Sim and Loosley's _Crestwood Heights_ (1963), Hollingshead's _Elmstown's Youth_ (1949) and Vidick and Bensman's _Small Town in Mass Society_ (1958).

These studies vary greatly in the thoroughness with which they treat the school system, but all did touch on it as one of the major institutions. A brief review of the findings of these community studies illustrates both the

shortcomings and some of the richness of this declining tradition. As Steward argued nearly twenty-five years ago, community studies could be faulted on two counts. First, Steward points out that "Scholars are quite aware that any modern community is a functionally dependent part of a much larger whole; but in general they have not yet taken account of this larger frame of reference in community study. Individual communities are often studied as if the larger whole were simply a mosaic of such parts" (Steward 1950:22). Second, he noted that "The historical approach has been little used in community studies; history is rarely included in them and never covers more than a few years of the immediate past. The result is that analysis of function and process tends to be predominantly synchronic and lacks insights into basic trends that the historical method might give" (Ibid.:24).

The fieldwork for the Lynds's classic, Middletown, was done in the the mid-1920s, nearly a decade before the Green Valley schools became centralized. The Lynds's description, in a number of areas, coincides with the picture which someone might have given of Frank Farley ten years later. In a town which then numbered 36,000, the authors noted curricular changes which had occurred since the nineteenth century, and which greatly resembled those that Green Valley would get through centralization.

> The facts and skills constituting the present-day high school curriculum present a combination of the traditional learning reputed to be essential to an "educated" man or woman and newer applied information or skills constantly being inserted into the curriculum to meet current immanent concerns [Lynd & Lynd 1929:192-93].

More pertinent, the president of the Middletown school board is quoted as saying, "'For a long time all boys were trained to be President. Then for a while we trained them all to be professional men. Now we are training boys to get jobs'" (Ibid.:194). The Lynds report that the vocational training courses are "the darling of Middletown's eye" (Ibid.:195), and that "vocational supervisors are more highly paid than any other teacher in the school system" (Ibid.:196). Other courses noted by the Lynds as relatively new to the system are "gymnasium work" and civics, the latter seen by them as predominantely concerned with developing "right attitudes" (Ibid.:202).

The Lynds describe the teachers as predominantely young women, locally raised and trained in the local teachers college, poorly paid (thus the paucity of men), and not particularly prominent in the life of the community. But, they say:

> If teaching is poor, supervisors are employed and "critic teachers" are added; in 1890 the only person in the entire school who did not teach was the superintendent, while between superintendent and teacher today is a galaxy of principals, assistant principals, supervisors of special subjects, directors of vocational education and home economics, deans, attendance officers, and clerks, who do no teaching but are concerned in one way or another with keeping the system going; in 1924 the office of superintendent itself was bifurcated into a superintendent of schools and a business director. Thus in personnel as well as in textbooks and courses of study strains or maladjustments in education are being met by further elaboration and standardization [Ibid.:210].

Simultaneously with the increasing bureaucratization of education in Middletown, the Lynds note that "the school is taking up more and more of

the child's waking life" (Ibid.:211). Extra-curricular organizations, inter-scholastic athletics, and school fraternities and sororities have proliferated since the 1890s when the only club was the "Turemethian Literary Society" (Ibid.:214). The Lynds conclude:

> The relative disregard of most people in Middletown for teachers and for the content of books, on the one hand, and the exalted position of the social and athletic activities of the school, on the other, offer an interesting commentary on Middletown's attitude toward education. And yet Middletown places large faith in going to school. The heated opposition to compulsory education in the nineties has virtually disappeared. . . . /Ibid:218/.

Although the Lynds' analysis of the changing nature of education is astute, one of the problems is that there is no sense given of where these changes come from. Why is it that vocational education, extra curricular activities and school administration have proliferated? Since the Lynds were working in a functionalist tradition, there is an implication that the changes are consonant with the community as a whole, and that they may, in fact, be part of a configuration of internally caused and causing changes.

The Lynds returned to Middletown a decade later, after federal depression subsidies and programs had clearly changed the nature of the community. Thus Middletown in Transition reflects a greater awareness of the connections between changes inside the town and those on the outside. They note that administration had further proliferated, that guidance services had been introduced, and that teachers in general were now more educated than they were in the 1920s. They describe a new focus in educational

philosophy on "individual differences" concurrent with a depression-caused increase in class size and a hardening of the community's conservative attitude toward real differences of opinion. Because the Lynds' critique of educational change in the 1930s is quite excellent, it is worth quoting at some length.

> The 1920s were years of educational "efficiency" in American public education and of yardstick making by which to measure this efficiency, and Middletown was rendered especially conscious of these tendencies by its pride in the rapidly growing X State Teachers College in its midst. Education was becoming "scientific" with a vengeance; "measurement" was in the saddle in all departments, from teaching to administration; and administration ceased to be the business of veteran teachers and became a series of specialties, its offices increasingly filled by specially trained persons. Cities were watching each other's progress and emulating each other in building new "million-dollar high schools" for a future thought to be permanently opulent; administrators were out to make records, because that was the way a superintendent or director of vocational education in a city of 40,000 moved up to a city of 100,000; and the teachers colleges and omnipresent Ph.D.'s were developing the necessary yardsticks which State Departments of Education and Middletown school systems could take over to apply to local problems. The Middletowns added Research Departments which used these yardsticks in the schools and issued impressive printed bulletins of comparative charts and tables on "How Much Do Our Schools Cost the Taxpayer?" and "Educational Planning in the [Middletown] Public Schools." Middletown's school system, in step with those of other cities, has been becoming thoroughly "modernized" and "efficient" in its administrative techniques—to the dismay of the city's able teachers as they have watched the administrative horse gallop off with the educational cart [Lynd & Lynd 1937:205-06].

Although they did not elaborate the connections, the Lynds's

analysis traced change quite clearly through the state education department and the teacher training institute in the area. Middletown teachers were no longer seen as riding their own horses, or even driving their own carts.

Yankee City is based on research begun in 1930 and conducted over the years by four social scientists, most of them trained in social anthropology. Warner, Low, Lunt and Srole discuss the schools of Yankee City in two ways: (1) as part of a network of voluntary (and compulsory) associations which create crosscutting ties and different levels of integration:

> All churches and many economic organizations, as well as the school and political structures of Yankee City, surround themselves with associations which act as implements in organizing and resolving their antagonisms toward the larger community. [Warner, Low, Lunt & Srole 1963:106].

and (2) as an institution for funneling specific ethnic groups and socioeconomic classes into their appropriate place in the occupational hierarchy through a class and ethnic group based tracking system. For example,

> The Polish students had a low representation in the Latin and scientific courses but were high in the commercial course. The Russians had no members in the Latin course and were heavily represented in the scientific and commercial courses [Ibid.: 196].

Or again,

> Only students from the two middle and the two lower classes were enrolled in the general course, and those of the upper-middle class had a significantly small representation. Students of the upper part of the class hierarchy attended the Latin and scientific courses more frequently than those of the lower classes, while conversely those of the lower classes more frequently attended the commercial and

> general courses than did students of superior classes [Ibid.:197].

Warner and his associates give a detailed account of the centralization and bureaucratization of industry and its effect on work and workers in Yankee City. Their description of the change-over to a pattern of absentee ownership in the shoe factory and its effect on shoe production, including a likely connection with the shoe-workers' strike, is detailed and convincing. Yet there is no attempt made to understand the centralization and bureaucratization of education. Instead, the school is seen as working toward integration within the town, when, in fact, its greater force may be toward working for integration with the outside world. Similarly, the perpetuation of class is seen merely in terms of local needs, when the locus of need for class differentiation may, in fact, be much larger.

The fieldwork for Elmtown's Youth was done in 1941-42. The book contains a short chapter, "The School System," in which Hollingshead describes who school personnel are and how they are hired; how the school board is constituted; how the school is financed at a local level; and even in a cursory manner how there is a relationship between the school district and the state. But Hollingshead says that

> . . . the school is essentially a local responsibility, particularly with respect to policy. State Educational officials have little control over the Elmtown system beyond their power to withdraw state aid funds in extreme cases for violations of law or administrative rulings [Hollingshead 1949:121].

Since Hollingshead's fieldwork was done when Elmtown still

included thirty-two rural school districts in addition to the "high school district," local autonomy probably existed to a greater degree than it would once school consolidation had taken place. Still, there are hints that the autonomy portrayed is, in fact, less than it would seem on the surface. For example, if one knows that the federal government gave large sums for agricultural courses in the '30s and '40s and for vocational education in the 1940s, the following passage takes on a different meaning:

> Each teacher in the vocational subjects—agriculture, home economics, shop, band, and secretarial science —has an especially equipped room. Teachers in the traditional subjects—English, Algebra, Geometry, Latin, French, Chemistry, Physics and History—believe that too much money is spent out of the limited school budget to equip these rooms. They are correct in their argument that more money is invested in this equipment than in all the rest of the school. . . . Salary differences between the two groups is another source of friction, since the highest salaries are paid to the vocational and the lowest to the academic teachers [Ibid.:171-72].

Despite Hollingshead's assertion that this vocational-academic cleavage "enters into every aspect of school life" (Ibid.:172), he makes no attempt to explain where the extra money for vocational education comes from.

Hollingshead's emphasis is on how school perpetuates class differences among individuals; he is thorough in his documentation on this subject —to the point where one wonders why it has had to be documented over and over in the following decades. He demonstrates that lower class students tend to go into the commercial and vocational courses, while the upper class students enter the academic courses of study, and that both tracking and

grades received in school follow class lines, although they do not relate in any significant way to tests of "ability." Again, there is an implicit assumption in Hollingshead's book that the funneling system is internally consistent in the community. It would have been important to investigate how power and resources stemming from outside the school fit into this process.

Crestwood Heights, written in the 1950s, is the first study of a suburb. Seeley, Sim and Loosey say that Crestwood Heights was "literally built around its schools" (Seeley, Sim & Loosley 1963:224). The building of the school and its subsequent reputation "has been and still is the magnet drawing residents to the area" (Ibid.:234). The authors state that although the school still competes with parents and churches for hegemony over the socialization process of the suburb's children, "it is evident that the school is more and more being entrusted with the task of developing in the child adherence to the emerging value system of health, happiness and success" (Ibid.:243).

The authors focus a good deal of attention on the ideology of progressive education and its relationship to the increase in professionalism and specialization in the school. These, in turn, they relate to changes in the structure of work in the society at large.

> The educational systems of present-day Western countries have become tightly knit, interlocking bureaucracies, staffed by administrators and specialists, providing more or less similar curricula, and aimed primarily at preparing pupils for a middle-class vocation in a highly industrialized culture [Ibid.:246].

The authors describe in general terms the same trend which had been noted by the Lynds:

> With centralization, bureaucratic organization, and specialization, the actual teaching situation at the classroom level is undergoing changes. The career line, particularly for the more able teachers, points toward the acquisition of more and more qualifications which will permit movement upward in the educational hierarchy, leaving the teaching itself to less experienced, less ambitious, and often younger teachers [Ibid.].

But Crestwood Heights suffers from overgeneralizations which are not related to the psychologically-oriented details presented on the life of the school—or of other institutions in the community. There is no attempt to draw out the details of educational bureaucracy with anything more than short role and personality descriptions of specific positions in the school. Nor is the notion of bureaucracy related to specific interactions and ideologies which form school life. Crestwood Heights is a middle-class suburb with a "good" school system which prepares students for white-collar, managerial-type jobs. The dynamics of this process are kept in the dark, as is —except through large-scale generalizations—the relationship of the educational process in Crestwood Heights to institutions and processes outside the suburb.

A more recent attempt at a community study was Small Town in Mass Society, written by Vidich and Bensman in the 1950s. The title of the book suggests the authors' consciousness of a growing interdependence between small towns and the rest of the world; the introduction argues that, in fact, the "study is an attempt to explore the foundations of social life in

a community which lacks the power to control the institutions that regulate and determine its existence"(Vidich & Bensman 1958:x). Much of the book is a carefully drawn picture of the way in which urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization have shaped the social system of a rural village. Yet in discussions of school politics, the configuration of action is described as if it were township based.

For example, Vidich and Bensman analyze the dominance of agriculture courses in the school in terms of the position of farmers on the school board. Their argument that the unwillingness of farmers to accept the decline of agriculture caused them to push for agriculture courses completely misses the fact that the federal government gave funds to schools in the '50s to try to revive an interest in agriculture in dying rural areas. It did this in Green Valley, and it presumably did this in Springdale, Vidich and Bensman's town.

The authors state that school purchasing has traditionally been important to local businessmen, but that because the school board is largely composed of farmers who are "psychologically capable" of by-passing local businessmen when it is to their advantage, "the largest part of school expenditures are made with outside firms" (Ibid.:185). Again, their presentation implies that the battle is between farmers and businessmen (which it may well be on the surface). Yet the book is clear in other contexts that specific Springdale leaders (including a board member) assume primary responsibility for keeping Springdale in touch with state and national power centers. But

because of the local ideology of democratic control, they work behind the scenes, making sure the village and town boards reach the "proper" decisions.

Finally, the principal is described in his relationship to the school board, the PTA and the community through his column in the local newspaper. As one sees him charting his course through conflicting groups as if he were a free-wheeling agent, neither his actions, nor those of the board, are ever described in terms of their operating under rules and regulations over which they have no control. Despite Vidich and Bensman's sensitive descriptions of the town's loss of autonomy in other respects, somehow the ideology of a democratically-controlled school makes them perceive the educational structures as if they still had the democratic localism of the colonial period.

The decline in the community studies tradition paralleled a change in social science knowledge and fashion as well as changes in the communities themselves. By the 1950s, an understanding of what has been called "mass society" was making it increasingly difficult for anthropologists and sociologists to describe a single community as if in isolation. At the same time, the social sciences were placing greater value on specificity, less wide-ranging theories and more systematic data.

The studies of communities in the United States had paralleled the studies of small societies abroad. One group of inheritors of the community studies tradition were those who, seeing change, attempted to develop structures and models for describing the interrelationships between the

communities, groups or small societies. This new tradition developed in rich soil in Africa, where anthropologists such as Max Gluckman (1958) or Norman Long (1968) focused on the points of conflict between two traditions and two conflicting, although not equally powerful, groups. However, it was probably developed most successfully in a study of an Indian village by F. G. Bailey (1960). Bailey focused on the tribal, caste and national cultures, their interactions, and the actions possible for individuals moving from one sphere to another.

A second group of inheritors of the U. S. community studies tradition were the studies of neighborhoods and streetcorners in the United States. Like the studies of groups and peoples in Africa, India and elsewhere, investigators working in this tradition used individual networks as their foci, and often concentrated on specific individuals and individual life histories. Liebow's Tally's Corner (1967), and Hannerz's Soulside (1969) are examples of this tradition, as is the more ambitious study of territorial fighting among four ethnic groups in a Chicago slum by Gerald Suttles (1968). These studies show an interesting methodological change from the earlier community studies. Having given up the possibility of describing an entire town, or even an entire ghetto—with or without its relationship to the outside world—the investigators focus instead on specific groups or individuals, sometimes indicating when they leave the area, but they rarely include descriptions of the larger, structural relationships except in an almost anecdotal manner.

The neighborhood and streetcorner studies mention schools only

tangentially or not at all. Instead, as the social sciences began tospecialize schools began to receive the totality of an investigator's attention. The schools studied were largely urban and populated predominately by Black and other minority students. Elizabeth Eddy's Walk the White Line (1967) and Eleanor Leacock's Teaching and Learning in the City Schools (1969) are examples of two anthropologists working in this tradition. The studies usually focused on how schools systematically destroyed the life chances of Black and Puerto Rican students by largely organizational, but also personal, means. But the works did not relate what occurred in the schools to the communities in which they were situated or to larger state and national structures, except in the most generic way, such as to point out that socialization for class and racial differences in success fitsinto the American occupational hierarchy. Most were not based on the thousands of hours of participant-observation which had informed the community studies.

By the early 1970s a couple of exceptions had appeared to the US-urban generalization and did contain participant-observation. Lacey's book, Hightown Grammar, described a working-class, English grammar school which he studied between 1962 and 1966. Like most of the American ethnographies, however, Lacey focuses on the perpetuation of, and socialization for, class differences through the school. Lacey does describe the roles and positions of various adult groups in the school; however, except for the following insight his analysis adds little new to our knowledge of school organization. Lacey says that the school had a number of bureaucratic features:

> . . . for example, sets of formal rules, a hierarchy of officers, division of labour (departments) and a career structure based on ability and seniority—but to conceive of it entirely in these terms is misleading. The main task of the school, teaching, was performed equally by heads of departments, heads of houses and assistant masters. For some purposes, the staff are best looked upon as a professional group, differentiated on the basis of seniority, whose activities were controlled by professional and traditional norms. Within the classroom and in his relation with the pupils, the teacher at Hightown Grammar had a broad area of professional autonomy which is not usually a feature of bureaucracies [Lacey 1970:160].

The notion of a teacher as free inside the classroom is an interesting one. Transferring his idea onto Green Valley, the teachers were, theoretically, free not to look through the curricula brochures, not to buy the pre-packaged lessons, not to show the slides and films, not to follow the lesson plans they turned in, etc. But given the socialization that they had undergone, what did this freedom mean?

A second book, Small Town Teacher by Gertrude H. McPherson (1972), is more relevant to my own work. A description of a rural elementary school by a woman who first worked as a teacher there and then took off time to study the school, McPherson's book centers around questions of power and authority in the daily life of the school.

> The important question to be asked about the relation of the Adams teacher to the administration is not: "How well does the authority structure operate?" but: "What is the authority structure? Is anyone in charge?" From the teacher's point of view the situation was characterized by the apparent unwillingness of any official in the formal structure to exercise authority. No member of the administration was anxious to give orders, to specify demands,

> to set limits. In such an authority vacuum, the older Adams teacher in particular was unsettled and disturbed. Her responses were ambivalent and confused. Occasionally she gloried in her freedom, comparing her present status favorably to the degree of control she had experienced during her teaching years or to the restrictive control reported by teachers in nearby towns. Usually, however, she was bewildered. She kept looking for situations in which the formal authority was so legitimated and clear that compliance became a social duty, even a moral obligation /McPherson 1972:153/.

McPherson offers several suggestions as to why the authority vacuum developed. First, she says, "In part, some confusion about the locus of authority is characteristic in a school like Adams which because of its small size had a double formal authority structure, descending in one line from the State Board of Education and in another from the Adams School Board. The superintendent and the elementary supervisor were employees of the State Board; the principal was an employee of the local school board. The teacher was directly subject to orders from the principal and the elementary supervisor" (Ibid.:154). Moreover, McPherson says, an unclear system of authority existed within the elementary school itself. When a new principal had been hired, he had taken a position as both high school and elementary school principal. The woman who had been elementary principal stepped down to the position of head teacher. However, the new principal's duties kept him in the high school most of the time, and the head teacher in her ambivalence both resisted and overdid her new role. Finally, McPherson describes the superintendent as "remote" and the school board as the "ultimate authority" in the minds of the teachers. What is particularly interesting here

is that part of the authority of the board was derived from their "status position /above the teacher/ in the formal structure. As a locus of authority the board had to be viewed with deference and respect"(Ibid.:158). In other words, the position of the board per se in the hierarchy of the school system, combined with the class position of a number of its members, was enough to give it a feeling of "ultimate authority" even when it did not have it.

While I would reject McPherson's conclusion that "The extent of the authority vacuum in the Adams Schools is certainly not typical of most elementary schools nor is it within the experience of most elementary teachers" (Ibid.:175), her analysis of the result of this authority vacuum bears quotation. McPherson believes that instead of freeing teachers for experimentation, the lack of clearcut authority resulted in teachers acting" primarily on the basis of past experience and habit"(Ibid.:175).

> With no specific direction from agents in authority the Adams teacher often displayed strict conformity to the norms and rules of the school system. She imputed to them a rigidity and formality they did not in actuality possess, partly to reduce her sense of exposure and defenselessness /Ibid.:176/.

One of the implications of McPherson's analysis is that creativity only arises when authority exists and is clearly defined. Conversely, there is an implication that in times of confused authority patterns individuals fear the possibilities of anarchy and so react with self-imposed authoritarianism. Or, as a sociologist has put it, "What, it is asked, shall be the source and

nature of an authority sufficient to replace lost authority, to restrain the natural anarchy that even in civilized society thrusts itself now and then through the crevices of law and morality?" (Nisbet 1966:108).

The necessity for an authority pattern imposed from above is as common to the literature on education as is the ideology of democratically-controlled educational institutions. Even as the myth of community control was being revived in the cities in the late 1960s, social scientists as well as educational decision-makers were arguing for the necessity of greater and greater centralized planning.

The following pages review a third tradition of literature on the schools which has increasingly attracted scholars, particularly in history and political science. This literature covers the history of American education, predominantely from an organizational viewpoint. In contrast to the community studies or the investigations of individual schools and school systems, this tradition focuses on the whole of American education, generally under the assumption that there have been commonalities informing the history of any individual school which wouldmake specific histories somewhat convergent. Most of this literature examines the authority patterns in American education; some of it is highly critical, while another side of it supports what has emerged in American education and even advocates further developments in the same direction.

Two books, one highly critical of the development of administration in education, and one somewhat ambivalent, examine its emergence in terms

of specific ideologies. Both have the ideologies as their research emphasis. The former relates the proliferation of administration in education to the acceptance of business ideologies and methods in the early part of the century, while the latter relates administrative growth to the force of an ideology of progressive education during approximately the same period.

In Education and the Cult of Efficiency, Raymond Callahan (1972) argues that between 1910 and 1930, educators became entranced with principles of management which were developing in business and industry. In particular, the ideas of Frederick W. Taylor, who advocated "management based on measurement," became an integral part of the developing school organization. For Taylor, there was no such thing as a top-heavy organization, if the productivity of the worker could be increased through management's scientific supervision. Taylor studied specific kinds of factory work to gauge how a product could be processed through a series of workers trained to do the smallest, "most efficient" unit of labor. His success became almost instantly mythic.

Educators were not the only ones who attempted to apply Taylor's methods to their organization. But, with unquestioning faith, they did adopt the stop watch, unit cost measures and the assembly-line tactic as a means of increasing educational productivity. In fact, the platoon system, an early forerunner of students passing from room to room for classes with teacher-specialists was based on the efficiency presumed to be inherent in the assembly-line system.

Callahan offers example after example of the new time-and-motion-saving devices which were instituted in education during this period. Even the notion of the "community school" arose during this period as a means of getting maximum usage out of the school plant. School systems found French to be more "efficient" than Latin in terms of recitations produced per hour, and accordingly eliminated Latin.

According to Callahan:

> Whether administrators were recognized by teachers or laymen as experts or had achieved a degree or professional status in other than their own eyes is difficult to determine. But there is no question that by 1918 administrators had followed the authoritarian role of the manager in industry and had applied it in their school systems. In fact by 1918 the adoption had gone so far that there was strong reaction against it. Thus in that year William C. Bagley, one of the most able and vocal leaders in education termed this arrangement a "factory plan" and a few years later voiced his opposition again. This system, which he said was "especially unfortunate," consisted of a "hierarchy of authority and responsibility which makes the school board a 'board of directors,' the superintendent a 'general manager,' the assistant superintendents so many 'foremen,' and the principals equivalent to 'bosses,' while the teachers, to complete the picture have the status of 'hands' or routine workers" /Callahan 1962:220/.

Some of the resistance, Callahan notes, resulted in the disbanding of specific measures. But the general notion of education as a business—and one that had to sell itself to the public—was never completely reversed. Moreover, as Callahan points out, once firmly established as a profession, school administration took on its own demands for growth.

Callahan's descriptions on a national level parallel the analysis made by the Lynds of Middletown in the 1920s. His work gives further credence to the notion that much of what occurred in Middletown education started quite far, both geographically and institutionally, from the Middletown school system. Similarly, notions of efficiency and growth which were crucial to centralization in Green Valley can be seen as stemming from ideologies and interests created at a national level, both in and outside education.

Swift's analysis of Ideology and Change in the Public Schools focuses on both the social and economic origins of progressive education and what Swift calls its "latent functions." Swift relates the enthusiasm with which progressive education was received to the burdens placed on schools by the enactment of compulsory education laws:

> . . . the enactment of these laws signified that a new burden had been placed upon the school, vastly complicating its work and requiring a radical change in its treatment of pupils. Now that a large share of the responsibility was in the school's hands, motivation for attending school shifted from being solely the concern of the pupil and his family to also being a concern of the school. This meant that the school's previous operating principles had become inapplicable. Teachers and administrators could no longer employ a "take it or leave it" attitude toward their students. Under the traditional pattern it had been up to the pupil to adjust to the school. If he was unable or unwilling to do so, the school could expel him, if he did not leave voluntarily. Now, however, the shoe was on the other foot; the school had to adapt itself to the pupils. If pupils were unwilling to cooperate with traditional expectations, a new system had to be devised which they would be willing to tolerate /Swift 1971:42/.

Swift demonstrates how progressive education proved to be an ideology which could solve the problems created by compulsory education. Primary, in his view, was its stress on flexibility.

> It gave school executives freedom to devise methods of coping with troublesome managerial problems. Faced with the mounting pressures of large, complex organizations, some adjustments had to be made. It was no longer possible to concentrate upon the clearly stated aims of the traditional school; other problems had to be met, even though they were not specifically educational in nature. Something had to give, and room for adjustment was provided by the broad goals of progressive education, permitting the school to shift its emphasis away from scholarship, from mastery of subject matter, and even from education in any form, toward other urgent issues which confronted it /Ibid.:66/.

While Callahan attributes the strengthened position of administrators to the ideology of efficiency, Swift attributes it to progressive education. But while Callahan rejects the traditional analysis of the history of public education which emphasizes the importance of the ideology of progressive education, Swift's book is an attempt to combine Callahan's insights on economic efficiency with his own on the importance of progressive education ideology. Thus Swift shows how economic motivations were combined with progressive ideologies, for example, to promote the policy of not failing students.

> Progressive education facilitated this practice by condemning traditional policies of failure and retention on the grounds of their deleterious effects upon the pupil. Automatic promotion not only forestalled serious discipline problems, . . . but also offered an economic incentive to cost conscious administrators, giving them a way to demonstrate their competence in school management /Ibid.:87/.

But Swift also shows how progressive education ideology by itself strengthened administrative authority in a number of ways. Among them, he notes that the de-emphasis on grades bolstered the administrator's position by changing evaluations of teachers from routine tasks to a role which would require "managerial expertise, professional judgement, and graduate work in administration"(Ibid.). More important, "By reducing the importance of subject matter and by emphasizing human relations, progressive education alleviated the problem of legitimizing authority over unfamiliar specializations" (Ibid.:88).

Reading both Swift and Callahan, one senses two seemingly unreconcilable ideologies at work at the same time. And yet, in Green Valley the educational ideology which permeated the local newspapers in the late 1920s and early '30s contained a constant mixture of these two ideological threads. Similarly, the brief analysis one gets of education in Middletown shows a parallel combination. What seems to be the case, in fact, is that both Callahan and Swift are correct, although only partially so.

While both Callahan and Swift emphasize the importance of the early decades of the twentieth century in formulating an educational ideology which was supportive to administrative growth, a third historian of education, Michael Katz, traces the origins of school organization to the late nineteenth century.

Katz's thesis is that "by about 1880 American education had acquired its fundamental structural characteristics" (Katz 1971:xix), and

that "it has not altered fundamentally since that time" (Ibid.:xx). By basic or fundamental, Katz means that education in America is, and was, "universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratic, racist and class biased" (Ibid.). Katz never makes either a logical or an empirical argument for the connection between bureaucracy and class- or race-biased education; however, it is an omission which is unconnected to the points which I shall cull from his book.

Katz divides the nineteenth century proposals for educational organization into four analytical models: paternalistic voluntarism, democratic localism, corporate voluntarism and incipient bureaucracy. The models reflect possible courses which education, as well as other institutions, might have taken, and the result of the controversy signaled the direction which both society and education was to follow.

Paternalistic voluntarism, according to Katz, "rested on faith in the individual talented amateur and, at an over-all administrative level, scorned the need for elaborate organization, state control, or professional staff. As its defenders pointed out, from at least one perspective paternalist voluntarism worked extremely well. With minimal administrative expense, scrupulous financial integrity, and commendable efficiency, the society maintained for decades an extensive network of schools that taught thousands of children a year" (Ibid.:9). However, it was a class system of education. "It provided a vehicle for the efforts of one class to civilize another, and thereby ensure that society would remain tolerable, orderly

and safe" (Ibid.).

Democratic localism, in contrast, was an attempt to adopt the organizational form of rural areas to the city. Its philosophy, as propounded by one of its spokesmen, was that "in education, the district should always remain paramount to the state, and each individual school should be under the control of a community composed merely of the number of families having children in it" (Ibid.:17). For democratic localists, any unit larger than a local community should be at most a federation. As Katz points out, democratic localism tended to ignore the tyranny of any majority on a local level; but it did provide one of the main ideological counterpoints in the movement toward centralization.

Corporate voluntarism was "the conduct of single institutions as individual corporations operated by self-perpetuating boards of trustees and financed either wholly through endowment or through a combination of endowment and tuition" (Ibid.:22). It represented one outcome of the belief that private institutions could be more flexible and thus reflect the variability of American conditions more than could public institutions. In the nineteenth century—as well as now—corporate voluntarism characterized the organization of secondary schools, universities and colleges, more than elementary education.

Finally, incipient bureaucracy, as propounded by Mann, Bernard, and their contemporaries, aimed "to uplift the quality of public education by standardizing and systematizing its structure and content" (Ibid.:33). The

plans of this group all included school centralization and the elimination of the district system as an important element, and both the institution of grade levels and an emphasis on supervision were considered natural concomitants of centralization.

While Katz generally ignores the economic and social conditions of the country which gave victory to the incipient bureaucratic solution, he does offer an interesting historical review of the attacks and counterattacks surrounding the educational route taken. In the 1870s and '80s criticism focused on the consequences of bureaucratic rigidity and formalism on individuals at all points in the hierarchy. "The 'personal force of the teacher,' Burke Hinsdale lamented, 'goes for much less,' and the pupil receives far less 'inspiration' than before. The old 'no-system' plan was, he felt, more conducive 'to developing individuality of character'" (Ibid.:43). Others argued that "By stressing the meek acceptance of orders from superiors, the system 'narrows responsibility and stifles thought'; it thus becomes 'death to all inventive minds'" (Ibid.:84).

The counter defenses of the same period seem less interesting—almost old hat by now: bureaucratic standardization would bring about regularity, increased order, efficiency and even harmony. Graded education would help the brightest as well as the dullest by creating opportunities for individual attention. A centralized curriculum would spare students from being buffeted back and forth among teachers with different ideas and different methods. And, given the huge population of students to educate under

compulsory education, a bureaucratized system was the only means of solving the problems of ignorance and thus—as many added—of crime.

What Katz's research makes clear is that the arguments for educational Taylorism were not qualitatively new. Rather, they were a quantitative outgrowth of an organizational philosophy which had already existed for several decades. From this perspective, progressive education was an attempt–whatever its use—to infuse a humanism into an educational system which had already received its basic structure, and which could use the ideology to further development along its basic lines. What is common to the arguments of Katz, Callahan and Swift, however, is that they ground their analyses in the onset of compulsory education, which on the one hand set a precedent for state control of education, and on the other, established the preconditions for large-scale educational growth and ultimately for the centralization and bureaucratization of both rural and urban education.

Callahan, Katz and Swift are critics of this process. There is, however, a tradition among political scientists of education who hold that the process has been good, or at least neutral and inevitable. For example, Myron Lieberman sees little use for school boards or for local control of schools, which he believes "should be limited to peripheral and ceremonial functions of education" (Lieberman 1960:283). And Cronin argues that:

> An education-minded governor like Terry Sanford of North Carolina did more for education in that state than could thousands of individual school board members. And the Congress, not school boards, took the necessary action in the 1960s to invest heavily in a new science

> and mathematics curriculum, to establish elementary school libraries for millions of children, to finance bilingual programs for the Spanish-speaking, and many other improvements. Federal authorities have not eliminated racial segregation nor eliminated the effects of poverty and malnutrition through schools, but their leadership has in general been more inspiring than those of most city school boards. The latter tend to react more to initiate reforms, with a few spectacular exceptions /Cronin 1973:246-47/.

Finally, Umans makes the same kind of argument that, in effect, change comes from top down, not from down up:

> Another alternative the reluctant administrator may face is government supervision of education. State and federal appropriations can easily provide the necessary foot in the door, particularly when the government has an angry and demonstrative public behind it. There are those who say that the policies of the Elementary and Secondary Education Acts, the National Defense Education Act, and the Office of Economic Opportunity are indications of a trend in that direction.
>
> Federal aid to education now equals approximately 25% of the total amount invested by the states. Each of the programs has strings attached. In some programs, the money must be spent only on the poor; in others, only for innovation, or for the handicapped, and so on. Each federal program is concerned with a purpose—to change education for segments of our population. There are those who deplore federal aid because of these "controls," but it is these very controls that effect change. Federal aid to education must therefore be considered as a serious and powerful tool for effecting change /Umans 1971:30/.

Two political scientists have gone so far as to warn that education is "bottom heavy" and that therefore those initiating change should be cautious in their expectations:

> Public education is a "bottom-heavy" enterprise of

> over 19,300 school districts and two million classroom teachers. It takes a long time for the trends featured in the current newspaper headlines to permeate this massive public enterprise—if they ever do so [Wirt & Kirst 1972:244-45].

That a social scientist can refer to our system of education as "bottom heavy" reflects the total re-volution which the ideology of educational administration has undergone. Perhaps any study which takes an overview of education must necessarily see things somewhat from top down; but I believe it is a dangerous view—one which becomes so removed from students and teachers that they are seen as the conservative drag on what might otherwise be an efficient and progressive system!

The Green Valley Central School System was far less bureaucratic than are many of our urban school systems. In fact, it was largely the historical and structural proximity of the school district to a far less bureaucratic system which made me able to see bureaucracy in a way that I might not have, had I studied an urban school or school district. Traveling to school and passing the rural one-room schools on my way, the Green Valley system as it presently existed seemed to hold no technological necessity. Moreover, the strong remnants of rural life made me question urban solutions when they occurred in the school.

Most discussions of bureaucracy have emphasized how bureaucracies limit the freedom of those outside them. For example, a common discussion is how a bureaucratic form of government becomes unresponsive to the people it is supposed to serve. For the layman, bureaucracy is most often simply a

word that recalls red tape, waiting in line, people sitting behind colorless desks piled high with papers. Franz Kafka's stories, although read by relatively few, have probably become part of everyone's images of bureaucracies as endless, winding hierarchies with no one really in charge, and thus frustrating to anyone who needs their services.

But there is another aspect of bureaucracy and human freedom, and that is the effect of bureaucracies on those who work inside them. This has been the focus of my study.

I have tried to trace the history of education in Green Valley in the twentieth century, from the rural one-room schools to the modern centralized school system. My focus has been on how, on the one hand, change has occurred because of economic changes within the Green Valley area itself, and how, on the other, it has been in response to pressures from the state and national governments and, more recently, from commercial enterprises. The kind of bureaucratic hierarchy I have tried to describe transcends the geographic confines of a building or even a school district.

My study has been informed by the sensibilities of the early community studies. But I have also tried to add a historical dimension as well as a constant awareness of relationships which extend outside the geographic confines of the study. While my method has not been predominantly quantitative or influenced by the newer techniques of network analysis, the problem orientation of this study is in the newer mode, and I have tried to use these techniques when they seemed useful. Finally, while studies of education have

tended to focus on either the ideological or the behavioral aspects, I have tried to bring an understanding of their constant interaction to bear on the problem, and thus to enrich the picture.

By tracing the history of education in Green Valley, I have attempted to show the effect of increasing bureaucracy and centralization on daily life as well as on people's perceptions of it. I have focused largely on decision-making and people's capacities to effect their own decisions. Much of my analyses makes it clear that the romanticization of suburban and rural areas as the last holdouts of democratic education which occurred during the fight for "community control" in the cities during the late 1960s has little grounding in reality. Rural schools differ from urban ones in quantity, more than in quality.

I have not tried to argue that the schools perpetuate racial or class or sex biases; while I sense that even the rural schools do that, it has not been my concern. Rather, I have tried to show that the configuration of authority in the educational bureaucracy, even in a rural school, makes whatever biases exist in the system outside the control of the people who use it and makes work uneasy for those who teach and administer.

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*Since person and place names in and around Green Valley have been fictionalized, scholars wanting the correct citations should consult the author.

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