A study to estimate amenability of citizens toward certain reconstructionist concepts proposed for application to their public high school

Congdon, Paul Ubert
Boston University

http://hdl.handle.net/2144/19618
Boston University
A STUDY TO ESTIMATE AMENABILITY OF CITIZENS TOWARD CERTAIN RECONSTRUCTIONIST CONCEPTS PROPOSED FOR APPLICATION TO THEIR PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Education
Boston University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Paul Ubert Congdon
August 1961
COPYRIGHTED, 1962

by

Paul Ubert Congdon
FIRST READER: DR. THEODORE BRAMELD, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

[Signature]

SECOND READER: DR. HOWARD B. LEAVITT, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

[Signature]

THIRD READER: DR. STUART A. MARSHALL, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

[Signature]
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PART I — THE SETTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. NOTES ON METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions and Descriptions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Concerns of the Cultural Anthropology</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Comment on Method</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing in Cultural Anthropology</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note Taking</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SELECTED CONCEPTS FROM ASHBY HISTORY AND TRADITION</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART II — THE HIGH SCHOOL IN THE SUBCULTURE OF ASHBY

<p>| IV. RE-ESTABLISHMENT AS PART OF THE COMMUNITY | 49 |
| V. THE SUBCULTURE OF ASHBY | 55 |
| A. A Problem of Values | 55 |
| B. Cultural Order in Ashby | 61 |
| 1. The Ashby Family — Authority Arrangements | 62 |
| 2. The Ashby Family — Child Rearing | 63 |
| 3. Threats to Family Structure | 65 |
| 4. Summary of the Ashby Family as an Institution | 67 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Some Aspects of the Structure of the Town of Ashby (Churches, Organizations, Influential Families, Clique, and Schools)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Central Institution in Ashby</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. RESPONDENT'S VIEWS OF RECONSTRUCTIONIST CONCEPTS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Review of Aspects of Cultural Order Which Make the School Central to its' Preservation, Transmission, and Change</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Operational View of Culture</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Goal Centering - Future Centering</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. The Conscious Use of Some Processes of Cultural Change</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Change as an Idea</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Acculturation</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Focus</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Crisis</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Innovation</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Causation and Prediction</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Controversial Issues and the Defensible Partiality of Teachers</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Comprehensive Adult Education</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Self-Correction Guarantees in Institutions</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Democracy Taught Through Use as Well as Theory</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# PART III - CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

## FOR EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>SOME PROPOSALS FOR EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN ASHEBY</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposals for Administration</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposals for Curriculum</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART I - THE SETTING

CHAPTER I

The Problem

It is the purpose of this study to estimate citizens' amenability to certain Reconstructionist concepts proposed for application to the public high school of Ashby, Massachusetts, and to test, at least partially, the promise of Educational Anthropology as an approach to the betterment of society through the betterment of its schools.

The Reconstructionist concepts toward which amenability is estimated are explained in this chapter along with key terms. They are:

1. The operational view of culture
2. Goal centering - future centering
3. Conscious use of processes of cultural change like acculturation, focus, crisis, innovation, causation and prediction
4. Examination of controversial issues and the identification of teachers with their defensible partiality
5. Comprehensive adult education
6. Guarantees of self-correction and adaptation in the institutional structure
7. Democratic methods taught through use as well as theory
The study is undertaken with at least two assumptions, namely; that proposals consistent with the educational philosophy called Reconstructionism offer improvement to public high schools and therefore to society, and that a study of a community through educational anthropology (deriving from cultural anthropology) can yield significant insight for school curriculum work, administration, and teaching.

It is an hypothesis that the citizens of Ashby are consciously or unconsciously amenable to Reconstructionism, at least in some of its implications, as applied to their public high school. That degrees of this amenability can be estimated through techniques of educational anthropology is a part of the hypothesis. Upon observation of what happens during the processes of estimating amenability, it becomes a secondary hypothesis that amenability can be developed through the same processes.

The importance of this work may be both local and widespread. The Ashby High School is apparently similar to many public secondary schools in that its methods, materials, administrative theory seem to reflect the currently obvious confusion of the public with regard to the role of the school. An identification of concepts consistent with a particular philosophy of education, in this case, Reconstructionism, can serve as a guide to those responsible for giving
direction to curricular work and related administrative arrangements, and to teaching.

Why Ashby? The Town of Ashby may be considered a subculture in itself with such apparent characteristics as rugged individualism, adherence to the Protestant Ethic, a highly valued local autonomy, and a determination to remain a small town according to its own image of a small town. These characteristics seem more pronounced here than in any of Ashby's neighboring towns which were once similar in deed as well as word. In the past decade regional solutions to recognized school problems have been twice rejected by Ashby in favor of local action. This has made the town virtually an island, educationally, with boundaries on state lines, on a city line of a community which no longer takes tuition pupils, and on the town lines of communities which have legally regionalized without Ashby. The question of whether the culture which produced this situation can also produce an improved secondary school, or whether it finds improvement necessary or desirable, is the question which gives this study potentially great local importance.

Significant application of this study in Ashby may provide a model for more widespread use; therein lies its broader importance.

As will be seen in the chapters immediately following, there are certain limitations imposed upon this study by the
scarcity of works attempting to adapt cultural anthropology primarily to education. Therefore, Educational Anthropology lacks the substance in literature and practice that more established disciplines have. The methodology also sacrifices the wide sampling characterizing some other kinds of studies (e.g., sociological) attempting to estimate public beliefs, attitudes, and preferences, in favor of depth in interviewing. Although this is listed as a limitation, it is also a strength—a contention defended in the next chapter. Related, also, to methodology are the limitations suggested by the fact that this study is a one-man venture in an area sometimes involving teams.

In spite of these limitations, the study was undertaken with the hope that data collected upon which to base an estimate of citizens' amenability to certain Reconstructionist concepts as they might apply to their public high school would be sufficient for conscientious formulation of conclusions to such a study, and that such conclusions could be re-formulated into specific proposals to be submitted to the Ashby School Committee for action.

Some explanations, descriptions, and definitions of key terms and concepts of the study follow:

A. Reconstructionism — a philosophy of education advocating that the schools take a leading role in the attempt to build the widest
possible consensus about supreme aims that should govern man in the reconstruction of his environment and that these aims be implemented by practical action.

B. Educational Anthropology — a study of ways that education, as a major agency of cultural transmission and development, may cope with such pervasive problems as cultural conflicts, change, values, and custom, using scientific and philosophical anthropology as prime resources.

C. Amenability — for purposes of this study, Webster's second meaning is intended, namely: responsiveness; tractability.

D. Culture — "A culture is a scheme for living by which a number of interacting persons favor certain motivations more than others and favor certain ways rather than others for satisfying these motivations. The word to be underlined is favor.

For preference is an essential of living things......To live at all is to act preferentially—to prefer some goals rather than others and some ways of reaching preferred goals rather than other ways. A culture is such a pattern of preferences held by a group of persons and transmitted in time."

E. Operational view of culture — the idea that culture is subject to change at the hands of man, that the individual man or the organized group can have an intended effect upon the culture, that there are no pre-existent or predetermined laws of cultural change which dictate man's relation to his culture. Man may operate upon his culture with the degree of success or failure dependent upon his understanding of it.

F. Goal centering — future centering — the choice and direction of activities so that they are conscious attempts to implement

some recognized over-all goal
distinguished from the present or
near-present-centered task accomplish-
ments which may or may not be enabling
objectives necessary to the maximum
future progress toward the overall
goal.

G. Processes of cultural change -

1. Acculturation - "acculturation comprehends
those phenomena which result when
groups of individuals having different
cultures come into continuous first-
hand contact, with subsequent changes
in the original cultural patterns of
either or both groups."

2. Focus - the tendency of a culture to
express greater variability in some of
its practices and institutions than in
others. For example, if there is such
a thing as American culture, perhaps
technology is one of its foci. Deviation
from this anthropological meaning of
focus is explained on page 97.

3. Ralph Beals, in Alfred Kroeber (ed.), Anthropology Today
3. Crisis — for purposes of this study the reference is to cultural crisis which is, according to Bidney, "a state of emergency brought about by the suspension of normal, or previously prevailing, technological, social, or ideological conditions." A slight but important extension of this definition is included, namely, the threat of such suspension shall be considered crisis, also.

4. Innovation — ways of thinking or behaving, or products of thinking or behaving, which are significantly different from the forms characteristic of the culture.

5. Causation and Prediction — the concept refers to the examination of a situation in the culture to discover how it came to be and to make tentative estimates of what the situation's outcomes will be under alternative sets of conditions.

H. Examination of Controversial issues and identification of teachers with their defensible partiality - the concept refers to the idea that matters of fundamental importance to the lives of adolescents should be central to the curriculum even though such matters are frequently disputatious, and further, that teachers, after consciously providing the students with all possible access to views other than their own upon such matters, should disclose and be able to defend their own views.

I. Comprehensive adult education - as used in this study, this concept sought clearer definition through the study itself, but began as an idea that comprehensive adult education should deal with matters which could make a significant difference to the culture as opposed to the familiar types of adult education catering to recreational and intellectual fads and fancies.

J. Guarantees of self-correction and adaptation in the institutional structure - most democratic institutions
have, explicit in their documents or implicit in their operation, provisions by which the institutions may be legally altered. An example is Article V in the Constitution of the United States of America. This study refers to such provisions as self-correction guarantees.

K. Democratic methods taught through use as well as theory—this concept has reference to the idea that adolescents need to be more directly involved in democratic processes as they pertain to important rather than superficial matters, and that adult authorities need to provide more evidence that they believe that democracy depends upon respect for the dignity of the human individual of which adolescents are examples.
CHAPTER II

Notes on Methodology

Sources of Methodology:

A search of the literature relating to studies which made a conscious and deliberate attempt to combine the methods and purposes of cultural anthropology and those of any particular philosophy of education yielded only two such references, both by the same author, Theodore Brameld. One was *The Remaking of a Culture* and the other was "The Meeting of Educational and Anthropological Theory." Under these conditions it may have been defensible to accept the first reference as the most practicable model available, use its methods and approaches, adapting only where necessary due to different conditions found in a subculture widely separated from that of the model. Defensible though this may have been, there was a felt need for more familiarity with the language, the modus operandi, the dominant concerns of the cultural anthropologist than had been acquired through related college courses. To meet this need an examination of related


literature was undertaken to gain a general background on the subject matter of cultural anthropology, to select from the accumulating background observations about the methods of the cultural anthropologist, and to select from observations about method specific references to techniques of interviewing relating to the particular needs of the educational anthropologist.

Prior to notes upon the procedure of this study, five categories of observations from the review of literature are listed as pertinent. They are definitions and descriptions of culture and cultural anthropology, key concerns of the cultural anthropologist, selected comment upon method, interviewing in cultural anthropology, and note taking.

Definitions and Descriptions of Culture and Cultural Anthropology

Selected definitions and descriptions indicate that cultural anthropology is somewhat characterized by a lack of concern over making a hard and fast distinction between itself and other closely related disciplines such as, for example, social anthropology. Chapter XIII of An Appraisal of Anthropology Today indicates that distinctions vary

from anthropologist to anthropologist. Evans-Pritchard, a social anthropologist, defines his discipline as the "study of human cultures and societies ... ethnology, sociology." Gillin says "Cultural anthropology is essentially the study of customs, their form, meaning, use, function, their organization and interrelation, their manifestations and results in human groupings and in artifacts and other material products."

Two short definitions of culture, itself, the subject matter of the cultural anthropologist, are one by Wissler, "culture is conceived to be the expression of the most distinctive phase of man's original nature", and another by Redfield, "culture consists of all the principal customs and institutions of a society." A longer definition of culture which reveals a number of the concerns of characterizing the cultural anthropologist is offered by Murdock, "The interaction of learning and society ... produces in every human group a body of socially transmitted adaptive


behavior which appears super-individual because it is shared, because it is perpetuated beyond the individual life span, and because in quantity and quality it so vastly exceeds the capacity of any single person to achieve by his own efforts. The term culture is applied to such systems of acquired and transmitted behavior. 12. This definition of culture could well serve as a basis for Geoffrey Gorer's description of cultural anthropology: "cultural anthropology is the study of shared habits, of habits which are common either to all the members of a society or at least to significant or relevant portions thereof. The basic assumption that underlies the description of a culture by the...observations of a few months...that a field worker is physically able to make are representative of an infinitely larger series of identical or similar items of behavior which members of the observed society will continue to perform whenever the appropriate situation arises. In other words, he is studying shared habits." 13.


Key Concerns of the Cultural Anthropologist

Margaret Mead lists as keys to the framework in which the concerns of the anthropologist are studied as "death, birth, marriage, crime, and misfortune." If to this list, concern with rites of passage is added, it would be difficult to find a work on cultural anthropology which does not find importance in these key concerns.

Cultural anthropology may be concerned with change, either as its agent or its observer: Spindler says the anthropologist may be the "initiating stranger in the intervention and change of a situation." Evans-Pritchard makes this concern even more positive by relating that some "anthropologists and ethnologists have... assumed that the purpose of anthropology is by prediction and planning to control social change." For purposes of this prediction and planning, the uses of the discovery of principles of culture by the anthropologist employed increasingly by business and industry has become a concern of Gillin who says "applied anthropology, unless done on a widely socialized


basis and with due regard to human goals and objectives is not to be indiscriminately applauded." Herskovits, in *Man and His Works*, supports Gillin's apparent concern regarding the uses of anthropology in business. It is Herskovits, also, in the same work, who says "It has become an anthropological truism that no culture can be encompassed by a student." Also difficult to encompass is *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, by A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckholn. However, having moved from the generally recognized keys to the framework mentioned by Mead earlier, to specific concerns of cultural anthropology, a concept of culture was sought which seemed to lend itself best to this study. The Kroeber and Kluckholn volume, just mentioned, has so many definitions, catalogued so many ways and commented upon so thoroughly that it may seem presumptuous to single out only one. Nevertheless, C. W. Morris, a philosopher, seems particularly expressive of a concept of culture pertinent to a study, such as this one, to estimate

19. Ibid., pp. 643
amenability. "A culture is a scheme for living by which a
number of inter-acting persons favor certain motivations more
than others and favor certain ways rather than others for
satisfying these motivations. The word to be underlined is
favor. For preference is an essential of living things—
To live at all is to act preferentially — to prefer some
goals rather than others and some ways of reaching preferred
goals rather than other ways. A culture is such a pattern
of preferences held by a group of persons and transmitted in
time."

Selected Comment on Method

In turning from definitions and descriptions of culture,
cultural anthropology and its concerns, to various methods
employed, the impression developed that discussion of method
is not as popular with cultural and other anthropologists as
description of what was observed. Yet, some broadly defined
procedures, cautionary admonitions, and suggestions are
available to provide a framework within which the cultural
anthropologist must exercise his own ingenuity and initiative.

John Dollard's notes on the methodology of his famous study, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, yielded a defense of procedures not characteristic of the typical quantitative study: "Should the researcher expect to be believed if he cannot hook his findings into the number system and present them in the manner conventional in the physical sciences?... the first loyalty of a scientist is to his material; he must seek it where it can be found and grasp it as it permits. If he does not do this, he is likely to find himself an aimless imitator of others, of better methods not applicable to his field. He does well to watch his tendency to imitate the methods of other fields, being sure that if he does this he will be imitating the type of material controlled as well as the method by which it is controlled. ....the adult man will tend to develop the feelings appropriate to his reality situation.....

"The primary research instrument would seem to be the observing human intelligence trying to make sense out of the experience; and the experience was full of problems and uncertainty in fact."

Dollard mentions the following, which have been lifted out of his discussion and listed, as needed tools,

precautions, and abilities for the observer in a community study: a feeling tone (for the social, cultural, attitudinal situation), a close watch on one's own mental life, ability to be a good listener, definition of relationships usually taken for granted, watchfulness for the systematic bias of the respondent.

"The important research act," says Dollard, "has been exposure and reaction to the social milieu, and a constant attempt to verbalize and organize the ensuing experience."

Alfred Kroeber touches upon method in his remarks on community studies in *An Appraisal of Anthropology Today*:

"...the community substitutes for the old fashioned holistic tribal study.....retains the face to face methods, the personal relations with informants, methods distinctive of the anthropologists."

Mead and Metraux refer to the accepted anthropological field method as the study of the living community which provides a model against which substitute methods can be measured. "The anthropologist....selects a ....situation that is .....practical in terms of his own goals." Then he exercises his ability to see, to hear, to fit what he sees

and hears into new patterns, to hold in abeyance his partial perceptions.

The cultural anthropologist working in his own culture, according to Herskovits, "must discover and relate to his own observations the sanctions that give meaning to the forms of behavior he records." Gillin admonishes the anthropologist to see forms in their native context, which he says Frazer (*The Golden Bough*) did not do. He also offers a reminder of Franz Boas' insistence upon two aspects of method: First, the first hand collection of data in the field, and second, avoidance of the imposition of some neat framework of theory upon the data as they are collected.

A final reference, by no means the end of any list of possible references, may serve to summarize in part the foregoing. It is a collection of remarks related to method by S. F. Nadel from his work, *The Foundations of Social Anthropology*. Pages 6 and 7 — "the anthropologist...has

to work out his own categories, even his own terminology....
certain studies....have been carried out....in communities
belonging fully to our own civilization. Indeed, many think
that here we have a new and promising field for anthropological
enquiry....We treat a familiar culture as though it were a
strange one....we view the culture from a new angle and throw
into relief features obscured by other forms of study.....we
concentrate on observations rather than on extraction, upon
intensive analysis instead of wide-range surveys...."

Pages 17 and 18 -- "....something like intellectual
assimilation" (is helpful)...."when you have become enmeshed
in the rules of predictable behavior valid in the society,
you may be said to have accomplished assimilation summa cum
laude." Pages 18 and 19 -- "Detachment, has advantages, too."
(The ideal balance between enmeshment and detachment, the
perfect intellectual assimilation will not be predictable in
advance.) Page 19 -- "Empathy is needed." Page 29 --
"Distinction needs to be made between actions of man which
are part of the existence of his group, and those which are
in but not of the group." Page 35 -- (Four common features
of anthropological methodology are:

1. Use of informants and/or respondents
2. Use of language in observation and description
   3. Effect of observer's personal equation
4. The extension of observation beyond tangible behavior to mental processes.)

From this reading on the general method of cultural anthropology it may be fair to infer that there is no "How to Do It" manual for use by a student embarking upon a community study.

Face to face relationships, first hand collection of facts, use of respondents or informants are mentioned rather specifically in connection with method. To some extent this implies interviewing. The next paragraphs of this chapter treat methods of choosing respondents and interviewing.

Interviewing In Cultural Anthropology

Supplementing the formulation of patterns out of observations, participation, random and happenstance conversations, is the frequent use of interviews with respondents. Benjamin D. Paul has summarized, from a variety of papers, reports, articles, and books as well as from experience, a description of the interviewing technique as it particularly applies in anthropology as opposed to its application in therapy, guidance, journalism or other areas where interviewing is commonplace. His summary appears in a chapter called "Interviewing and Field Relationships" in Anthropology Today.

---

First, regarding the choice of respondents, Paul says, "Ideally they should comprise a panel representing the major sub-divisions and categories within the community. Practically, however, range of choice is restricted to those who are accessible, able, and willing. In choice of respondents, the researcher needs to be alert to the atypical individual. One type may depart from his cultural mean but retain good standing in the community. Another may be stigmatized as a misfit, derelict, or a trouble maker. This type is a public relations liability if identified with the investigator."

Regarding the place and viewpoint of interviewing in anthropology, Paul has this to say, "Interviewing is a type of vicarious observation of events outside the interview. It is also a direct observation, insofar as the interviewee's apparent feelings and judgments are relevant. Interviewing and observation may be alternative techniques or complementary techniques more useful in combination than alone."

Seeing things as the interviewee sees them is the objective view in interviewing. A world view of the interviewee, of the pattern of the assumptions guiding his perceptions, of the hierarchy of values animating his actions, is the subjective view. "The what and how obtained from the objective view is necessary, but the cultural wherefore is the distinctive concern of the investigator."
When it comes to the actual act of interviewing there is again, apparently, no "How To Do It" manual, but many things it is wise to keep in mind. Paul says:

1. "The characteristic approach is a compromise between a directive and nondirective approach — a question is asked or a topic suggested but the informant answers as he sees fit. This is often referred to as open-ended. The purpose is to give the respondent maximum opportunity to reveal how he structures his world of experience. Once exploratory conversation has gone far enough to indicate to the interviewer topics that the respondent is willing to discuss further, a more explicit interviewing technique can be arranged."

2. "Whatever the extrinsic motivation for cooperation with the interviewer may be, the relationship must be rewarding in itself if the person is to feel he is valued in himself and not just a source of data."

3. "Time and tolerance are needed to lower defenses like evasiveness, concealment, denial, lies, boasts. Opportunities for retractions are often spotted by the respondent himself when the climate is favorable."

4. "Truth is not a thing in itself; it has social and cultural dimensions. Therefore an informant will react differently when alone with the interviewer than when with another person; differently when the other person is a child,
a male, a female, an elder, etc; differently to a male interviewer than to a female interviewer."

(Nadel's statement, "'correct' answers are not the only valuable ones. Conventionalized truths tell of habitual sentiments and ideologically distorted 'history', may be an appropriate insertion to accompany Paul's remarks on "Truth").

5. "Local idiom must be learned if hyperbole, understatement and contraction are not to be mistaken for literal fact."

Note Taking

Prescriptive directions are as lacking regarding note taking as they are regarding the other aspects of method. Still, there are suggestions gleaned by Paul for his article and reported there:

1. "Since the investigator cannot note everything, he notes what is or may be important. The definition of importance depends on his sense of the problem, his theoretical orientation, his personal characteristics, familiarity with the literature of the field, prior experience, etc."

2. "Whether notes are taken during the interview or made soon afterward from memory; whether they are made by a third party during interviews, depends upon whether or not the method inhibits the interview. They should include: the time, the source, the specifications of attending circumstances, questions asked and answers given, and the subjective reaction of the interviewer to the community and to respondents."

Specific practice in the use of the foregoing practices about interviewing and notetaking was afforded by The Advanced Doctoral Seminar on Values, Spring 1960, School of Education, Boston University.

Procedures of This Study

With the foregoing material as background, a description of the procedures of this study follows together with a list of departures from the procedural model provided by Brameld's *The Remaking of A Culture*. Two of the procedures can be listed here briefly. The first, an examination of historical materials selected for pertinence to the study is described in Chapter III. The second, participation in the life of the town, consisted of experiences purposely undertaken with the five senses attuned to possible implications for this study, and other experiences which the student would

have undergone regardless of the study but during which his senses were similarly attuned. To facilitate this, the investigator took an important research step which he recommends to the would-be educational anthropologist whenever possible. He moved himself and his family into the subculture to be studied. If each participation in the life of the town appears to natives as a research act, opportunities for participation may be limited. This appearance is reduced when the investigator is not simply a visitor but a resident.

The procedure of this study described here is that of selecting and interviewing respondents. Ashby, as a subculture, was studied through intensive interviewing with carefully selected respondents from each of the following groups:

- School Administration
- School Committee
- School Staff
- Student Body
- Parent-Teacher Association
- Town Government, past and present
- Finnish Farmers
- Commuters -- Professions
- Commuters -- Business and Industry
- Unitarians
- Congregationalists
- American Legion and Auxiliary
- Retired Persons
- Influential Families

The rationale for depth interviewing of respondents through methods of this study is perhaps best expressed by Brameld as follows: "Whatever the preferred anthropological technique, it is primarily a qualitative rather than a quantitative one. That is, it aims to obtain knowledge of a culture more by a process of depth analysis than by statistical sampling or other more objective techniques of
investigation. The results have the limitations of this method -- for example, it is much more selective—but they have the advantage of probing further, if successful, than is often possible in more standardized sociological types of research."

Varied methods of choosing respondents were used. For school administration, the principal and superintendent were asked to serve by the investigator. The School Committee, the school staff, the student body, the P. T. A., the American Legion and Auxiliary, a Unitarian and a Congregational church group, all of which are formal organizations, were asked after explanation of the study to select that person who could best speak for the group in terms of its attitudes, beliefs, customs, values, and loyalties, to serve as a respondent.

From town government, once again the investigator asked certain persons to serve whose positions enabled them to speak for the town in some way. These are a selectman, a member of the finance committee, a member of the police department, an assessor, and the librarian.

A polling of above respondents suggested persons from remaining groups, which are not organized, to speak for their groups as best they can. (The unorganized groups seem to

32. Brameld, Ibid., pp. 24-25
produce such spokesmen in Town Meeting, in organization meetings, and in "Cracker barrel" meetings. (The "cracker barrel" is in the form of the snack bar these days).

A list of respondents obtained in these ways appears in Appendix 3. Indications of their ability to speak in some way for various segments of the town population, or for the town in general, appear in the titles of offices respondents hold or have held, in the names of groups from which they have been chosen, and their years of residence.

In addition to this information it may be noted that the group consists of ten women, fourteen men, one boy, and one girl. (The respondent from the school committee and his wife are listed as one respondent. It is the member who served as respondent but his wife's helpfulness in discussions is recognized by mentioning her as well).

The list of respondents includes six who are relative newcomers to Ashby having lived there less than ten years, eight whose Ashby residence is from ten to twenty years, four from twenty to thirty years, three from thirty to forty years, and four with over forty years residence the longest being sixty-five years. Two respondents trace their family lineage into the last century in Ashby and one to the original settlement of the town.

Concerning the age distribution of respondents, two are adolescents, three are between twenty and thirty, four between
thirty and forty, eleven between forty and fifty, four between fifty and sixty, and two are over seventy.

The religious preferences of respondents are not listed in Appendix 3 except when the respondent himself listed a church as an important affiliation or when it was a church group from which the respondent was obtained. There are two Catholics, ten Congregationalists, two Unitarians, two Baptists, one Evangelical Lutheran, one Episcopalian, and eight unaffiliated.

Appendix 2 lists the educational status of Ashby adults. Of respondents in this study, there are two among the 34% who completed elementary but not high school education, twelve among the 28.1% whose formal schooling ended with high school graduation, three in that 13% who finished high school but attended college less than four years, two in the 4.8% who completed four years of college, and four among the 4.3% who have done graduate study. One respondent was not a resident at the time of the survey but is among those who have done graduate work. Two respondents are not adult and are therefore not included. At present they would be in the group which finished elementary but not high school, although both expect to complete high school and perhaps continue.

Occupationally there are among the respondents two students, ten housewives, four educators, a minister, a carpenter, a combination policeman and small industry owner,
a retired retail clerk, a retired poultry farmer, a poultry farmer—egg retailer, a contractor, a librarian—teacher—housewife, a representative for wholesale paper products firms, and an insurance agent.

It is at the request of several respondents, that information about them, except that which appears in Appendix 3, is used in an over-all description of the group of respondents rather than in a profile of each individual respondent.

Each respondent was scheduled for roughly ten hours of interviews at times and places most convenient and comfortable for him whenever circumstances permitted. Sessions of not less than one and one-half hours nor longer than three hours were the norm. The general and flexible plan of interviewing was to utilize the first session to restate the purpose of the study, establish beginnings of rapport, and begin to know something of the life and personality of the respondent. Stress was placed on the fact that no statement would be identified with the individual respondent.

The second, third, and fourth sessions moved outward from the personal and family life of the respondent to the community and its institutions, especially its schools.

From about the fifth session on, questions phrased on many levels of abstraction were used to attempt to get respondents to reveal potential amenability toward the various concepts used in this study insofar as they apply to Ashby
High School. The concepts, except number 3, below, were chosen as particular exemplifications of the educational philosophy of Reconstructionism, the value of which for the improvement of schools, is an assumption of this study. The concepts listed in number 3, below, are chosen from culture theory. They are processes of change which, after all, is basic to reconstruction, and are stressed as possible Reconstructionist tools by Brameld in Cultural Foundations of Education, and in The Remaking of a Culture.

The Concepts, defined in Chapter I, are:

1. The operational view of culture
2. Goal centering – Future centering
3. Conscious use of processes of acculturation, focus, crisis, innovation, causation, and prediction, and other processes of cultural change or interpretation
4. Examination of controversial issues and identification of teachers with their defensible partiality
5. Comprehensive adult education
6. Guarantees of self-correction and adaptation in the institutional structure


34. Ibid, The Remaking of a Culture, 1959, pp. 173, 175, 183
Democratic methods taught through use as well as theory

Concepts of the respondents' invention or suggestion which were added to the ensuing discussions

With the above interview sequence in mind, a guide list of questions was composed for use when it seemed to be needed either for the purpose of generating responses and discussion when they bogged down or were difficult to start, or for refocusing purposes when responses or discussion seemed aimless and lacking in significance for the study. Since the original guide list had a tendency to develop, during the study, and to take new forms as unforeseen opportunities to explore some area in greater depth or from a more rewarding perspective presented themselves, no one form of the list is reproduced here. A perusal of the table of contents for Chapters V and VI, however, will divulge a fair summary of the list of topics upon which questions focused discussion. An example of how questions in the guide list expressed on a level of abstraction familiar to the student were re-phrased when necessary, for respondents unfamiliar with that level, may be helpful:

Level 1. Do you think culture determines what men are or that men make culture? Do you have a third alternative? What is your reasoning? What do
you think most people of Ashby or of your acquaintance think on this subject? What is some evidence of this?

Level 2. Are men helpless victims or lucky survivors of their political, economic, social surroundings, or can men control and direct, at least to some extent, these surroundings? (Develop this as on Level 1.)

Level 3. Must men accept things as they are, or can they make things different through their effort? (Develop this as on Level 1.)

Level 4. Can you fight city hall or can't you? (Develop this as on Level 1.)

Level 5. A hypothetical problem is drawn. Several answers are presented, some related more to the operational view of culture, some more to the sui generis view. The respondent is asked to make a choice and then explain it.

Level 1., above, is the guide list form which was sometimes given verbally to the respondent and rephrased on a return trip to the question, or immediately, or not at all depending on the response. Sometimes, the investigator would anticipate the level most appropriate to the respondent and skip to that immediately. Levels 2, 3, 4, and 5 were oral and not written into the guide list. As the study progressed,
the investigator developed an ability to use the level of abstraction which would be most fruitful with each individual respondent so that climbing up or down the abstraction ladder on each question became less and less necessary.

Notes or summaries of interviews were submitted to respondents in the early sessions so they might edit them before use in the study. However, as time went on, respondents, upon gaining confidence in the investigator and in their own functions as respondents, expressed a preference for an on-the-spot editing session at the beginning of each interview. This was accomplished by reading the notes of the previous session back to the respondent and making corrections, additions, and alterations upon request. This was done at the end of the final session also.

Formulation of data collected by these procedures appears in Chapter V and VI.

35. Brameld's method was followed closely in the initial choice of respondents, that is: 1. A direct request to certain persons in positions of leadership (in the Puerto Rican study, the governor, for example; in the Ashby study, the superintendent and principal, for example). 2. The election by ballot

35. Brameld, Ibid, pp. 423-442
of respondents obtained from organized groups (in Brameld's study, the respondent from the P. T. A. in the sugar subculture, for example; in this investigator's study, the respondents from the American Legion, the Congregational Church Committee, for example). However, the selection of some respondents from groups not officially organized, like retired persons, by following suggestions from a polling of the respondents already secured is a departure from the model.

Another specific procedure which is a departure from the model, according to conversations with the author of the Puerto Rican study, is the use of the guide list of questions. Brameld's list, being comprehensive, was needed for frequent reference and was in view during interviews. The guide list used in this study was used from memory and tended to develop as the study progressed, into a guide list of topics about which discussion, including questions, would evolve. No list was very often in the sight of the respondent.

The treatment of the data by Brameld in the Puerto Rican study gives more attention to majority and minority views of respondents than does the investigator in his reporting upon this study. Although this study refers to the numbers of respondents who said this or that, the estimates of amenability were based upon other considerations as well. It may be fair to say, for example, that the investigator depended more upon the spontaneity, enthusiasm, readiness or reluctance, and "feeling tone" of
the responses than did Brameld. This aspect of method is a form of the extension of observations beyond tangible behavior to mental processes, a practice common to cultural anthropologists. In this process the main protection against personal bias and selectivity of perception on the part of the anthropologist is a close watch upon his own mental life. In this study, such a close watch was augmented as much as possible in the final interview sessions by checking the investigator's observations about spontaneity and the other intangibles which go into "feeling tone" against respondents' opinion of their accuracy.
CHAPTER III
Selected Concepts from Ashby History and Tradition

".....the high school symbolizes the community it serves. As local ties are broken more and more by the nature of modern life, the high school more and more becomes the local institution which stands for man's pride in his home-town........I have been struck by the tendency of residents of a town either to overrate the accomplishments of their high school or sadly to underrate them. The reason probably is that they have an emotional attachment to the school of which they may not even be aware. Without such emotional attachment their judgment might well be more accurate. ....
....I sense....not alone pride in the high school or a concern for the state of secondary education, but rather a reflection of that localism which is deep in our society." 36.

The introductory quote above is not from Ashby History, but from Dean Francis Keppel of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. However, what he has sensed about localism in America is exemplified by the Town of Ashby to an extent which distinguishes it from its neighbors.

36. Francis Keppel, "Clarifying the Role of the High School in the Face of Conflicting Demands", in Francis A. Chafe and Harold A. Anderson (Eds.), (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957) pp. 303-304
The examination of history was for the purpose of finding hints as to what the enduring values have been in Ashby so that later in the study these could be compared or contrasted with those values perceived by respondents as still operative in the behavior of the people of the town. This, it was presumed, would be helpful as a starting point in judging what reconstructionist ideas might be expected to be considered in an atmosphere of amenability, which ideas might need developing and which might best be postponed.

Since this phase of the study is not intended as an extensive and exact historical study but only as an attempt to find the hints mentioned above, it was no great disadvantage to find that most available materials are found in disordered array in a black box labelled "Ashby Historical Society" which is kept on a shelf in the stacks of the town library. Other materials from scattered sources were made available by the librarian or by persons she suggested. They are reviewed here informally but documented in footnotes when used specifically. They were: town reports, school district reports, stage coach drivers' log books, the business diary of the original owner of the stage coach stop called the Ashby Tavern (later the Ashby Inn; now the Ashby Museum), the Fitchburg Sentinel articles about Ashby which were serialized in the early 1950's by a feature writer using the contents of the same black tin box mentioned above. There was also
a history of the town from 1748 to 1889 by I. B. Sawtelle. Finally, most of the above sources were utilized by the Salutatorian of the class of 1955, Ashby High School, Miss Ann Phinney in the preparation of her graduation address, "A History of Education in Ashby" which provided the investigator with the opportunity to compare his perception of the historical material with that of a contemporary.

The presently apparent characteristics mentioned in Chapter I which led to the consideration of Ashby as a culture are largely borne out by the historical materials examined. Expressed as values which are widely held in high enough esteem to influence the group decision-making in town meetings, church meetings, school committee meetings, families, and so forth, the following are seen: Frugality, industriousness, love of the natural countryside, independence especially in the form of insistence on local autonomy, and simple patriotism, reflected throughout the letters, accounts, and reports of historical Ashby.

Frugality, for example, is not used in the sense of stinginess or miserliness, but in the sense of "waste not—want not", and a pride in use of ingenuity in making things do for as long as good service can be rendered before replacing them. Paper No. 17 in the Historical Society's black box tells of the purchase of the Lexington Grants in Ashburnham, bordering Ashby, by seven German immigrants.
The Germans were accepted by their Ashby neighbors "as equals and not as a 'distinct people'". This was considered noteworthy and the two traits of the Germans which were cited as most admirable and leading to acceptance were frugality and industry. Reference is made from time to time in A Book of Records for School District No. 3 to a Prudential Committee which was apparently the historical counterpart of today's Finance Committee. Its recommendations assured official attention to frugality. Frequently, the meetings concerned themselves chiefly with the question of whether the wood stove which would supply heat for the schoolhouse would be a new one or a second-hand one for less cost. The latter usually won out as far as the student could discover.

The same source recorded that Article 5 in the district warrant for 1857 was as follows: "To see if they will adopt any measures to preserve their House from injury by scholars attending here or by any other person or persons." Modern warrants do not contain such plaints in print, but on the occasion of any suggestion that the present high school plant needs replacing, someone is always ready to recommend that better care of present facilities would be preferable to

39. Ibid.
replacement.

Another committee reported to the School Committee of District No. 1, in 1835, "We find the walls... so broken... they are... not worth repairing and... the tables are in such a situation that they ought to be covered." The committee's recommendation has a familiar ring: "We therefore think it best to defer repairs for the present." Frugality indicated that repairs at this point would be sending good money after bad, and the absence of an alternative school arrangement did not inhibit the submission of a "no action at this time" report.

Industry, the second trait which seems to draw admiring comment in the pages of Ashby history, was mentioned in company with frugality earlier in the case of the seven German settlers. These industrious and frugal men could not have been more exemplary of these traits, however, than was Oliver Laurence Wheeler, who in the early 1800's walked both ways between Ashby and Boston every week-end during the summers in order to work in the city and keep his commitments at home. Industriousness was considered an attribute of manhood. The hardwork of the forty-three fathers of the town made up for lack of accumulated fortune as far as the esteem of their...

40. Record Book School District No. 1, Ibid., 1835
descendants was concerned. A letter written in 1943 by Mrs. P. A. Caton to Mrs. Harold Foster refers to the first valuation of the town in a rather noteworthy year, 1776. Such valuation forced the conclusion that the fathers were "poor in the world's goods, but rich in manhood...."

Ashby's contribution to the patriotic efforts of the country are recorded both in the accounts of individuals and in the statistics regarding numbers of recruits, war casualties, bond drives, and so forth. There is no apparent evidence that Ashby patriots have ever been noted for chauvinism. The only veterans' organizations in town are the American Legion and the Auxiliary. Unlike many veterans' groups and other patriotic groups in any section of the country, Ashby's patriots have apparently never been involved in any matter of public notice which would indicate that they feel they know better than other citizens what is or is not patriotic or "American". Yet, the responsibilities for patriotic holiday observances, even in the relative apathy of peace time, have always been taken up by the Legion, its Auxiliary, and others without fail.

A Fitchburg Sentinel article about George A. Hitchcock's memoirs links the abiding love of the people of Ashby with an aspect of patriotism, by using two familiar lines from the

National Anthem to introduce Hitchcock’s recollections of Ashby. It begins, "I love thy rocks and rills, Thy woods and templed hills ---" to George A. Hitchcock meant, "Ashby, homeland of our fathers which holds our loyalties." Hitchcock, born in 1844, dates the beginning of his Ashby memories in 1850. These memories reflect the love of the natural beauty of the woods and fields as do most of the other accounts in the Historical Society’s materials. In addition, however, Mr. Hitchcock evidently had something in common with the investigator in this study, since he was interested in traits of local culture which characterized Ashby more than other places. He says, "...one distinctive trait differentiating it from other old New England towns (is) It never harbored or claimed an aristocratic taint...., no aristocracy or plutocracy can ever be anything but an excrescence in any true American community. The blossom and fruitage of Ashby in 1850 was the sterling common sense which called no man master. Yet Ashby was never a Utopia, simply a plain common-sense outgrowth of democratic ideas." Although it is not difficult to infer this egalitarian value from other accounts, none were as explicit as Hitchcock’s statement.

44. Ibid.
The history of schools in Ashby does not seem to distinguish it from that of other small New England towns, in so far as can be seen by the usual transformation from private academies to public schools, from several one-room school districts to centralized schools, from lay supervision by school committees to professional supervision hired by the committees, from adequate school housing to outgrown school housing (the latter development repeated over and over, as in many places), until the near-present when Ashby has, by resisting the trend of small towns to enter larger regional school arrangements, made an educationally historic decision which distinguishes it from its immediately surrounding Massachusetts towns and from many other small towns in the Commonwealth. Although many of the opponents of regionalizing are now privately admitting that their opposition was a mistake, there are some who are determined that superior secondary education can and will be had under local auspices. These latter, combined with those who want localism with or without good education have held the balance of power since 1957 and apparently held it prior to that without realizing it since no issue sufficiently threatened localism to compel a show of strength, until the regional school idea reached Ashby.

One last page from history will bracket this chapter with touches of localism. Chapter III was introduced by Dean.
Keppel's views on localism which he sees as "deep in our society"; here following is an example. On June 1, 1920, W. O. L. penned the following letter to the Fitchburg Sentinel in answer to the question, "Where is Ashby?" It reflects, besides localism, others of the traits discussed earlier:

"To the Editor of the Sentinel:

Where is Ashby? This question was asked in the State House, Boston, a few years ago when the people of Ashby were trying to get an appropriation for a state road.

There may be some people today who would like to know where Ashby is, and we are only too glad to tell them.

It is located in the northwest corner of Middlesex County, on the New Hampshire line, 50 miles from Boston. Ashby village is about 900 feet above sea level. Mt. Watatic is 1700 feet, Mt. Nemoset 1400 feet, Jewel and Jones Hills 1200 feet above sea level.

It is said that from some of these hills, Boston Harbor can be seen. I am not sure about that. Boston Highlands can be seen, and no doubt some part of all the towns between Boston and Ashby, many towns in other directions, and also such mountains as Wachusett, Monadnock, Peterboro and Temple, the Uncanoonucs of Goffstown, and Kearsarge.

Cities to be seen are Manchester, Nashua, Lowell, Fitchburg, Leominster, also a number of villages. So we feel we are beautiful for situation if only a town.
Here are some of the things we have:

The first state road built in Massachusetts was built in Ashby (if we were unknown). We can go to Boston by state road through Townsend or Fitchburg, a state road is nearly done to the state line by way of Rindge and Mason.

We have a nice public library with reading room and selectmen's room, an historical building, two churches, one liberal enough for anyone, and one conservative enough for most people. Both have funds for carrying on their work. We also have a high school and school fund of $21,000. The town is out of debt and has $16,000 at interest. Our tax rate last year was $17 on $1000. We have a cemetery fund of $15,245. We take care of our people here after they are dead, so far as their lots are concerned.

We have a fund of $1370 toward building a chapel; an Old Home day fund of $422.73; $3000 from the state for town roads; electric lights, telephone, with 131 subscribers, and 125 autos.

We have sold our poor farm for lack of business. In all war drives Ashby went over the top from one to three times.

We have one of the finest stock farms in the state, J. P. Lyman's. If you have any doubt about it, come and see it. We have a small goat farm, John Chapin's, by the Ashby reservoir. Go and see it and have a real drink of milk.
Streams and lakes are here for the sportsman, and in June the mountain laurel is in abundance for the auto tourists.

This is where Ashby is."45.

(For a modern summary of "Where Ashby Is" see Appendix 1 and 2 taken from the pages of the latest school self-evaluation and from the Town Report.)

Considering the size of the Finnish ethnic group in the town, one might expect considerable reference to its influence and other facts about it, even in such a scattered collection as that of the Ashby Historical Society. However, this was not the case. The Finnish group in Ashby is discussed on pages 73, 74, and 93-97 of this study.

Having in mind, the foregoing examples of the things apparently highly valued by Ashby people through history, namely; frugality, industriousness, love of the wide open and unspoiled beauty of the countryside, simple (unchauvinistic) patriotism, and strong local autonomy, all of which values are somehow bound up with individual independence, the investigator could proceed with interviewing respondents and participating in town affairs with some idea of what values, if threatened, would jeopardize amenability and, if cultivated, would encourage it. Results follow.

45. W. O. L. "Where Ashby Is", Fitchburg Sentinel (Fitchburg, Mass.: The Sentinel Printing Company, June 1, 1920)
PART II
THE HIGH SCHOOL IN THE SUBCULTURE OF ASHBY

CHAPTER IV
Re-establishment As Part Of The Community

The investigator participated in the life of the town of Ashby with senses alerted to opinions, sentiments, actions, and conflicts which might reflect an amenability toward any policy or proposal for the town, particularly its high school, which might, if adopted, comprise a Reconstructionist improvement. It was thought, upon selection of Ashby as the laboratory for this study, that the investigator's past association with the people of the town would be of assistance in the process of the study. These associations included visiting there from time to time from childhood, attending various functions related to the fact that relatives were employed in the school system, and serving as school principal, grades 1-12, for three years (1954-7). Experience during the study indicated a certain acceptance of the investigator, due to his past relations with the town, which might not have been accorded a complete outsider. But perceptions of the town as a culture, gained through these past associations proved naive and tending toward stereotype. They were helpful only in suggesting that persons directly involved in a culture may have difficulty in taking an overall view. They see the trees
but not the forest. The new role of the investigator resulted in the altering of former views rather than in finding that past perceptions were at all sufficient in the estimating of amenability toward concepts proposed in this study for local implementation.

Of great help, however, particularly in the saving of time and in communication, was the fact that past experience in the town had made the investigator familiar with many of the incidents, personalities, and situations which respondents used as illustrations of this or that point they were making.

Here follows a list of the specific activities, associations, and relationships undertaken by the investigator. The list does not include the interviews with respondents as these are reported in Chapter V. Neither does it include those hundreds of items which describe those daily associations which are natural simply to living in the town although many of these contributed to the investigator's perception of the town.

For purposes of this study, the investigator joined, attended, and served the Parent-Teacher Association, twice as a speaker, as a discussant in business meetings, as a member of the nominating committee.

He met with the school committee and school administration on several occasions regarding school matters of concern
to people of the town.

The investigator served as a substitute teacher five or six times, and risked life and limb as a judge of the competitive one-act plays.

Through the courtesy of the town librarian, who became a respondent, a corner of the public library was made available to the investigator who for several months made it a habit to be there every Tuesday evening for an hour or two to talk with all and sundry who stopped to converse.

Similar purposes were served by the verbal exchanges at Murphy's, the local coffee bar and hangout.

Not the least among the investigator's experiences were his chaperoning duties such as counting noses with eight Ashby parents on a trip with two grades to Science Park, Boston.

Attendance at the various holiday traditional affairs like the Memorial Day Parade and exercises, at the town common, the Independence Day festivities at the ball field, the Christmas observances and parties at the schools and churches, as well as at important non-holiday events like Ashby High School Commencement, and Grange Fair were important participations.

Meetings with the lay committees of both churches in the town and with their ministers as well as attendance at one of the churches and appearance as speaker at a meeting of the other were, in the investigator's opinion, very helpful.
The Ashby Band Concerts, which the investigator attended all summer, are not primarily for the purpose of hearing music. Rather, the concerts signify a weekly gathering on the common of most of the townsmen, their families, relatives, and friends from nearby towns. Children are allowed to stay up after dark and chase each other in and out among the groups of adults and parked cars. Music competes unsuccessfully with conversations, called-out greetings, howling horns, and the attractions of fund-raising food concessions. For building up a backlog of informal opinions of townfolk, and for estimating how deep and tough a layer of common sense sayings, rules of thumb, and conventional wisdoms might need to be penetrated during this study in order to get people to examine Ashby and its ways of life at unaccustomed depth, the band concert gatherings were a helpful resource.

Informal exchanges of views in the recreation room at the American Legion Post after meetings of the Legion and of the Auxiliary, at which the investigator was a visitor, were informative as were the meetings themselves.

A citizen's committee anxious to see action on a multiplicity of real and imagined unmet and critical school needs called a meeting which the investigator attended. Before the meeting was over, the investigator was a member of a committee to draft an article for the warrant of a
special town meeting. The article was to create a recognized, legally created, town committee to cooperate with the school committee in the consideration of alternative proposals for meeting anticipated school needs. Such an article was included in the warrant, debated at town meeting, and defeated. The chief reason discernible among its opponents was the suspicion that it was a "cover up" for a renewed regional school arrangement.

A somewhat new cast of characters was in association with the investigator when he became secretary of the local Cub Pack, B. S. A. This included monthly meetings at which a half-an-hour would suffice for Cub business, after which up to three hours were required to settle all the problems of the town theoretically.

The investigator was asked to take nomination papers for the school committee post involved in the March, 1961, election. He declined but agreed to help secure a candidate, write a platform, and ring doorbells. This he did.

As has been noted in Chapter II, the investigator and his family moved to Ashby in order to facilitate these participations.

These experience, and countless others too minute and numerous to report, are extremely important sources of perceptions about Ashby upon which the investigator bases interpretations and gains understanding of the views
expressed by respondents. They also are important sources of illustrations, examples, explanations for him to use in making himself understood by respondents.
CHAPTER V
The Subculture of Ashby

A. A Problem of Values

As suggested in Chapter III of this study, amenability toward any concept may depend upon whether acceptance of that concept appears to threaten or fortify enduring values. The same chapter identified what the investigator believed to be the values, or categories of values, suggested by Ashby's historical papers as highly characteristic of the citizenry through the generations. How respondents reacted to the investigator's findings follows:

Frugality: All twenty-six respondents saw historical support for identification of frugality as a deeply felt value of the typical citizen. One saw frugality valued by a minority today, and another, as valued by none today, but all other respondents saw this value as widely operative in the present. One hundred per cent of all the respondents characterized themselves as frugal.

Industriousness: All twenty-six respondents perceived industriousness, both historically and in the present, as held by the great majority of Ashby citizens to be a characteristic of the worthwhile person.

Love of the unspoiled countryside: This value includes appreciation of nature's recreations, the beauty of the plant and animal wildlife, the peaceful panorama of
fields, mountains, streams, and forests, and apparently of less tangible things that most Ashby people value. As a value it is of interest to the study because of its apparent influence in decision making which affects the culture. For example, resistance to zoning, lack of readiness for a public water supply and public sewer system, persistent objection to the encouragement of local industry even though it might help reduce the individual tax load are all related at least partially to their real or imagined implications for the relatively unspoiled countryside. All but one respondent saw this as strongly operative in history and at present. The one dissenter felt that while this value was frequently a consideration, it is doubtful that it could be considered fundamental.

Simple patriotism: All respondents expressed the thought, in one form or another, that Ashby citizens had valued patriotism and had so demonstrated in war and peace in history. They also saw no chauvinism associated with this patriotism. The same, they all said, would be true today. One said, as an example of how this value is still operative in the decision-making of the town, "Although we could use state or federal aid very advantageously, most folks in this town don't want it. They don't want it because they think the trend towards this type of aid is bad for the country. Therefore, the possibility of state or federal aid
has been likely to lose votes for an article rather than gain them."
(Other respondents who see patriotism as a value strongly influencing decisions might not agree with this example.)

Strong insistence upon local autonomy: All respondents saw this as an historically demonstrable enduring value and currently as strong as ever. All respondents volunteered the rejection of the regional school idea as the most recent and obvious example. Some recalled the refusal by the town of a W.P.A. built school or town hall or historical society building in the 1930's as another example. One respondent refreshed the investigator's memory regarding the refusal by local dairymen, led by the same person who spearheaded the defeat of the regional school idea, of federal subsidies on milk prices. In that case, for the security offered by the government guarantee, the selling price would have to be one cent less than the local men were getting, but they resolved then, as the respondent put it, "that we wouldn't accept a government price even if it were higher than ours. It's the idea of the federal government telling us the price that we don't like. We'll take the risk of a price drop."

46. All quotes henceforth are the words of some respondent. They are used because they express his or a general point of view as well or better than any other language the investigator could use.
All respondents felt that frugality, industriousness, love of the unspoiled countryside, simple patriotism, and strong insistence on local autonomy describe, at least in part, the core of their personal value system. However, each respondent had different additions to list in his personal core of values.

Observations and interpretations by the investigator of his experiences as a resident of Ashby, as many of which have been described in Chapter IV as was practical, confirm the majority opinions of respondents regarding the place the foregoing five values play in the thinking and other behavior of the townspeople.

Questions regarding advantages and disadvantages of living in Ashby were included in the interviews for the purpose, among others, of generating conversation which might reveal widely held values which were not forthcoming in the comparison of past and present values just described. These discussions revealed that Ashby people generally value the following:

1. A cluster of traits, attitudes, behaviors which may loosely be summed up in the term neighborliness. Some respondents talked about Christian spirit, some about honesty with respect to private property ("We never lock our doors in Ashby"), some about the close relationships, the ready helpfulness, and community cooperation, but without exception,
each respondent resorted to the term neighborliness when trying to pick a word to sum up this value.

2. A group of advantages that respondents described as democratic (all but two stressed the lower case "d") included the opportunity to speak up in town meeting, the chance to participate as officers, committee members, and on programs of the various institutions and clubs of the town, the largely unchallenged feeling that "I'm as good as anyone else in this town and probably better", an anti-snobbishness (unfortunately, according to four respondents, equated with anti-intellectualism), and the opportunity to "live and let live as regards our private lives." (Two respondents pointed out that not all those who value the opportunity to exercise democratic practices take advantage of this opportunity when the accompanying responsibility takes the concrete form of running for office, accepting a chairmanship, volunteering public service, speaking up at public meetings, etc.)

The investigator's experience in the town corroborates for the most part the respondents' identification of a value or cluster of values which may be called neighborliness. It is fair to say, however, that while important components of this value have been mentioned by various respondents, there are probably others. It is also important to note that neighborliness and other values such as the love of the
unspoiled countryside, local autonomy, opportunity for
democratic participation, are interdependent and that Ashby
citizens seem to feel that loss of one would adversely affect
the others.

The participation in town affairs leads the investigator
also to agree that the citizenry generally values the demo­
cratic opportunities cited by respondents. He agrees with
the minority opinion that the opportunity is valued more than
the practice. He observed that each year there are several
town offices going by default to unopposed candidates. At
this writing, there are three, one of which is the strategic
post of Town Moderator. Also, he observed that there is
frequent grumbling that the same people always run things.
Yet, social, religious, and governmental positions are diffi­
cult to fill. Excuses abound. The form of traditional town
meeting democracy seems to conjure up an image of the town
of Ashby as one of the last strongholds of pure democracy
standing against the encroachment of creeping modernism. The
protection of this image takes many forms.

For example, a few years ago the selectmen served notice
that they would like the duties of the tree warden to be
absorbed by the highway department which does the work anyway.
The way they planned to do it was, by vote of the town, to
change the office of the Tree Warden ($10 per year) from an
elective office to an appointive office with the Road
Commissioner making the appointment yearly. The investigator remembers an impassioned speech by a local citizen which had to do with the protection of our democracy and which had at least three results: 1. The citizen seated beside the investigator breathed, "Give me liberty or give me death!", and then had to simulate a coughing fit to disguise his laughter. 2. Knowing those few who were amused were in a very small minority and that the speaker had stirred a kind of righteous and patriotic fervor in the majority, the selectmen withdrew their motion and moved the article be passed over. 3. The office is still an elective one. At this writing, nobody has been found who will run for election as Tree Warden for the coming year.

In summary then, the Ashby citizen values frugality (including the ingenuity needed to exist frugally), industriousness, the serenity, peace, beauty, and feeling of freedom characteristic of the relatively unspoiled Ashby countryside, simple patriotism, local autonomy, neighborliness, and the opportunity to practice democratic ways. This summary, of course, assumes that the perception of Ashby citizens held by the investigator and his respondents is, on the whole, accurate.

B. Cultural Order in Ashby

A discussion of change involves some concept of what is presently the case, since change to something must be change
from something else. The investigator attempted to precede any estimate of amenability to the processes of cultural change in Ashby or to the goals toward which those processes are directed, with the development of some idea of what Ashby now is. Since such a view is likely to include some description of those forces within the culture which encourage or inhibit change, this visualization is in terms of the institutional structure of the town including the unofficial power structure, according to the combined evidence of respondents' views and the observations of the investigator.

B.I. The Ashby Family - Authority Arrangements

Respondents saw no pattern of family size or composition except that two respondents guessed there might be a high percentage of families with elderly, retired persons in the household. The arrangement of authority in the Ashby family was recognized as largely democratic - cooperative by half the respondents; three saw the father-dominated household as normative but not operative. That is, the practice was democratic or at least benevolently authoritarian. Three saw the Ashby family as mother-dominated, and the remainder (six) saw authority as non-existent in the Ashby family. In the latter case, it was stated by some respondents that in some families where there seemed to be no authority arrangement it was because the parents seemed to think that exercise of parental control is somehow undemocratic while in other
families the lack of control is explained by irresponsibility or ineptitude.

The democratic-cooperative arrangement is strongly enough approved so that, according to four respondents, open disapproval is shown toward obviously father or mother dominated arrangements, and this is in spite of the strong feeling that people should mind their own business.

Most respondents pointed out that this so-called democratic-cooperative authority arrangement in families does not call for parliamentary procedures; it simply means that family decisions affecting all members are discussed and explained, and that the wishes of each person are considered. Final decisions, by tacit agreement, usually, are made by that person in the family to which the members usually delegate this responsibility.

B.2. The Ashby Family - Child Rearing

Again respondents saw no pattern in child rearing schemes except that in their opinion more and more of the child's upbringing was being left to agencies outside the family, and this development was unanimously deplored. All respondents suspected this trend was less advanced in Ashby than in other places, however. Next, the investigator turned discussion to critical concerns of the family, outside of the problem of supporting it, to see whether respondents could
identify any common ways that the child in the Ashby family is prepared to deal with them. These concerns, mentioned to generate items to discuss, were 1. a birth in the family, 2. problems of puberty and other phases of growing up (In Ashby, is there anything akin to rites of passage?), 3. a marriage in the family, 4. problems of wrongdoing, and 5. misfortunes.

These items were of interest to all respondents but not helpful in establishing any typically Ashby family way of preparing children for dealing with them. Again respondents noted that people leave such preparation to other agencies, although one respondent pointed out that in some cases, among which she would place herself, it was not so much leaving these things to other agencies as it was the feeling that they are a part of the natural life of a family and that one simply takes them as they come and learns by experience.

A quarter of the respondents thought these matters ought not to be any concern of the school even though it is the agency which reaches the largest number of children whose families leave important aspects of upbringing to agencies other than the home.

All other respondents indicated various degrees of interest in having the school deal in some way with problems the family is not handling. However, their reservations about this, shared by most people, they thought, correspond
with some of the descriptions of the school as an institution. They will be presented when the secondary school is discussed; distrust of the staff's qualifications is chief among them.

B.3. Threats to Family Structure

Some of the developments which can threaten the structure of a family and which occurred to the investigator as a result of his observations and experiences as a resident of Ashby are divorce, infidelity, pre-marital pregnancy, desertion, and allied problems. How the Ashby family deals with these and how it deals with the reaction of the town to them seemed to the investigator to be possible indications of the character of family life and of people's attitude toward it.

Respondents agreed that divorce, separation, and desertion are not common in the town, and that there is no discernible pattern in the ways the individuals involved deal with them when they do occur. Infidelity, they agreed, is not known to be common, though individual cases are well broadcast on the town grapevine. Again, the respondents offered no typical re-adjustment made in families where this occurs. However, there seems to be rather common reactions from the townspeople with which families have to deal when disruptions of the above kinds have occurred. These were reported in different ways by all respondents. The first town reaction is some short-lived gossip. The second is concern
for the welfare of the individuals. The third is concern that the incident, if possible scandal is attached, be absorbed quickly by the town and not become a matter of record outside the town. The fourth is quick resumption of ordinary social relationships insofar as possible.

Pre-marital pregnancy is apparently more common or more easily discerned than the other threats to family structure mentioned. Respondents all said there was too much and that most other people would feel the same way even though they are better at adapting to the problem than preventing it. One respondent claimed that a yearly outbreak of pre-marital pregnancy was only tacitly disapproved and certainly time honored. This view seems to have support in the remark of a long-time school committeeman regarding an embarrassing incident suffered by a new school doctor several years ago. A few weeks after having medically examined all the members of the girls' basketball team and certified them for the sport, he was informed one of the girls was five months pregnant. School authorities wanted to know how the doctor could have passed her. His sheepish and righteously indignant answer was, "Well, these are school girls! I wasn't looking for pregnancy!" The school committeeman's remark was, "You can tell he's new here."

Even the oldest of the respondents could recall only one instance of a pre-marital pregnancy which did not result
in marriage. Once this culmination has taken place, all respondents reported, the general reaction of the town follows the same pattern outlined above for other threats to the family. One respondent was emphatic in her opinion that tolerance is so high that it invites the childred to postpone responsibility in sexual matters until pregnancy occurs. She recommends that girls and boys involved (usually the boy is known) be made objects of shame. However, even this respondent feels she would get very little backing from townspeople for this suggestion. All other respondents agree that tolerance of pre-marital pregnancy and, incidentally, the violation of the explicit moral code, is high. They ascribe this to Christian kindliness and to the practical view of making the best of a situation, rather than crying over spilled milk. The violently disapproving respondent ascribes this high tolerance to the small number (her estimate) of families in the town who could afford a holier-than-thou attitude toward anyone. The investigator senses some truth in both versions.

B.4. Summary of the Ashby Family as an Institution

The incompleteness of this study of the family, as of the other institutions is recognized. It is hoped, however, that aspects of the family which relate to need for change have been uncovered, since amenability to the conscious use of processes of cultural change is being sought. The Ashby family tends to
be democratic in its authority structure, has apparently no
typical child rearing arrangement except the trend toward
leaving important family functions to non-family institutions,
has apparently no typical way of dealing with incidents which
are regarded as threats to family structure except to "make
the best of things", but is protected in large measure against
some of the evil effects of these incidents by the character­
istic attitudes of Ashby townsfolk.

C. Some Aspects of the Structure of the
Town of Ashby (Churches, Organizations,
Influential Families, Cliques, and
School)

The official town government of Ashby is detailed by
title in appendix number 1 & 2 at the end of this study. How­
ever, town meeting types of governments like Ashby's may have
unofficial governments as well as official ones insofar as
decision making, policy making, and influence wielding are
concerned. The investigator interest himself in this as another
facet of the existent culture of Ashby before introducing the
various concepts of cultural change to his respondents.

Social, fraternal, and cultural organizations seem to
have little influence upon the power structure of Ashby. Nor
do they seem to have a pronounced enough singleness of purpose
to cast any noteworthy reflection upon the culture of the
town. Their main significance, apparently, is for the members who attend meetings and that significance does not appear to color the behavior of the members much outside of meetings. Of those institutions mentioned; one respondent identified the Grange as having controlled politics and economics in Ashby in the past. Its motivation was to pass road construction and maintenance articles in order to assure access between farms and markets. The Grange's function now is mainly social with focus upon agricultural interests.

Another respondent mentioned the P. T. A. as influential in the power structure. However, all other respondents saw the Parent Teachers Association in Ashby as no longer a power though it was very influential from about 1945 through 1952 during which time it sponsored and almost completely administered the hot lunch program and was central to the community effort in obtaining a new elementary school building. These two issues were cultural foci at the time. Schools in general are becoming so again, but the hot lunch program has been relinquished by the P. T. A. and now takes a place in the total school program more appropriate to its relative importance. This leaves the P. T. A. free to choose other absorbing projects but it has thus far chosen nothing which has returned it to its former centrality.

Two respondents mentioned the American Legion and Auxiliary as influential in the operation of the town. How-
ever, this influence is sporadic and has usually amounted to an attempt to elect a candidate to office to replace someone who has irritated the Legion Post by some regulation or other.

There are two churches with edifices in Ashby, the Congregational and the Unitarian, and two very small groups of lay officials who struggle for the survival of each of these churches. No respondent said he thought that either church was considered much of an influence in the everyday affairs of the town. The conscientiousness of the few mentioned above has not been able to offset the apathy of the many. A fifth of the respondents noted a growing Catholic population which is organizing socially. Three respondents said that many people in Ashby fear that Catholic organization will not remain just social, but do not know exactly what they fear it will become.

No respondent could recall any political decision, economic development, social change, or general improvement in moral and ethical behavior in the town which they would attribute to any of the churches, with or without buildings, in Ashby.

The way of life of a town sometimes is largely controlled by a family or a group of families, which has at some time been in a position to wield economic or other influence over large segments of the population. The influence then is passed on from generation to generation often after the
original reason for the family's power has disappeared.

Is any family central to Ashby's way of life? Seventeen "tribes" of families were identified by one or more respondents as having been the dominating family "tribe" at some time in the history of Ashby. Those whose influence is most nearly current, however, number only three if the identifications of respondents are accurate. All respondents (four-fifths) who believed there was any such thing as an influential family mentioned these three families. One of these respondents thought the motivation for the power wielding of these families was simple desire to maintain the status quo as this constituted the kind of culture in which these families could best maintain their own prominence. The remainder of respondents thought these influential families were motivated by civic interest, altruism, beneficent feelings, and desire for progress.

What has been the effect of the domination of these families, if in fact they have dominated? Two respondents said the influential families have quietly taken steps to impede progress, especially any kind that costs money, even while speaking up publicly for the opposite. Two respondents took quite another view. They saw Ashby's biggest strides educationally, socially, and economically as having been underway during the hey-day of influential family power. No respondent could see any evidence on the current scene, however,
of any family "tribe" that was cohesive enough or possessed of enough singleness of purpose to dominate the ways of life of Ashby even if it wished to do so.

Does the structure of Ashby include any ethnic groups which act as a unit? All respondents said that the older generations of Finns (those older than the parents of children now in school) were a cohesive ethnic group, but three respondents thought the people of Finnish extraction in Ashby were no longer a distinct group.

One respondent said he could see a French ethnic group growing in Ashby, but no other respondent mentioned this.

Mixed responses were obtained to questions regarding the observable effects upon the town of having a large Finnish group living there. Most respondents said most people considered the presence of the Finnish-Americans a good thing for the town. Sample quotes follow:

"It's good for democracy."

"They're good examples of industrious workers and scholars. They keep us and our children on our toes."

"Much run down, marginal farm property abandoned by former owners and a liability to Ashby is now taxable property after having been taken over by the Finns."

"Their personal life, their wholesome attitude toward health, family, cleanliness, and cooperative endeavor should be copied by the rest of us."
Two respondents, while granting the advantages in general of the presence of this ethnic group, if it is a group, had some reservations. One said most people considered the Finns too radical in their political beliefs. Another said that by not participating in politics as a group they defaulted to existing power structure.

It was interesting to note that, even the respondents who had not seen the Finnish-Americans as a distinct ethnic group, talked about them as if they were one.

The immigration of Finns to America had slight beginnings between 1911 to World War I but accelerated between 1921 and 1930. Although in America as a whole the population growth which could be attributed to Finnish immigration was slight compared to most European countries, Central Massachusetts, including Ashby, was where many of them settled to work in textile mills and on farms. Many of Ashby's farms which were running down under former owners were taken over by Finns who found that frugality and industry made it possible to eke out a livelihood on New England farms where the worst conditions could not match those under which over half the population in Finland struggled for an agricultural living. Further, many Finnish immigrants and their descendants found that while the breadwinner worked in a mill in nearby Fitchburg, the rest of the family could care for a small farm in bordering Ashby. In this way Ashby's
Finnish-American population grew until it accounts for over a third of the total. Because the Finnish-Americans are so frequently referred to as a group and since they do make up such a large proportion of Ashby's population, this study has used them as a point of reference in questions and discussions relative to acculturation, ethnic groups in the power structure, and in proposals.

Another element which occurred to both investigator and respondents as possibly affecting the structure of Ashby as a subculture was the clique. Is there any group making itself felt which is not brought together by a religion, an ethnic background, a political party, a civic or fraternal organization? A majority of the respondents knew of no clique. Nine respondents, however, thought that most Ashby people would recognize the so-called "economy group", which founded the Ashby Tax-payers' Association in the middle 1950's, as a clique. These respondents said they believed it would be generally agreed that economy in government, particularly in the school department, was the early motivation of this group. It has become history that the economy clique succeeded in electing its candidates to office and failed to effect any economies except false ones, according to these respondents.

The experience of the investigator as a participant in the town suggests to him that both groups of respondents are correct. The nine who see an economy clique see the results
of the work of a six year old group of taxpayers with budget cutting uppermost in their minds. These results are not good to look upon and the dissatisfaction is directed at the clique. The other sixteen respondents, however, can see no clique since many followers of the original economy group have become disenchanted and the founders are on opposite sides from issue to issue. It is understandable that under these conditions no clique is seen.

A final consideration in the examination of the structure of the Ashby subculture was what respondents perceived as the class stratification of Ashby. No respondent was aware of any class consciousness in the town in the sense that there is resentment or other kinds of concern about it. People know, they said, that some people are richer than others, but there is apparently neither official nor unofficial exclusion of anyone from any of the social and other activities of Ashby which can be attributed to class distinctions. There is little ostentation on the part of the well-to-do. There is no poor, rich, or middle section of town. There is no section which is regarded as the "nice" section nor the opposite. Those nine respondents who said people might be made conscious of stratification said, also, that no more than three classes—upper, middle, and lower—would be discerned and even this would be considered an artificial construct good only for temporary purposes of
study. One lady inadvertently summed up what respondents thought Ashby people would see as the class structure of the town. She said, "We're all middle class, even the upper and lower."

D. The Central Institution in Ashby

In the process of evaluation of a secondary school in the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary schools, a visiting committee makes commendations and recommendations. The visiting committee's one commendation regarding the Ashby High School plant was its central location. Indeed, the Ashby Schools are located centrally, but they are also central to the economic and social life of the community; they are the communications center of the town; they are central to the continuing and mounting controversy in the town as to what is and what is not adequate education, as to what can and cannot be afforded, as to what candidate should be elected to school committee, as to what person is honest and what person lies; they are the chief raison d'être for fund raising schemes for many town organizations which need, each year, some worthy project which usually turns out to be the purchase of some tangible object for the schools or the awarding of a small scholarship. The schools have become the chief symbol of the determination of the town of Ashby to preserve local autonomy if one may judge by the arguments employed in this regard by
the successful opponents of the regional school proposals in 1955, 1956, and 1957.

The status of the high school, people's expectations regarding it, their opinion of it, and what they think it ought to be are considerations which infuse all parts of this study. However, for this attempted description of what is the case prior to the introduction of some of the processes of cultural change, some direct approaches to respondents' perception of the school in the subculture of Ashby were used. What are some of the best features of Ashby High School? What are some of the worst things, or if you prefer, the greatest unmet needs? What are some of the best features of Ashby living? What are some of the worst? The two first questions are obviously direct enough with regard to schools. The latter two gave rise to discussions which provided data for many uses, some of which, relate directly to schools.

None of the best features of Ashby living were attributed to the schools by any respondent.

Discussion of the worst features of Ashby living gave rise more frequently to mention of the schools. Most respondents (all but three) mentioned the tax rate and finances of the town as among the worst problems. Five of these placed the schools as foremost of all the factors contributing to the economic burden of Ashby.

Three respondents said most people they knew would call the general school situation the most serious disadvantage
of living in Ashby. Two, who mentioned the above problems as well, gave the high school plant top priority as an unmet need. One respondent said the chief complaint he heard in Ashby was about unprofessional teachers.

Two other characteristics which three respondents said their friends and associates considered descriptive of Ashby and which they attributed largely to the schools were lack of culture (refinement) and civic apathy.

Discussion of the secondary school specifically led only half the respondents to try to identify things they thought most people in Ashby would consider among the best advantages offered. The others either felt that calling anything best was too positive a term to be applied to the school (three respondents), or that people were so dissatisfied with schools no thought was given to what might be advantages or "bests" about them (eight respondents). One respondent said, "People don't really know the schools' good or bad points. They just send their kids there and get them back at night--most nights."

Of those who could list advantages they thought people would agree upon, the greatest number mentioned two things; 1. opportunity for anyone to participate in any activity of the schools, and 2. opportunity for individual attention and provision for individual differences. Mentioned less frequently: 1. Heterogenous social contact (four times)

2. Location (twice)
3. Certain teachers (twice)
4. Spirit of students (twice)
5. Smallness an advantage if standards are high (once)
6. Spirit of staff in face of difficulties (once)
7. Spirit of tolerance in student body (once)

Respondents reported it was much easier to know what people find unsatisfactory about the school. Twelve respondents said the limited curriculum (no art, no home economics, inadequate science, illogical sequence and no variety in foreign languages) is widely deplored and consciousness of its limitations is growing. Eleven respondents said people were dissatisfied with administrative and supervisory matters (turnover of personnel, quality of instruction, continuity in curriculum content and grade level offerings, coordination of staff and administration, and teacher recruitment).

The high school plant, failure to take advantage of opportunity to give individual attention, and discipline problems were identified by three respondents each as the worst features of the Ashby High School.

Two respondents thought most people they knew were concerned about the lack of ethics of teachers (contract ethics, gossip, "goldbricking", indoctrinating). Two others saw slack manners, immodest dress, general lack of courtesy (not necessarily intentional) on the students' part as the priority concern of their acquaintances and associates. Only one
respondent said people considered certain weak teachers as the worst feature of the Ashby secondary schools, though inferior teachers and teaching is implied by many of the foregoing perceptions of the undesirable side of the school situation.

All in all, the scales seem rather sharply tipped on the negative side with regard to the esteem in which the high school is held by people when questioned in depth. If this is true, it might be reasonable to expect that the schools would not be considered the appropriate agent for cultural change, but this was the case in the opinion of only five respondents. One said that the school had no business involving itself directly in the culture—that "its job is to do a good job with the 3 R's and let cultural outcomes follow as they may." The other four said they thought most people expected the schools to reflect the culture as it is. They expressed the view that people would consider the possibility of cultural lag far less a danger than entrusting leadership in cultural change to the personnel of the public high school.

Of the more optimistic twenty, half said people looked to the school and its professional staff for leadership in cultural change. They agreed that the school has a function in preserving what is worthy in culture but that democracy, "even town meeting democracy," is still so far from the achievement of its ideals that change in the direction of this achievement is the compelling task of the public school.
The remaining ten respondents said they thought people would expect the school to play a dual role: in preserving and extending the traditions and characteristics of the culture which should survive, and in taking the lead in changing the undesirable shared habits or ways of life in Ashby.

There was less agreement upon the question of who should decide what should be preserved and what should be changed. Some respondents said people looked to the school committee for this; others, the superintendent; others, the teachers; and still others, the principal. All, however, said that whoever happened to take the responsibility ought to be forward-looking and ought to base his thinking upon some attempt to get consensus. Respondents make a distinction between merely reflecting the culture and taking into consideration a consensus of the people in the culture before directing changes.
CHAPTER VI
Respondents' Views of Reconstructionist Concepts

A. Review of Aspects of Cultural Order
Which Make the School Central to its Maintenance or Change

The dependency of families upon other institutions for the development of future generations, the apparently declining or vanished power of influential family "tribes," the lack of singleness of purpose seen as characteristics of the many fraternal and social organizations of the town, the relatively small influence of the churches upon the thinking and behavior of the people as a whole in the subculture, the lack of realization by the general population, of the one chief ethnic group's past and potential contribution in Ashby, and the uncertainty about the existence of cliques and the long term influence of them if they do exist, added to the ease and naturalness of respondents in turning to the topic of schools whenever any discussion approached problems of the cultural change or preservation. All this tends to focus attention upon the schools as the agent of cultural improvement, disintegration, or transmission.

Sharpening this focus are the opinions of twenty of the respondents that the school should play this central role. The identification of school officials, lay or professional, as responsible for selecting the appropriate traditions to
retain and protect, and for selecting the priority changes to be made, further sharpens this focus.

B. The Ashby Citizen's Relationship to His Culture

One concept basic to the philosophy of education called Reconstructionism is that culture is subject to change at the hands of man, that the individual man or the organized group can have an intended affect upon the culture, that there are no pre-existent or predetermined laws of cultural change which dictate man's relation to his culture: Man may operate upon the culture with the degree of success or failure dependent upon his understanding of it. This view is opposed by the idea that the culture is a thing in and of itself, that it changes or remains stable according to its own laws with man's role, if any, being merely culture's unconscious instrument. The former view is called the operational view; the latter, the superorganicist view. What would the Reconstructionist, hoping to discover amenability to the operational view of culture, find in Ashby?

The respondents seemed to be fascinated with the idea that there could be two views. Discussion was lively and more questions were put to the investigator, at times, than he put to the respondent. All but one respondent rejected the superorganicist view and even the one who espoused it said
he thought everyone else in town acted as if people could change or control things if they wished. His expression of the organicist view was: "Times will change when and if they get around to it; If a particular person thinks he had anything to do with some change in the way of life of the town, he's kidding himself: He just happened to be in the right place when the time was ripe." All other respondents take the operational view personally but three expressed the feeling that most of their friends and associates did not seem to do so. Two also said that although the operational view was valid, they themselves were too discouraged to use it. Both, at this writing, have at least partially recovered from the discouragement and are involved in the approaching election which they consider important in the eventual reversal of what they see as a trend toward satisfaction with mediocrity in the town. Their behavior indicates that they hold the operational view even while professing discouragement with it.

One respondent said she thought the regional school fight was a good example of her contention that most Ashby citizens would believe in the operational view of culture even though it is not often that many of them act upon the belief. In this case, very few abstained from participating in the regional school controversy. The proponents recognized that regionalizing would run counter to the established ways of doing things in Ashby. They, themselves, regretted the
changes but felt that adequate schooling could no longer be provided by the local culture in its present form. They, therefore, set about to change that culture to whatever extent necessary for the formation of a regional school district. The opponents, on the other hand, saw the regional school idea as one more instance of the trend in the larger surrounding culture for governmental units to get bigger, more centralized, and farther from the people's direct control. They saw the surrounding towns succumbing to this cultural trend. They were not convinced that this trend would roll on of its own weight and encompass Ashby. They took the operational view and decided there was something they could do about it. There was. They stopped the trend in its tracks on two of Ashby's borders.

The investigator's personal involvement in the example just cited, plus his participation in the life of Ashby for purposes of this study, indicate to him that, without knowing or caring about culture theory and its language, most Ashby citizens take the operational view of culture, have notions about what habits, customs, enduring values, and ways of life characterize their culture, and have some degree of skill and inclination (depending upon the issue) to use these culture characteristics to control, impede, encourage, or direct cultural change. He believes that even the one professed superorganicist among his respondents is really not one, as
his observed behavior is not consistent with this position.

Summary: While satisfaction with or apathy toward his culture is sometimes viewed as resignation to its imagined self-generating nature, the usual Ashby citizen feels that, if he wishes it, he can individually or in organized groups influence cultural change on behalf of his own purposes or the shared purposes of his fellows. Should the school staff take the operational view? Since it has been indicated, through respondents' views of their institutions, that the school is the central institution in Ashby, the school staff becomes the chief agent of cultural change, preservation, and transmission. The staff then defaults to chance and to minority pressures, unless it takes the operational view itself.

C. Goal Centering - Future Centering

Does the Ashby citizen pursue explicit overall goals shared by his fellow citizens in the governmental, social, business, religious, and educational endeavors of the town? Is the past and present of these activities interpreted through projection of their effect upon the future? Does he consider these matters important? If not, can he be persuaded they are?

Respondents themselves quickly identified the subject of goals with the schools, dismissing the clubs, fraternal
and social organizations, and even the churches as having rather specific functions which may or may not contribute to some over-all goals "which people don't think about much."

The churches are described as largely a Sunday affair for most of those who attend and these are few in number. The P. T. A. was mentioned by several respondents as having rather generalized objectives in print but as having deteriorated into an organization that "makes and sells cakes to raise money to buy record players for the school." The town, perceived as an institution, fared a little better: Two respondents said they thought that officials and other responsible citizens saw two overarching goals, and these were 1. the retention of Ashby's identity as a town, and 2. the survival of Ashby in terms of solvency and local control of its affairs. Another respondent thought most people felt the goal of the town as an institution was to further democracy as a way of life. One respondent said that the town ought to adopt the goal of developing a responsible citizenry, thereby contributing to its own survival. (Note number 2 above). One respondent guessed there were as many town goals as citizens. All other respondents expressed, in various ways, an interest in the idea that a town might have an explicit overall goal by which to judge its progress and from which to take direction, but they also thought the Town of Ashby had none.
Thus, the schools became the chief topic in the discussion of goal centering and future centering of the energies and enterprises of the people of Ashby. This might have been expected since the school is geographically, socially, economically, central to Ashby, and is its main vehicle for communication. What did respondents say they thought most people felt ought to be the primary goal of the high school? Only one said college entrance. Only two cited vocational preparation. One claimed knowledge for its own sake ought to be the chief concern of the school. All others identified the creation of good citizens as the central overall goal or as related and directly necessary to it. For example, "The school aims to make contributing, responsible, decent citizens."

"The creation of a socially conscious public...."

"To prepare students for the competition and cooperation necessary for progress."

"The preservation and advancement of civilization through the kind of persons graduated."

"Safeguard democracy through continuing generations of kids who understand it and have faith, but not naive faith, in it."

Thus, all but four respondents said they thought Ashby people they knew would consider citizenship for democracy, as the appropriate overall goal for the school and that to the extent this goal is achieved, so are the town's goals achieved.
Apart from what the goal of the schools ought to be, what does it seem actually to be? None of the respondents were familiar enough, in their own estimation, with the daily proceedings inside the school, except the three respondents from the school system, to say whether the teachers were consciously directing their activities toward some overall goal. The Superintendent, Principal, and respondent from the teachers' group said there was no apparent school-wide sense of goal direction, but that individual teachers "probably" had their own goals for their classes. As for the public, all respondents said that people's complaints, demands, and aspirations regarding schools, and their own children therein, seemed to indicate the school's main purpose was to help children "get ahead," that is, college entrance, good job, and material gain.

Discussion of the apparent disparity between what many Ashby citizens would say ought to be the main goal of their school and what they really want out of it led, in the case of each respondent, to an expressed realization that: 1.

The two kinds of goals are not mutually exclusive if the "get ahead" goal is subordinate to the citizenship goal, but that, if the "get ahead" goal predominates, it is likely to exclude the good citizenship goal. According to six respondents and many other citizens met in casual contacts, the "get ahead" goal in Ashby High, as in the other schools,
is currently given far more weight by students, parents, and teachers than is the goal of good citizenship. The school staff has to see its work, and help the public see its work, more clearly as the means to a recognized worthy, widely shared goal and to a future society which is a better expression of that goal.

Some ideas about how concern for the clarification of school goals and their relationship to society, particularly future society, might be developed would apparently be considered worth trying out. For example, all but one respondent said that while the administration of the schools and of the classrooms frequently employed the forms of democracy, the substance of democracy was lacking. This, they said, was not consistent with the goal of the furtherance of democracy through good citizenship, and that more and more ways of substituting democratic operations for arbitrary and authoritarian ones should be sought. The reservations respondents thought most people would have regarding this were voiced by the one respondent who said there should be less rather than more democracy practiced in schools. She felt time was wasted, orderly procedure lost, and control abandoned when schools were operated democratically. These fears, the other respondents said, could be overcome since most Ashby people were not yet ready to equate chaos with democracy. (The last Reconstructionist concept treated in this chapter deals with
Just over half the respondents expressed interest (and said most other people would) in the idea of a goal centered-future centered school project, involving all pupils sometime before they were graduated, which would require them to construct theoretically their concept of a desirable future society and to outline the necessary means to its achievement. All but one of the other respondents were less enthusiastic because "it sounds Utopian" and therefore impractical, but they said it might be worth a try if the readings and skills necessary for the project "got a good workout." The one intractable respondent said most people don't know what is going on today "so let's get that settled first."

Amenability toward other proposals related to goal centering-future centering appears to exist in varying degrees but not as pronouncedly as for the above two suggestions. The investigator's non-interviewing activities in the life of Ashby lead him to support a contention made by only six of the respondents, that is, that no subject in the schools is presented with sufficient rationale to relate it to any goal other than college entrance, getting a credit toward graduation, and making a good record.

Only one respondent suggested the relationship of a revamped teacher preparation program to the idea of a goal
oriented, future oriented curriculum. Yet, the investigator discovered instance after instance of concern over the apparent perception by teachers of their positions as a kind of assembly line job rather than as a professional position with long range significance.

Summary: Respondents for the most part estimated that since schools are central to the life of the town of Ashby, concern about goals is chiefly concern about school goals. They said, also that if the normative goal, citizenship for democracy, were to be realized, teachers, the public, and the students would have to be re-oriented so that they would take their main direction from the normative goal rather than the apparent "get ahead" goal indicated by their present behaviors. The future as a central concern would apparently be considered a desirable and necessary concept in connection with goals and the predictability of achieving them, if the responses of interviewees are significant. The investigator's experience in the life of the town supports the summarized views of respondents but leads him to think that considerable re-education of the public and of the school staff will be necessary before any serious effort to reach consensus upon an overall goal for the school can be made, since there are few who wish to be committed to matching action with expressed goals.
Amenability to the idea of goal centering–future centering is one thing, to suggested implementations another. Proposals related to this are found in chapter IX.

The Conscious Use of Some Processes of Cultural Change and Interpretation

1. Change as an Idea

Reconstruction, of course, is change and implies change for the better. How do Ashby people like the idea of change? All respondents, after discussion, had answers which may be summarized as follows: Very few citizens of Ashby want any change which would require them to alter their personal ways of doing, thinking, and relating to the other people, but most people in Ashby want some changes in their institutions or in other people’s ways of doing, thinking, and relating. In other words, many people who are not ready to alter their own opinions, routines, status, etc., in order to take a responsibility in bringing about desired change, can nevertheless see the need for some changes in the subculture.

2. Amenability to Purposeful Use of Acculturation

Without drawing the fine distinction between acculturation and such other processes as assimilation and diffusion, this study refers to those changes in the original ways of life which come as a result of two differing cultures finding themselves in a position where they influence one another.
Processes of acculturation such as intermarriage, the drift by Finns from agriculture to industry, and from unskilled heavy labor to technical skilled labor were observed by respondents as changing in various degrees the way of life of the Finnish-American population, but this has not been due to its juxtaposition to other elements of the Ashby subculture, but rather to the regional and national trends.

Acculturation within Ashby does not seem to favor the Finnish. That is, changes in the Finnish attributed to influence of non-Finnish were not considered desirable by respondents. For example, two respondents said most people would recognize the rapid loss of parental respect and control as each generation of children of Finnish extraction "strove to be more like the other kids." The other frequently mentioned loss was the reduced use of the Finnish language. The growth in the numbers of families in which grandparents and grandchildren do not share a common tongue, the steadily decreasing subscriptions to Finnish language publications in the area, coupled with the recent national emphasis upon the need for bi-lingualism and the value of cultural exchange have brought out two ideas which eight respondents said many Finnish families have suspected for some time. One idea is that it is not necessary for desirable, in order to be a good American, to cut off all association with the cultural heritage of Finland. Secondly, the loss to present generations of Finnish-Americans of the Finnish
language is, in effect, cutting of such association with the Finnish heritage to a great extent.

On the other hand, seven respondents see the non-Finnish people, "the Yankees", as being gradually made more tolerant and broadminded by living in association with the Finnish. For example, many have been released from some of their time-honored inhibitions regarding the human body. The Finnish esteem for cleanliness and bodily health, their customary sauna or steam bath which is the occasion of plural nakedness, sometimes involving both genders simultaneously, have promoted this. The fine athletes and beautiful specimens of human physical and mental health produced by Finnish upbringing have gradually led the rest of the citizenry to suspect that the sauna is not necessarily a sexual debauch, nor attention to bodily cleanliness and development necessarily narcissism. While it would be an exaggeration to say that everyone in Ashby is a sauna enthusiast, it would be fair to say, according to these respondents, that tolerance of what others consider proper, wholesome, or natural has grown due to exposure to Finnish customs.

The other most frequently mentioned change produced in non-Finns by their situation as neighbors of citizens of Finnish extraction was the gradual reduction of suspicion of the cooperative movement. In a subculture which had made competition a part of the ethic and which used the words
socialism and communism as synonyms, the cooperative movement was difficult to swallow. But the practical results (mainly the survival and then the successful operation of farms which had failed under "old Yankees") have convinced most people, according to thirteen respondents, that the cooperative movement is not a threat to "our way of life". It is now tolerated by all and embraced by many.

The foregoing have been instances of acculturation, that is, changes in the cultural patterns of those in the one ethnic group and those outside it due to the influence of each upon the other, which have occurred without impetus from the intended purpose of any institution. What agency could best make use of the concept of acculturation for the betterment of the town, and how could it be used? The answer to the first question was readily offered. All twenty-six respondents directed their suggestions to the school.

Fifteen respondents, in experiencing a growing interest in knowing more about the most tangible and pronounced contribution of the Finnish-American population, namely the cooperative movement, an interest arising out of the discussions in this study, said they thought most people they knew could be persuaded that room could profitably be made in the school curriculum for examination of the cooperative movement, its socialistic affinity, and how it has influenced political and economic factors in our democracy. Related to
this is the designation of some Finnish-Americans as "Red Finns" and others as "White Finns". In local parlance, this refers to the fact that a number of Finnish-American residents are known, or alleged to have been, communists. All others are "White Finns". A final subject for school perusal, and related to the cooperative idea, is that some of the Finnish ethnic group are quite traditional and conservative in all ways except economic theory and practice.

Twelve respondents said Ashby people would come to accept efforts by the school to examine habits of thought and deed which are shared by the Finnish and the non-Finnish in Ashby, and those unique to each group. Eight thought that drawing upon the Finnish for their contribution to the home arts, the practical arts, and the fine arts would be found acceptable to most Ashby people.

Why should the school do this? Respondents were vague. "Tolerance", "understanding", "cosmopolitan view", were terms used. However, the vagueness does not negate the amenability toward the uses of the concept suggested above.

4. Amenability to the Concept of Focus

The concept of focus as the tendency of a culture to express greater variability and resilience in some of its practices and institutions than in others was not sustained in interviewing. In spite of efforts to keep to this concept, responses kept drifting to a rather different idea of focus which seemed to offer possibilities as an operational tool. This was the idea of focus as a sort of spotlight which in a given culture could be shone on this
or that important problem leaving other problems in the pentumbra until satisfactory progress is made upon the spotlighted one. It is, therefore, this understanding of the concept of focus to which reference is made in the following treatment.

"There is no need for the purposeful use of the concept of focus at this time", said one respondent, "and I do not believe many people would think there is."

At times, in the ongoing development of subculture, something happens which compels the interest and attention, energies and talents, time and effort of the people. At such times, people give lower priority to their customary diverse activities in order to focus on the compelling problem or incident. The above respondent apparently does not feel that such a time is now here.

All other respondents, however, seem to think Ashby may be in a time when focus is about to come into play, and that it may as well be used by the people instead of being forced upon the people by necessity. Some examples:

a. One respondent said most people would welcome some priority rating of the town's problems, so that effort could be concentrated where it would do the most good. She also said people would not welcome her suggestion of employing a town manager to implement this, however.

b. Another respondent, thinking along the same lines,
said people can be persuaded to focus upon a single important project or problem under good leadership "which we don't have.

  c. Two respondents gave examples of how the town had consciously employed the concept of focus (without probably naming it) in the near past. One instance was the attempt to acquire a doctor for the town, in which effort, all organizations, families, and official or unofficial groups were enlisted to work on this project which, by unspoken consensus, was the priority problem at that time. The usual activities of all these groups were temporarily suspended or de-emphasized while the focus was upon the medical protection of the community.

  The other instance was a similarly organized, successful attempt to focus on the need for a central multi-purpose public building. This became the combination elementary school, recreation hall, town meeting hall, and social center referred to still as the New Elementary School.

  d. Two other respondents said they thought people could see the value of focusing upon particular problems and their amenability toward participation would depend upon the problem.

  e. Seventeen respondents related the use of this concept to the schools directly. Eleven of these said Ashby people with appropriate explanation could be made interested in the concept of focus as applied to the curriculum. With-
out seeming to understand just how the idea of focusing the resources of several subject areas and their teachers upon some central problem would work out, they did express in various ways the apparently widespread town opinion that courses now seem to have no rationale and that the curricular offering had no unifying theme. Discussion of a number of suggested ways to use the concept of focus led these respondents to see focus as "one way out of chaos." The remaining respondents indicated agreement with this and had suggestions which they said they thought their friends and associates would favor. Focusing student and staff energies upon the academic day and reducing the dissipation of energies in all the various directions of interscholastic sports, competitive drama, and the like, was suggested. Another suggestion was that Art, Music, English, and Social Studies personnel plan together to focus their resources upon some theme or problem to be central to the School for an appointed period of time.

A third suggestion, which the respondents thought would not be widely acclaimed but toward which "some" amenability could be developed, was that schools could focus upon civic problems analogous to those in Ashby and, thereby, be a moving force for local action.

Finally, there was offered a suggestion, toward which both the respondents and the investigator were quite sure amenability could rather easily be developed, that a
curriculum project be undertaken with the objective of identifying "what is distinctly Ashby", and that once that identification were made, it would be the focus by which some curriculum improvements took their direction.

The suggestion is based on the observation that both the advantages and limitations of localism are now falsely considered as common knowledge and that a close, analytical view of "what is distinctly Ashby" would provide a better basis for determining what should be preserved, transmitted, or changed than is now used.

5. Purposeful Use of Crisis

No respondent reacted to the concept of crisis with the automatic assumption that crises of various kinds are necessarily bad, but responses were cautious. All respondents said they thought Ashby people would consider that crisis tends to be bad, but that it may be possible to make something positive out of an existing crisis (two of these noted that most of their associates recognized an educational and financial crisis in the town currently.) However, four respondents expressed certainty that Ashby people would disapprove purposely induced crisis no matter how nobly such action was motivated. The other respondents all said they thought, personally, that there are times when some long smoldering, but unresolved issue, ought to be brought to a head, but all were reticent about speaking for other Ashby
people on this matter. Purposeful use by responsible people, of a crisis atmosphere, which exists but was not intentionally created, is an idea toward which amenability could more likely be developed, according to respondents. Two respondents contended that the school had no business dealing with crisis as an operational tool, but a third said he thought most people in Ashby could be persuaded that a study of the nature of crisis, its effect upon people's behavior and thinking, and ways of getting what good, if any, out of different kinds of crises would be a legitimate project for the high school to develop with students. This suggestion was discussed with those respondents interviewed subsequently (about a third). All agreed this might have possibilities.

6. Tractability Toward Innovation

The idea of innovation as a process of cultural change and specific suggestions for innovation seemed to the investigator to arouse more interest among respondents than any other of the cultural processes. There were, however, some negative reactions to the idea of innovation. Four respondents thought the Ashby public considered the school's responsibility to the culture as mainly one of transmission. Three of these respondents thought most Ashby people would favor continuing the present ways of doing things in all affairs and business of the town, but doing them better.
The other could see general amenability to innovations by teachers within the classroom, but any wide-ranging fundamental innovations, he said, would run afoul of the school committee and town opinion. Finally, on the negative side, one respondent claimed he was convinced that Ashby people would suspect that innovations in schools would jeopardize college entrance. The same respondent said he could not imagine any innovations which could solve either of two inter-related problems of the town—finances and education. He said that Ashby's lack of amenability toward innovation had been demonstrated by its repeated rejection of the regional school idea, which in his opinion would have gone far to relieve the two problems above stated.

The other twenty respondents take a more positive view of innovation. All said most people they knew could be considered tractable, if not already receptive, to promising innovations both in the management of the town and its various institutions and also in the school specifically. Eight of these said they thought the town had reached such a state of crisis or impending crisis that amenability could be developed for any responsibly conceived innovation even among those who do not like change or who might prefer some innovation other than the one undertaken.

Some innovations suggested by respondents are:

a. A more widespread social acceptance and integration
of Catholics and avowed Democrats in the town.
b. Tax valuation of the town by an outside agency.
c. Unification of all activities, facilities, and services of the two churches in Ashby insofar as conflicting dogma are not affected.
d. Establish an explicit standard for desirable school committee members and elect only those who measure up to it.
e. Eliminate all but the "academic" courses at school.
f. Institute, in addition to the present field trips, more lengthy field studies such as might be done with biology courses utilizing all the natural laboratories afforded by the countryside.
g. Institute a school camping requisite for graduation which would encompass learnings in community living, survival, nature studies, and the like.
h. Institute a year-long school of some educationally profitable arrangement.
i. Eliminate the rigid clock and bell schedule in the school. Where larger than usual blocks of time offer better instruction possibilities, schedule them.
j. Try some kind of adult education.
k. Regionalize with Fitchburg.
l. Focus curricular improvements upon identification
of what is distinctively Ashby, and upon what
this has to do with the rest of the world, whether
it is good or bad, what it means for the
individual, and so forth.
m. Place new emphasis upon the arts.
n. Experiment with ideas about improvement of
instruction and put to use the findings of up
to date research.
o. Send students of the high school out on tuition.
p. Offer six consecutive years of one foreign
language.
q. Try out new ways of communication between the
school staff and the parents.

7. Causation and Prediction

What causes cultural change in Ashby and how may these
changes be predicted? Although a few respondents had their
opinions on these questions, none wishes to hazard any
estimate of how those Ashby people with whom he associated
would answer them. But if respondents' opinions arising out
of lengthy discussion may be considered a possible indication
that others might, after similar discussion, be of the same
opinions, then a summary of respondents' views may be of
some worth.

Two respondents politely but insistently and consistently
maintained that as far as the subculture of Ashby is con-
cerned, action in the present is what is needed and "theorizing about the past and future or about causes and prediction is ivory tower delay." These two also said they thought that school age adolescents are not ready for analysis of facts until they have learned them. They said the schools have not taught the basic facts well enough to take on the added job of analyzing causes and predicting that "what some intellectual theorizes about the outcome of the facts will actually be the outcome."

Five respondents expressed, in various ways, the view that each local unsolved community problem ought to be analyzed from the standpoint of what set of circumstances engendered the problem and what set of circumstances would reduce or eliminate it. Then an investigation of the possibilities for bringing about the latter circumstances might become the basis for predictions. As one old-timer said, "It's just common sense. We looked at our troubles that way before you ever heard of causation and prediction."

The remaining respondents preferred to think of the concept of causation and prediction as a valuable way of improving instruction and curricular content in the schools. One said, "Historical facts have to add up to something or they're not worth learning. They should explain the 'why' of something and then point out directions for us." Several other respondents echoed this in various ways. The quotation
above does justice to their expressed opinions, if the investigator's interpretation is correct. Another described the school's treatment of current issues in classes as little more than keeping up to date with the news. She said bracketing each current issue with its causes, insofar as possible, and with prediction of the conditions required for the issue's resolution would comprise a marked improvement in the school's use of current affairs in the curriculum. Even more significance could be derived, according to this respondent, by predicting the long range social effects of both the resolution of each current issue treated and the failure to resolve it.

In all, eighteen respondents had some suggestions for the application of the concept of causation and prediction to the curriculum of the Ashby High School, and all of them were concerned with the social studies. It was more than an inference that social studies in school are apt to be deficient with regard to causation and prediction; the future is never regarded as history, and the question, "So what?", after any block of learning, is hardly ever answered. This was stated as an opinion of all respondents except those who saw no value in the concept to begin with. In fairness, however, most admitted having no first-hand evidence, but based their opinions upon their general impression of the school, or upon the kinds of experiences their children or neighbors
children in secondary school report from time to time.

Controversial Issues and the Defensible Partiality of Teachers

The Reconstructionist believes that if an issue is controversial it is apt to be of fundamental importance to people; if it is fundamentally important, it should be a prominent part of the subject matter of the educative agencies including secondary schools; if it is treated in the schools, the teachers should be expected to take all possible measures to assure fair presentation of all sides of the issue, but also, should be expected, not merely allowed, to identify themselves with whatever side of the issue they believe to be the just one, and to present their reasons for so doing. The Reconstructionist believes this latter provision prevents indoctrination by preventing ideological opportunism, and by preventing application of the teachers' own religious, class, ethnic, and political orientation subliminally upon norm setting in the treatment of controversial issues.

What are considered controversial subjects by Ashby people? According to respondents there is probably little in this area to distinguish Ashby from other subcultures in the New England region. Religion heads the list of controversial subjects, followed in descending order by politics, sex, education as a subject, economics, ethics – morals – manners, taxes, organization of society, race, government, atomic
power, communism, and philosophy. As can be seen, some of these items can be combined with others in a larger category, but some respondents tend to think more abstractly than others. One respondent pointed out that "in the anxious climate of Ashby today, any subject at all can become controversial."

Two respondents said Ashby people are not amenable to the purposeful inclusion of any controversial issues in the curriculum. There was one respondent each for the exclusion of anything but the most superficial examination of religion, social organization (class structure), and education as a subject. They said most people they knew would feel the same way.

All other respondents said they thought Ashby people, if the ones they knew were indicative, could be persuaded that schools should deal in some way with controversial issues. Nine of these referred to any and all controversial issues, but the others focused on the "big three": Religion, Politics, and Sex. However, respondents had reservations themselves and said most other people would also. Here are some samples:

a. Religion should be treated in such a way as to avoid indoctrination.

b. Party politics should be treated in such a way as to avoid indoctrination.
c. Communism should be treated as the antitheses of democracy.

d. Treatment of religion, politics, sex should be systematic; "haphazard present practices accentuate the hazard."

e. Treatment of sex should avoid personal allusion.

f. It is more the business of the school to treat the "why" than the "how" of sex. In other words, the responsibilities attendant upon dating, courtship, and marriage, and any other relationships in which sex is an important factor, are more important and appropriate for treatment in schools than is sex technique.

g. All treatment of controversial subjects should be done in good faith.

Respondents, whether they approved it or not, seemed to find the concept of defensible partiality a challenging one. The discussion of it brought out the possibility that the desire of teachers to avoid the appearance of indoctrinating may have been greater than the desire to avoid actual indoctrinating. Whether Ashby people would consider the exercise of defensible partiality, as described at the beginning of this section, an improvement over the supposed impartiality of teachers in classrooms today is highly debatable according to one respondent. Although he doubted
the improvement himself, he could see possibilities for defensible partiality. This was more than two other respondents would say for it. They said Ashby people, including themselves, did not want teachers taking sides no matter how fairly the other sides were represented. One respondent said that if controversial issues must be in the curriculum, which she personally deplored, then the concept of defensible partiality of teachers ought to be used. She said if other people could understand why and how it was being done, "they could be persuaded, as she was, that it's the best way to handle controversial issues."

The remaining twenty respondents who answered at all, said people they knew either already favored defensible partiality of teachers (without having a phrase for it), or could readily be made friendly toward the idea through discussions such as those between respondent and the investigator.

Two respondents did not make up their minds to any final answer on this topic.

**Comprehensive Adult Education**

The kind of community-sponsored adult education which offers a wide assortment of courses like chair caning, tray painting, typing, elementary Russian, Real Estate I and II, golf, and so forth, is available in nearby communities as
are state-aided vocational evening courses and regular high school evening courses. The special use of the word, comprehensive, in this case, refers to adult education which would stress examination of world wide, even universal, issues with focus, if desired, upon particular implications for Ashby.

Although all respondents said there was need for some type of adult education in Ashby, three said that very few people could be made willing to set aside their present activities or leisure long enough to follow through on any organized adult education venture. Two others said there is little, if any, felt need for adult education in Ashby but did not preclude possible development of a felt need.

Adult education, according to the remainder of the respondents, would be successful or fail depending on the offering. The particular kinds of offering the respondents said they thought Ashby people would consider worthy of their support varied greatly. Three said that it should be the familiar cafeteria-like assortment of courses. One said that the manual arts should predominate. Another suggested that stress be upon child rearing as a subject. A third said that expert leadership in the use of the earlier discussed concept of focus could make adult education successful in Ashby. Still another suggested that improvement of communication be the goal of adult education and that the curriculum evolve out of this. Any kind of adult education which would help
Ashby citizens to learn how to consider ideas other than their own would be a service to the town, according to one respondent who said that such an offering would be well attended even if by those who need it least.

Four respondents who had been stimulated by earlier discussions of goals for the town and its institutions, said amenability toward adult education with such goal seeking as its unifying theme could be readily developed, at least in the first year.

Although there was no consensus as to what adult education should be, there was unanimity about one characteristic essential to its successful establishment: It must be short—no longer than six weeks per session.

Although some of the above suggestions could possibly be developed to involve ideas of universal importance, even if the focus was local, more explicit response was sought so an explicit proposal was made in a succeeding round of interviews. The investigator proposed hypothetically that in the next school year on six successive Wednesday evenings, an adult seminar on the theme, "Taxation, Freedom, and Local Autonomy" be offered which would examine the relationship between these three concepts in history, in current practice in various cultures including Ashby, and in projections of things to come.

With this as an hypothetical example, half the respond-
ents said enough people could be interested to get such a seminar started, although the suggested day, Wednesday, and the suggested broad topic might not prove to be the best proposal. Seven others said such an idea would be welcomed in Ashby where more common adult education programs would not. Five respondents persisted in their first round responses as far as other people were concerned, but two said they would personally be interested.

Fifteen respondents said that most of the Ashby people they knew in their organizations or through other relationships could be made interested in at least giving a second suggestion of the investigator a try. This suggestion was that from time to time a unit of work in some course in the high school be offered simultaneously, on a different level of abstraction if necessary, to an evening seminar of adults, and that periodically a joint meeting be arranged for exchanges of views between youth and adults on the work of the unit. Insofar as possible, adult members of the seminar would be parents of the adolescents doing work on the same topic during the day so that discussions at home could reinforce the learning and perhaps whet the appetite for more. Since all the respondents who reacted favorably to this idea have school aged children or grandchildren, the investigator hazarded the guess that respondents saw hope in this idea, or something like it, for a breaking down of communications
barriers between generations. They admitted that this was at least partly so.

The other ten respondents were less ready to say what people of Ashby would think of this idea. One said, "They'd quit in droves if they thought you were giving them the same work mere kids could handle." The others had various reasons for giving a low estimate of amenability. These reasons may be summed up in the words of one of the men: "We have to support the day school. They can try things there and we don't pay any more than if they tried nothing. We are not obliged to support adult school either by taxes or by the individual paying out his own money. Your idea is O. K., but people won't go to an expense for it."

Self-Correction Guarantees in Institutions

Institutions cannot change themselves. People change them. Most democratic institutions have, explicit in their documents or implicit in their operation, provisions by which the institution may be legally altered. The provision in the U. S. Constitution which delineates the procedure for amending it is an example. This study refers to such provisions as self-correcting guarantees.

Are there such guarantees in the institutions of Ashby? All respondents said that there are, but in many cases
members of organizations never refer to their constitutions, by-laws, or other guiding instruments, but merely act upon what seems expedient. All respondents expressed the view that while this usually has no immediately harmful effect, it could lead to confusion, and has done so from time to time.

All respondents said they could see value in renewed stress in all town organizations, especially the town government and the school, upon the self-correcting aspects of Ashby's institutional rules and regulations. These values were of both an immediately practical nature and more long term kinds. The immediate value mentioned by all but three respondents was that the new town by-laws have a much better chance of passage if the attention of the public is directed to Section 2, Article I, which is a self-correction guarantee: "Any and all of these By-laws may be repealed or amended, or other By-laws may be adopted at any Town Meeting, an article or articles for that purpose having been inserted in the warrant for such meeting by the Selectmen."

The long term value is a renewed respect, by young and old alike, for law and order without mistaking law and order for a force against needed change. Although all respondents admitted, after discussion, that any town institution could contribute toward the realization of the above value by providing some focus upon its own self-correcting provisions,
they all were ready to advocate, even before discussion, that the school could contribute the most by arranging, through curricular, administrative, and instructional means, to focus upon the legal and orderly procedures for self-correction available in most institutions. Respondents said that most people would be tractable toward proposals for or by schools which were understood to be for the purpose of such focus.

Democracy Taught Through Use As Well As Theory

It has been the observation of the investigator that those secondary schools with which he is familiar do not make much provision for the pupils to practice the democratic theory they are presumed to have been taught. Clubs, classes, student council, and other activities which take the forms of democratic procedure either have such unimportant decisions to make that the participants see themselves as merely play actors, or else the forms of student government are used as manipulative ploys by the authoritarian administrator who feels a need for a democratic outward appearance.

What is and what ought to be the case in Ashby? One respondent said that the present chaotic condition of discipline and order in the schools is due to the introduction of more and more democracy into the school situation over the last twenty years, and that there ought to be a definite
return to authoritarian methods. She said most people she knew would say the same but that they would probably back down when they saw how this would affect their own children's daily existence. "They tend to think everyone else's children need strictness," she said.

Another respondent said she thought that the school had always been and still was very conscientious about teaching democracy as an ideal, but that the ideal seemed to have little relevance to the practices employed in the school's operation. She said, also, that she thought Ashby people in general had no firm conception of the status of democracy as a practice in the school. Her judgment matched the findings of the investigator since only five other respondents had a personal opinion on this subject and they spoke for no one but themselves. The opinion was that very little opportunity for practice in using democratic procedures, except of the play-acting variety, is afforded by the high school.

When the subject of discussion turned from the present status of democracy in the high school to the normative, a much greater response was forthcoming: One respondent objected to the label "play-acting" being used as something undesirable. He thought most people would expect the school to offer many student government, parliamentary, and election activities and the like, as good practice for democratic citizenship, but that important decisions all had to be made
by the adult staff.

Eleven said that people could be persuaded that, although attempts to do it are fraught with peril, ways need to be found for youth to participate meaningfully (as opposed to "play-acting") in the decisions that affect them in school if the school is going to produce citizens capable of responsible participation in the democratic institutions outside school. One of the eleven said people expect this from the Social Studies particularly.

Six others in effect suggested that a certain minimum authority must reside in the school officials, including the teaching staff, but that above and beyond that minimum wide opportunities for self-government both in classes and in school as a whole should be encouraged. According to these respondents, criticism would be forthcoming if such opportunities were provided but that through means such as these discussions (investigator-respondent discussions) most people could be brought to see the need.

The remaining seven respondents said attempts made in good faith to teach democracy by its daily use, as well as by studying it through use of the textbooks and other usual teaching materials, would be welcomed by Ashby people, by and large. These respondents predicted criticism, also, but not because of the school's effort to make democratic practice more real but because set-backs would be considered evidence
that the school personnel are, themselves, not very good at operating democratically.

Amenability, assuming the majority of respondents is correct, is high toward the idea of a reduction in the gap between democratic theory and practice in schools. Although these respondents seemed to feel that this amenability would fluctuate when the idea was translated into specific proposals, they saw present "play-acting" kinds of democratic practice like their perception of parliamentary class meetings and student council deliberations upon matters of little import as inadequate in the task of teaching democracy through practice.

Summary of respondents views on Reconstructionist concepts:

Many aspects of cultural order tend to make the school central to cultural maintenance, transmission, and change. The majority of respondents approve this role for the school and even the minority accept it with misgivings.

The operational view of culture is seen by the majority of respondents as the predominant Ashby view.

The task of goal centering - future centering is seen as chiefly the school's assignment. Most respondents identified citizenship for democracy as the overall goal of the school and considered achievement of this goal commensurate with town goals. All respondents agree that
a wide consensus should be sought on what the overall goal of the school should be and on what kind of a future is desirable.

Acculturation in Ashby occurs as a result of the juxtaposition of citizens of Finnish extraction to other citizens. All respondents could suggest ways that they would like to see the process of acculturation utilized by the school.

The anthropological definition of focus was supplanted by a persistent perception of the respondents of "a spotlight shining on a particular problem." To this concept all but three respondents said amenability would be found to be high and many examples of its usefulness were suggested.

Accentuating the positive in any existing crisis is an idea to which all respondents were somewhat amenable. Little amenability could be estimated toward the purposeful inducement of crisis, however worthy the motivation for its inducement.

Interest was high in the concept of innovation. Although a small minority offered alternatives to innovation or evidence that amenability towards it is low, the majority was amenable and suggested a variety of innovations for consideration.

Although a large majority of respondents were amenable, after lengthy discussion, to the concept of causation and prediction and had suggestions for its use by the school, most of them qualified their responses to this particular concept by stressing their uncertainty about general amenabil-
All but two respondents are amenable to the use of controversial issues in school. Many suggested conditions for their use. The majority said the idea of defensible partiality of teachers is one toward which amenability already exists to some extent and toward which it can be developed further.

A majority of respondents' reactions to various suggestions regarding adult education indicated that the need is greater than the amenability, but that a short term, adult-youth coordinated unit as described in this chapter could move Ashby people to renew their personal educational pursuits.

All respondents indicated a high degree of amenability toward renewed stress, in and out of school, upon the self-correcting aspects of Ashby's institutional rules and regulations.

Toward the final Reconstructionist concept, the teaching of democracy through use as well as theory, amenability is high according to a majority of respondents. Although hazards in the use of democratic processes in schools are feared by some respondents, most recognize a need for reducing the gap between the theory and practice of democracy.
PART III

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR
EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

CHAPTER VII

Conclusions

Conclusions about method: Two pieces of evidence lead to conclusions about method. One is the testimony from respondents concerning comprehensiveness and depth of the study. The other is the experience of the investigator in trying to estimate the degree of amenability of Ashby citizens to Reconstructionist concepts as applied to their public high school.

All respondents said that the methods of this study produced more thoughtfulness about aspects of Ashby which they had either taken for granted, hitherto, or had never considered at all. They said, also, that the process of trying to estimate amenability toward any concept tended, in themselves at least, to develop amenability.

What respondents said they learned about Ashby, compared to what they had realized before, testifies to the effectiveness of techniques of Educational Anthropology in producing or uncovering knowledge.

The same techniques, however, were weak in producing data which could be defensibly expressed statistically. For one thing, respondents do not represent, except possibly by
accident, a statistically random sampling. When a respondent refers to "people" he may refer to many more persons than another respondent, or to different kinds of people, or to the very same people. Further, the tendency of the method to develop amenability while it is trying to estimate it, makes any very explicitly quantitative estimate only temporarily accurate at best. Finally, the spontaneity, enthusiasm, persistent interest, and other characteristics of respondents' reactions, plus the observations and interpretations of the investigator's participation in the life of the town influence his estimates as such as anything stated by respondents.

Nevertheless, the methods of Educational Anthropology do make it possible to estimate amenability in at least one useful way. The investigator believes that the selected Reconstructionist concepts can be listed on a continuum, one extreme of which represents most amenability and the other the least, and with points between the extremes representing the relative positions of the concepts according to amenability toward them. This is attempted in the conclusions about amenability.

To summarize conclusions about the method: Educational Anthropology is an effective way of collecting information and gaining understanding which can be helpful in the interpretation and use of such characteristics of a subculture as cultural conflict, change, values, and custom. Such
information and understanding can be a basic consideration in the determination of the kind, the amount, and the timing of educational reconstruction that is most appropriate for the subculture.

Conclusions about citizens' amenability toward Reconstructionist concepts proposed for application to their public high school: Ashby citizens are amenable in some degree toward all the Reconstructionist concepts proposed, but for reasons discussed in conclusions about the method, the exact degree can not be expressed. Nevertheless, conclusions can be made regarding which concepts seem to enjoy the most amenability and which the least and regarding the relative position of other concepts along a continuum between these extremes. It is assumed that school personnel seeking to institute Reconstructionist measures would find use for an amenability estimate expressed in such a way.

With the concepts arranged in order of decreasing amounts of amenability, the operational view of culture is placed in the Number 1. position indicating most amenability. Number 2 indicates that there is less amenability toward innovation than toward the operational view, but more than for any concepts listed below it. Number 3. indicates there is less amenability toward that concept than toward Numbers 1. or 2. but more than toward concepts below it, and so forth down the list until Number 11., Crisis, toward which there
is the least amenability.

Such a continuum and comment upon it follows:

Most Amenability
1. Operational View of Culture
2. Innovation
3. Self-Correction Guarantees
4. Goal Centering-Future Centering
5. Democratic Methods
6. Causation and Prediction
7. Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality
8. Focus
9. Acculturation
10. Adult Education

Least Amenability
11. Crisis

1. Combined with the twenty-one respondents who see the school as the chief agent of cultural conservation, transmission, and change, the comparatively high degree of amenability toward the operational view of culture should be significant to school administration, staff, and lay committee.

2. The high amenability toward innovation seems due to three factors: a. some people simply like innovation, b. some people feel the school situation is so desperate that "anything is worth a try," c. the pressure of responsibility upon those who defeated the regional school proposals is now sufficiently felt that they will consider innovations which
might improve the schools.

3. School efforts to direct attention to the self-correcting guarantees in the documents and traditions of institutions seems to appeal as a law respecting approach to change, thus finding amenability among those who value order as well as among those who feel need for change.

4. Goal centering coupled with future centering has somewhat the same appeal as emphasis on self-correcting guarantees. Goal centering seems to offer the curriculum and allied aspects of schooling a sense of direction now recognized as missing, while the idea of goal choosing by attempted consensus appeals as a safeguard against "education-ist high-handedness." The idea of future centering seems to offer a way to make judgments about the effectiveness of means toward goals. The future as history seems to strike respondents as logical.

5. Use of more democratic methods by the school administration and teaching staff is widely considered appropriate and needed. Amenability toward this grew, as suspicion that democracy means lack of order diminished.

6. Many respondents feel cheated as they recall the mental exercise to which they were subjected in courses without rationale. They say bracketing units with considerations of causation and prediction could be a significant improvement, particularly in social studies, but also in other
subject areas.

7. Controversial issues and defensible partiality of teachers is found to be a complex concept. Amenability is high in the sense that most people admit such issues should be considered legitimate concerns of schools. Amenability is somewhat lessened as people consider the alleged lack of qualifications of the present school staff. Amenability toward each of the big three controversial topics (Politics, Religion, Sex) can be developed through careful methods such as those of this study. Defensible partiality of teachers is considered by respondents to be an improvement over ersatz impartiality, and amenability toward this concept can be developed.

8. The general amenability toward the concept of focus was higher toward its application to problems of the town as a whole than to the school, although no hostility toward its use in the activities of the school was shown by any respondents. The three from the school department saw no need for use of the concept at present but did not deny its potential.

9. Tractability can be developed toward the incorporation of the concept of acculturation in the high school. Conflict between the desire of the younger Finnish-Americans who want to drop the "Finnish" and the older generations who know there is something of value to be preserved, complicates
the development of amenability in this case, but also tends to make the concept vital.

10. Potential amenability toward a particular concept of adult education (a short term, adolescent-adult coordinated experiment, described in Chapter IV) is indicated by interest of respondents. A general, continuing adult education program is recognized by many respondents as needed, but they say people would not be amenable to it.

11. The idea of the use of crisis, especially that which has been purposely induced, to accomplish some school purpose elicited more responses indicating intractability than did any other Reconstructionist concept. However, there is enough amenability indicated to conclude that the concept should not be dismissed as of no value in Ashby.

A general conclusion about the above Reconstructionist concepts which may be useful is that specific proposals for the Ashby High School can be made which embody one or more of these concepts and, at the same time, avoid violent disservice to those enduring values identified early in the study. This study continues with an attempt to formulate a set of such proposals.
CHAPTER VIII

Some Proposals for Educational Reconstruction in Ashby

Introduction: No claim is made that the following proposals can be completely justified by evidence collected in this study. The claim is made, however, that information and understanding derived from this study can suggest to the alert mind proposals which would embrace one or more of the Reconstructionists concepts used in the study, and at the same time appeal to those values which appear to be the enduring characteristic values of the subculture. Since amenability toward the Reconstructionists concepts proposed for application to the public high school was estimated rather than amenability toward any particular kind of application, it must be pointed out that the proposals in this chapter go beyond the evidence. However, they are examples of the kinds of suggestions a superintendent of schools, or a principal, or any person familiar with the concepts in this study, and the concluding estimate of amenability toward them, might make for Ashby. Such a person might well meet with some or all of the respondents in this study and explain his proposal, how it is consistent with the values they agreed were characteristic of the town, and how some Reconstructionist concept toward which they were
in some degree amenable would be utilized in the proposal. They might then be encouraged to discuss the proposal among those groups of people from whom they were chosen. There is some tentative evidence that this is an effective approach: Discussion of various ideas in this study has continued among respondents and their associates since the completion of interviewing. The discussions have included some speculation about how the ideas could be implemented. Examples were suggested and some of these closely resemble the proposals made in this chapter. During this time it has come to light in public meetings and private conferences that the school department has taken initial steps and made tentative plans which are in effect implementations of Proposals 3, 4, 6, 9 and 10 in this chapter. Although these steps and plans were not undertaken until this study was being widely discussed in the town, it must be admitted that pure coincidence may possibly account for their activation at this time.

A final consideration by way of introduction to the proposals is that they are all intended to provide new freedoms in order to contribute to the over-all goal implied or explicitly stated by twenty-two respondents, namely, the development of the kind of citizen who will be both competent and responsible enough to make a contribution to the job of perfecting democracy as an instrument of human freedom. Freedom from some restricting difficulties is necessary. Therefore the proposals suggest freedom from
the real restrictions of lack of classroom space by obtaining more classroom space, from imagined restrictions of classroom space by more imaginative use of what space is available including the outdoors. Freedom from restrictions of an inflexible time schedule, from restrictions of a prescriptive curriculum, and from the divorce of theory and practice in democratic participation is also sought. Freedom from a traditional school year no longer supported by the practicalities out of which it grew, and freedom from the psychological constriction of the diminished view of the role and status of the teacher are desired. The main idea from which freedom is sought is the view that "this is our school situation and we're stuck with it." But freedom from restriction is only important if it becomes freedom to do something worth doing. It is hoped that these proposals can be seen as worth doing in terms of their potential for the improvement of instruction designed for the development of competent and contributing citizens in the task of reducing the gap between democracy as practiced and democracy as envisioned in American ideals.
Some Proposals for Administration:

Proposal 1. -- School Plant

Values: Frugality, Love of the Unspoiled Countryside, Local Autonomy

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Crisis

Since an expense is already imminent regarding the provision of more school housing, consider the purchase of the Lavigne property directly across Main Street from the Lyman Building. Consider the possible advantages of removing the guidance office and the health facilities into this building. Consider establishing Ashby headquarters here for the union superintendent and for other part time personnel. Consider locating the Special Class for mentally handicapped, a homemaking program, and an art program in this building. Consider possible use of rooms in this building for small classes which now make uneconomical use of full size classrooms. Small adult seminars of various kinds would be appropriate in these surroundings. Should this suggestion prove unfeasible, consider other adjacent property, like Uno's Garage, and the possible uses to which it could be put for improving the curriculum for freeing space in the present buildings.

Proposal 2. -- School Plant

Values: Local Autonomy
Consider action upon the plan suggested by opponents of the regional school idea. This plan was the development of a campus type school in Ashby. The idea was to formulate a priority list of curriculum needs, then plan a series of free standing special purpose buildings to meet these needs. The recommendations of the visiting committee of the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools might serve as a useful reference. (The School Department has a copy of these.) A lay committee with professional consultants, or even without them, could give insights to the School Committee and staff as to what the public sees as critical needs of the school. A priority listing of program needs would be easier to establish after an attempt at consensus on what the ultimate goal of the Ashby High School is. After such a listing is made, establish a building time table and start building. This proposal may reasonably be considered either separately from Proposal 1, or in combination with it.

Proposal 3. — Administration and Supervision

Values: Industriousness, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Self Correction Guarantees, Goal Centering — Future
Centering, Use of Democratic Methods, Causation and Prediction, Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality, Focus, Acculturation, Adult Education, Crisis

Consider arranging a series of professional meetings for the purpose of making teachers self conscious of the role thrust upon them by the school's central place in the culture. If the school is seen as the chief agent of cultural transmission, preservation, and change, which is apparently the case in Ashby, and if the people of Ashby hold the view that man can influence his culture (this seems to be the Ashby view), then the teacher needs to consider the applications of the various concepts in this study. Esprit de corps and renewed dedication could be early outcomes of this self consciousness. Encouragement should be given to those teachers proposing specific action on the concepts listed at the beginning of this proposal. Goal centering—Future centering can establish the ends toward which the other concepts are means. However, if the only outcome of these meetings is to get the teacher to see himself as the key person in the future of the subculture, the meetings will have been worthwhile.

Proposal 4. — Administration and Supervision

Values: Local Autonomy

Concept: Crisis, Goal Centering
Consider implementing the suggestion of opponents of the regional school idea that moneys which would have been committed to the building and operating of the regional school be used, instead, to enhance the recruitment of superior teachers. Consider the salary schedule now in effect as minimum, but allow the superintendent to offer greater amounts to get superior personnel. Some consensus upon what is the ultimate purpose of the school will be helpful in establishing criteria by which to decide who is a superior teacher.

Proposal 5. — Administration and Supervision

Values: Frugality, Industriousness, Local Autonomy
Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation

Consider the possibilities for improvement of instruction in the idea of the year-long school. One form that this might take is division of the year into four ten-week terms with three weeks between each term. The first week of each three week interim would be reserved for making up days lost for reasons of weather, holidays, etc., during the previous term. Large time blocks, which give the superior teacher the freedom to get better use out of field trips, demonstrations, group assignments, visiting resource persons, cooperative projects, and host of other good teaching approaches now inhibited by the clock and bell theory of scheduling, should be used. Such new scheduling could result in courses which
are only one or two terms in length rather than a year long, which means that a term lost for sickness or because some people could not reconcile themselves to summer attendance would not necessarily mean a full year's delay in the completion of diploma requirements. The terms falling in the summer months might be staffed by the best teachers from schools not in session.

This kind of school year allows for recesses at about the point of diminishing returns from study and school attendance, while eliminating the need for excessive and uneconomical review periods at the beginning of a school year.

All possible advantages of this or a similar plan should be sought and considered first. Excuses for dismissing the idea are readily available, although not valid without research.

Proposal 6. — Administration and Supervision
Values: Frugality, Industry, Local Autonomy
Concepts: Innovation, Use of Democratic Methods

Even if the present configuration of the school year is retained, use of larger time blocks should be considered and more flexibility in scheduling than is afforded by the forty or fifty minute period in a six or seven period day. Fewer subjects offered each term with more time allowed per subject allows for better continuity in the learning process, for more ingenuity on the part of teachers in the use of methods and choice of content, for development of human relationships
within the class group which good teachers can turn into quantitative and qualitative improvements in learning. Time, attention, and order, now lost every forty minutes or so at the sound of a bell, is conserved when larger time blocks are allowed. This is not a summary of advantages. There are many others.

Proposal 7. — Administration and Supervision
Values: Industriousness, Opportunity for Democratic Participation
Concepts: Self Correction Guarantees, Use of Democratic Methods, Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality

Consider arranging a series of professional meetings focused upon the problem of professional ethics. At least four phases of this problem should be considered:

a. Professional relationships between staff members.

b. Professional relationships between the staff and the public regarding what should be communicated and how.

c. Contract ethics including some definition of what constitutes honest effort by teachers, and what constitutes ethical practice in terminating contracts.

d. What attitudes toward the profession and toward
adolescents make remaining in the profession unethical?

School committee and other lay persons should participate in these meetings.

Some Proposals for Curriculum:

Proposal 8. -- Curriculum

Values: Frugality, Industriousness, Local Autonomy

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality

Consider establishing the Ashby High Summer School of Home and Fine Arts. Let offerings of this school be elective and allow credit toward graduation. Hire good people from good schools which are not in session during the summer. Let this program be superior in quantity and quality; fine Arts should include a variety instead of the minimum music and drawing; home Arts should include the usual cooking and sewing but should integrate these with personal adjustment, marriage, and family living considerations. Emphasis upon the responsibilities that accompany knowledge of the sexual side of human relationships might alleviate in large degree a matter which is of some concern in the town. Budgeting, religious considerations, and comparisons of various family arrangements from culture to culture can be important in making home arts worth while.
Even if music, art, and home economics are contemplated in improved curriculum plans of the present school department, offering them as suggested in this proposal could conceivably be superior to the usual offering. If so, costs of an Ashby High Summer School of Home and Fine Arts could be diminished by taking non-residents on tuition.

Proposal 9. — Curriculum

Values: Local Autonomy, Opportunity for Democratic Participation
Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Use of Democratic Methods, Causation and Prediction, Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality, Focus, Crisis

Consider adopting the policy that all social studies in the high school include, on appropriate levels of abstraction, a consideration of the processes of cultural change (acculturation, innovation, focus, crisis, causation and prediction); that all studies of any kind, but particularly the sciences and mathematics, give importance to the past, present, and future social consequences of the subject matter and the skills related to it. Identification of the overall goal for which the study of each subject is the means is essential. Let Ashby High be not concerned with the production of neutral technicians but with the production of socially conscious citizens whose technical competence
contributes to responsible citizenship.

Proposal 10. — Curriculum

Values: Local Autonomy, Neighborliness, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Self Correction Guarantees, Future Centering, Use of Democratic Methods, Adult Education

Consider seeking cooperation with all town departments, boards and commissions in the establishment of student internships in civic affairs. Let a high school student be assigned to each of the town departments, boards, and commissions for a term of, say, a half school year during which time he would attend all meetings of the group to which he was assigned and would participate in every way consistent with law and discretion. The school would provide ways for the interns to translate their on-the-job civic training into learning experiences for their classmates. Over a period of years such a program might develop a pool of Ashby High graduates with some experience in the work of the town. Then ballots might offer the voters a choice among qualified, high minded candidates for each office. Such a development would be evidence of superior civic education at Ashby High School.

Proposal 11. — Curriculum

Values: Frugality, Industriousness, Love of the Unspoiled
Countryside, Neighborliness, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Use of Democratic Methods

Consider the establishment of extensive use of field studies in the biological sciences using the natural laboratories which are plentiful around Ashby but largely unrecognized in this age of stress upon the physical sciences. The school's need for improved physical science facilities should not be forgotten, but Ashby does have many unused resources for good biological science teaching. Biological field studies can be enhanced by:

a. Scheduling them in large blocks of time on successive days.

b. Making them the core of a school camp experience, which would include other learnings such as democratic procedures, community living, cooperation, cultural relativity, human relations, problem solving, survival training, and hygiene all of which develop as incidentally necessary learnings while a group of adolescents live together for a week or two on a field study.

c. Providing a biological field study as a unit credit course offered in the summer and located wherever the study would profit most.
Biological field studies are suggested here because they and Ashby seem mutually advantageous. However, similar patterns in the teaching of other subject areas could improve instruction. This proposal includes the suggested consideration of such other applications.

Proposal 12. **Curriculum**

*Values: Local Autonomy, Neighborliness*

*Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Acculturation, Innovation, Controversial Issues and Defensible Partiality*

Consider purposeful use of the Finnish-American segment of the subculture for the improvement of instruction and curriculum content. For example, the Finnish language, if offered in the school would serve the same purposes allegedly served by the present offering and would have the advantage of serving in addition the growing realization that preservation of the treasures of previous cultures can enhance one's American citizenship. Of mutual educational benefit to the Finnish Americans and other Ashby people would be greater familiarity with the important Finnish contributions to music, art (particularly architecture), economic theory, and social and political thinking. In this connection, the Finnish-American population should be utilized by the school as another largely untapped resource for making the curriculum live.
Proposal 13. -- Curriculum

Values: Local Autonomy, Patriotism, Neighborliness, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Self Correction Guarantees, Goal Centering - Future Centering, Use of Democratic Methods, Focus, Adult Education

Consider sponsoring, as a first try in a yearly series, an adult seminar on goals of Ashby schools. The focus should be upon the apparent lack of direction in the activities of the school now, why the lack, and what might be a goal, accepted by consensus, toward which school activities could be directed. A particular aspect of this seminar, giving it added possibilities for concomitant values, is the suggestion that during the weeks that the adult seminar is meeting, similar subject matter is planned for discussion in classes in the high school. Cross-communication between adolescents and adults focusing upon the same problems is proposed. Ashby, despite other considerations, can be considered superior to other schools, however elaborate they may be, if it can accomplish the creation of a sense of direction shared by young and old.

Proposal 14. -- Curriculum

Values: Local Autonomy, Patriotism, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Self Correction Guarantees, Focus
Consider ways of including in the curriculum some focus upon the self correction guarantees, or lack of them, in the institutions with which or in which we live. Starting with the Constitution of the United States and those clauses specifying the procedures by which the supreme law of the land may be amended, examine all other institutions down to the local by-laws, church, club, and even (or maybe especially) student organizations to see what institutional self correcting provisions are available. Assuming that such provisions are explicitly or implicitly present, focus may then shift to ways of using those provisions. That change need not be lawless may be a concept which encourages the restless to respect orderly change.

Proposal 15. — Curriculum

Values: Patriotism, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Self Correction Guarantees, Goal Centering — Future Centering, Use of Democratic Methods

Consider a requirement that all students, sometime before graduation, serve with two or more of his classmates upon a committee project, the task of which would be to work out the committee's idea of a desirable future society and to determine what political, economic, technological, religious, and other changes would need to take place in order to achieve such a society.
Proposal 16. — Curriculum

Values: Patriotism, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Self Correction Guarantees, Goal Centering — Future Centering, Use of Democratic Methods

Consider establishing one hour per week, on a rotating schedule, for the discussion by students and teachers, regardless of their subject specialty, of a current issue determined in advance so that for that one hour all teachers and all students are discussing, within their separate classrooms, the same vital current issue.

Proposal 17. — Curriculum

Values: Patriotism, Opportunity for Democratic Participation

Concepts: Operational View of Culture, Innovation, Self Correction Guarantees, Goal Centering — Future Centering, Use of Democratic Methods

Consider a series of assembly programs utilizing controversial local citizens who would debate with their opposites, the subject which made them controversial. By the term local, the confines of Ashby plus the surrounding towns and cities is meant in this instance.
General Proposal

Values: Local Autonomy

Concepts: Focus

Consider making some part of the school better than its counterpart in any other school in the area. Such an effort might be found in the implementation of one or more of the proposals made in these pages. Whether it is or not, Ashby needs to supplement the hostile attitude of some people toward the school, and the defensive attitude of others, with an attitude of pride in at least some feature of the school. This attitude needs to be developed around some important feature of the school which will enable the pride to be shared by pupil and teacher, young and old, newcomer and those in long residence. Having one such superior school feature tends to uplift the rest of the school to some extent even if improved student morale is the only apparent explanation of such uplift.

Until such time as some wider consensus upon goals for Ashby High School is achieved than is suggested in this study, it is suggested that this general proposal as well as all other curriculum, administrative, and instructional efforts be guided by the goal of making competent and contributing citizens in the task of making democracy a better instrument of human freedom.
CHAPTER IX
Summary and Recommendations

In estimating the amenability of Ashby citizens to certain Reconstructionist concepts proposed for application to their public high school, this study apparently impressed the respondents as having been very comprehensive. All respondents had remarks at the final sessions which corresponded in meaning with that of the woman who said, "Good grief! If we had any more meetings I don't know what we could talk about. I've had to think about this town from more angles these past months than I did forty years altogether up to now." In spite of this, there were, no doubt, mistakes of omission and commission which will be apparent to the investigator after the passage of time for reflection and perhaps readily apparent to the critic who distrusts the unfamiliar approach used in this study. Nevertheless, a visualization of the subculture of Ashby and its amenability toward important aspects of a particular educational point of view has been created by the investigator and his respondents. Both did their best within the limitations of the study, and neither claims complete objectivity as an attribute of their contributions to the study, although they were as objective as possible considering human fallibility and the
nature of the material. The investigator then attempted to suggest initial steps that could be considered in changing the central institution of the subculture so that it might better implement the goal tentatively chosen from evidence in the study touching upon goals. These suggested steps appear as proposals which admittedly go beyond the evidence although related to it.

Limitations

It is apparent to the investigator that in the image of Ashby as a subculture which has been developed, the treatment of the Finnish-American ethnic group has been inadequate. Two of the respondents who are of Finnish extrac­tion pointed out that, in general, members of this ethnic group "prefer to avoid the spotlight." An assumption that this observation is accurate would explain, at least in part, the moderate estimate of the acculturative influence of this group which could be made in this study.

Educational reconstruction, according to the Reconstruc­tionist philosophy, should proceed toward an agreed upon goal which gives the various separate, practical acts of reconstruction a unifying theme. Yet, such a theme is not spelled out nor clearly demonstrated by the proposals for reconstruction offered in the previous chapter. The reason for this is that the experience of the investigator in Ashby
has convinced him that the best hope for the success of educational reconstruction in this subculture is through a plan whose goals and unifying theme for action have been worked out by the people. In other words, no finalized, detailed plan, no matter how logical, can be offered by an educator, or anyone else, without running a very high risk of complete rejection. This is why, in the introduction to the proposals and in the selection of the proposals themselves, an attempted compromise was made. A goal was tentatively suggested but the proposals offered only starting points for the consideration and discussion, by the populace, of needed change and the development of a theme by which to structure that change. Also, in listing Reconstructionist concepts and local values with each proposal without comment, instead of explaining why they relate to the proposal, the investigator invites the Ashby reader to decide why they do relate rather than dwell on real or imagined weaknesses in the investigator's reasoning.

A third limitation may be seen in the possible contention by a critic that focus upon local values may be too parochial as a basis for educational reconstruction such as, for example, curriculum change. Such focus, however, may be a necessarily calculated risk. It may be that just as the individual is not ready or able to give the optimum response
to wider values before he has developed a respectable self-image, some communities must be satisfied that local felt needs and enduring values are being given appropriate attention and respect before they can become concerned with wider interests. It is the experience and observation of the investigator that Ashby is such a community.

Possible Next Steps

It would be very helpful in the evaluation of the accuracy and value of this study if another investigator or team of investigators would make a study of the subculture of Ashby avoiding what they might consider weaknesses of the methodology and interpretation of this attempt and improving upon the strengths. This is recommended particularly since there is no other study of Ashby with which to compare this one.

Such further investigation, besides whatever other results it might have, would serve to continue to focus a spotlight upon the institutions of Ashby, particularly its schools. Sometimes needed action is stimulated by such a focus.

Continued focus upon Ashby would also be provided if candidates for the degree of Master of Education at nearby Fitchburg State College should choose to do theses on various problems suggested to them by a reading of this study.
An example, with obvious implications for education, would be a study of child rearing in the town -- a sort of "Coming of Age in Ashby" -- which could use the findings of this dissertation as a resource.

Another next step is contemplated: Compliance with the requests of the Selectmen and of many citizens that the conclusions and proposals of the study be reproduced in volume for distribution to town and school officials and to interested citizens.

The Fitchburg Sentinel, The Worcester Telegram, and several Boston newspapers reach Ashby as does The Raivajah, a Finnish language newspaper. It is possible that one of these would be interested in a series of features on Ashby based on this study.

Further next steps may be better calculated after the results of one or more of those steps already suggested are seen. The investigator's recommendation is that these previously mentioned next steps be considered a sufficient beginning.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Allport, Gordon W., Becoming, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955

Benedict, Ruth, Patterns of Culture, New American Library, New York, 1934

Bideeney, David, Thoreutical Anthropology, Columbia University Press, New York, 1953


Chase, Francis S. and Harold A. Anderson (Eds.), The High School in a New Era, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957

Dollard, John, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, Doubleday Anchor, Garden City, 1957


Friedenburg, Edgar G., The Vanishing Adolescent, Beacon Press, Boston, 1959


Kroeber, Alfred L. (Ed.), *Anthropology Today*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953


Lowie, Robert H., *An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, Rinehart, New York, 1940


Mead, Margaret, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, New American Library, New York, 1953


Mead, Margaret, and Rhoda Metraux, *The Study of Culture at a Distance*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1949


Morris, Charles, *Varieties of Human Values*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1956


Spindler, George (Ed.), *Education and Anthropology*, Stanford University, Stanford, 1955


Tax, Sol (Ed.), *An Appraisal of Anthropology Today*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953


Wissler, Clark, *Men and Culture*, Crowell, New York, 1923

**Miscellaneous Other Readings**

Brameld, Theodore (Ed.) *The Battle for Free Schools*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1951 (Pamphlet)

Murdock, George Peter; "The Science of Human Learning, Society, Culture, and Personality"  
*Scientific Monthly* 39:378, December 1949

Ashby Historical Society, Collection of letters, record books, logs, scrapbooks, news clippings, brochures, Ashby Public Library, Ashby, Massachusetts
APPENDIX
APPENDIX 1

Some Facts about Ashby from the 1960 Town Report

Incorporation Date – March 5, 1767

Town Government – Elected

Moderator
Town Clerk
Selectmen (3 members)
Assessors (3 members)
Department of Public Welfare (3 members)
Town Treasurer
Tax Collector
School Committee (5 members)
Trustees of Public Library (9 members)
Constable
Tree Warden
Board of Health (4 members)
Park Commissioners (3 members)
Surveyors of Wood, Bark and Lumber (5 members)
Fence Viewers and Field Drivers (Selectmen)
Cemetery Commissioners (3 members)
Planning Board (5 members)

Town Government – Appointed

Town Accountant
Town Counsel
Police Chief
   Sergeant
   2 Officers
Registrars of Voters (4 members)
Public Weighers (3 members)
Director of Extension Service
Sealer of Weights and Measures
Fire Chief
Forest Fire Warden
Moth Superintendent
Road Superintendent
Dog Officer
Civilian Defense Auxiliary Police (9 members)
Veterans Agent
Agent for Veterans' Graves
Burial Agent
Superintendent of Schools
School Physician
Finance Committee (6 members)
Welfare Worker
School Nurse
Health Agent
Inspector of Health
Inspector of Animals
Inspector of Slaughtering
APPENDIX 2


Institutions, Services, and Activities of Ashby:

Churches - Congregational and Unitarian
Ashby Public Library
Ashby Museum (private)
Well-Child Clinic
Board of Health
Recreation - Damon Pond and Allen Field
Maja Hall (private)
Forest Park (Commercial Dine and Dance)

Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Brownies
4-H Club
Youth Fellowship

Educational Status of Adults

Elementary or Less 15.4
Elementary but Less Than High School 34.0
High School Graduates 28.1
High School but Less Than 4 Year College 13.0
College Graduates 4.8
Graduate Study 4.3
Undeclared .4

100%
Population - 1700
School Population - 170 (Secondary School)

Some Facts about Schools and School Age Children
Size of Graduating Class 1952 - 13, 1957 - 23
Modal Intelligence, Grades 7-12, 92, 108
Holding Power of High School - Dropout rate about 12% but increasing

Aspirations regarding further schooling ---
   Undetermined further schooling - 36%
   Four year college - 4%
   Various kinds of further schooling - 16%

Aspirations of those not continuing school ---
   Management, Professions, Technical - 12%
   Clerical and Sales - 11%
   Agriculture, Marine, Forestry - 10%
   Mechanical - 4%
   Undecided - 7%

56%
APPENDIX 3

A. Respondents and Their Affiliations

B. Total Interviewing Time

The group, or the position held, which accounts for the respondent's participation in the study is listed first after his name. The years of residence of the respondent is listed last. Since, in some instances there are more positions listed than can be held at any one time, an asterisk indicates that this position is currently being held by the respondent.

Anzulot, Mrs. T. A.; At large, Grange, Parent Teachers Association, Congregational Church, 50 yrs.

Bernhardt, Mrs. Paul W.; Board of Health*, American Legion Auxiliary, 8 yrs.

Brideau, Carole; Ashby High School Student, Student Council, 12 yrs.

Bullis, Mr. Jerome Q.; Superintendent of Schools, --

Crouse, Mr. Phillip; Teachers Association, Vice Principal, Parent Teachers Association, --

Chandler, Rev. Grant; Congregational Minister, American Legion Chaplain, 2½ yrs.
Graves, Mr. Richard; American Legion, Fire Department
Assessors, Boy Scouts, Grange,
Masons, 14 yrs.

Gooley, Mrs. Franklin L.; President Women's Union, Parent
Teachers Association, Girl
Scouts, Heart Ass'n., 8 yrs.

Hargraves, Mrs. Gordon C.; Women's Club, Congregational
Church, Parent Teachers
Association 20 yrs.

Hayes, Mr. Luther; Retired Person, Masons, Grange,
Moderator, School Committee, Board
of Health, Cemetery Commission 36 yrs.

Hill, Dennis; Ashby High School Student, Chairman Jr.
Red Cross, 14 yrs.

Horan, Mrs. Albert F.; Cub Scouts Den Mother, American
Legion Auxiliary, 9 yrs.

Ingerson, Mr. Franklin; Police Sergeant, Grange, Fire
Department, Assessors, Elementary
School Building Committee, 45 yrs.

Koehler, Dr. Everett; Commuting Professional person,
Republican Committee, Parent
Teachers Association, 15 yrs.

Mason, Mr. Elmer; Unitarian Church, Grange, Assessors,
Welfare Board, 65 yrs.
Mossman, Mrs. John; Influential family, Nemows, Parent Teachers Association, Hot Lunch Manager, 20 yrs.
Pernan, Mr. Waino; Ashby High School Principal, Moderator*, Grange, Assessors, Selectmen, Library Trustees, 42 yrs.
Russell, Mr. Ralph; Selectmen and Finnish Farmers, American Legion, Masons, Ashby Coop Social Club, 14 yrs.
Sears, Mrs. Louis A.; Congregational Church, Parent Teachers Association, 4-H, 28 yrs.
Seppala, Mrs. and Mrs. Martin; School Committee*, 12 yrs.
Sibley, Mr. Richard; Commuting Businessman, School Committee, 10 yrs.
Thatcher, Mrs. Mark; Librarian, Nemows, Congregational Church, 21 yrs.
Vachon, Mrs. Alfred; American Legion Auxiliary, Girl Scouts, Catholic Women's Club, 10 yrs.
Wilson, Mrs. Robert; Housewife, Congregational Church Committee, 5 yrs.
Woodruff, Mr. Richard W.; Parent Teachers Association, Planning Board, Masons, Grange, Congregational Church, 31 yrs.
Woodruff, Mrs. Walter A.; At Large, Superintendent Congregational Sunday School, Parent Teachers Association 31 yrs.

Total Interview Time with Respondents - 271 hours.
Appendix IV

A Sampling from the Interviewing

The following sampling from interviewing illustrates how discussion, in order to test out the effectiveness of communication between respondent and investigator, fluctuated from one abstraction level to another. In some cases, once an apparently effective level was established with a particular respondent, there was little need to switch from level to level. In this example, however, it can be seen that problems of teaching democracy are discussed first quite generally, then with reference to specific activities by title (student council, class meetings), then by specific examples of decisions and duties (prom committee selection, etc.), then back to more general remarks regarding the product of Ashby High. Then, in the succeeding session, discussion came out of deliberate use of a specific incident which was known to both respondent and investigator. From this incident, they rose to a higher level of abstraction and, finally, a door was opened to discussion of specific proposals in a future session. This sample exchange is offered only as a starting point for prospective adapters of the method. It is not necessarily typical.

A. From Session 5.

After usual amenities and review of past sessions, the following exchange occurred.
Investigator: "In past sessions we have discussed, in connection with various aspects of this study, the place of the public school in a democracy. Do you think the schools can teach democracy effectively without providing good examples of how the staff practices democracy and without giving the kids a part in decision making?"

Respondent: "The teacher who tries to operate with each class member having a vote on what takes place in class ought to be fired. You can teach about democracy without practicing it."

Investigator: "Do you mean without the pupils getting a chance to practice it or without teachers and administration practicing it?"

Respondent: "Both. After all, school is a state of suspended animation. It's not real. You're in school only a few hours a day for a few years of your life. You learn all you can. You need efficiency, not democracy. You practice what you learn about democracy after you're out of school. To a certain degree, this goes for the administrator-teacher relation also."

Investigator: "What about student council work, class meetings, and so forth? Are they worthwhile? Would you eliminate them?"

Respondent: "Oh, no. Keep them at a minimum and outside the academic day. But keep them. I will agree the students need practice in parliamentary procedure--the forms of democratic operation."
Investigator: "In these activities, should the decisions made be on important matters?"

Respondent: "Well, they're usually important to the children. But anything affecting the school as a whole has to be approved by the principal or some other authority."

Investigator: "What do you think is a typical student council problem? What do they deliberate upon?"

Respondent: "Oh, choosing prom committees, deciding who should go to state council affairs, and I think the council raises money for assemblies and sports uniforms, and so forth."

Investigator: "You know, you've listed some of the things I sometimes try to work into a question about student government. Now, do you think these things are realistic preparation for democracy? You can probably sense from my question that I have my doubts, but don't let that bother you, as I know you won't."

Respondent: "I think they're O.K. for practice in parliamentary procedure. As for dealing with more serious problems, I don't think they need to do this. I think these little things they consider kid stuff is about as far as the school can let them go. And raising money for their own affairs is good training."

Investigator: "Does this mean that the schools, as you know them, practice as much democracy as they ought to?"
Respondent: "More than enough."

Investigator: "Is the product of the Ashby Schools an effective democratic citizen?"

Respondent: "Some of the most responsible citizens are Ashby High School grads, but I must admit that there is considerable improvement that could be made in the numbers of these. The percentage, I mean, that actively work at the town's business."

Investigator: "As you've probably guessed we have only skimmed the surface of this subject. How do you feel about expanding on your last statement?"

Respondent: "Well, I don't know how I'd expand on what I've said, but I'll think about it. Let's go to something else for a while."

B. From Session 6.

After usual amenities but before the review of the last session, the following exchange was recorded.

Investigator: "Did you hear about the trouble at the cafeteria yesterday?" (This was an uproar of yelling, table pounding, drumming with silverware, etc., with which pupils were said to have greeted a new ruling on cafeteria procedure.)

Respondent: "Yes, and I think it was disgraceful and the administration brought it on themselves. The kids were in the wrong but, just the same, they had provocation."

Investigator: "How?"

Respondent: "Well, the rule, which is inconvenient even if necessary, was just put into effect without any explanation
or any substitute actions to consider. Teachers had no chance to comment on it or consider how it would work out."

Investigator: "Are you saying there was a more democratic way of handling this situation?"

Respondent: "Well, I wouldn't adopt or reject a rule just because a majority of students voted to do it, but I think they could have been given credit for having enough sense to consider an explanation of the problem so that when a rule is decided on they'd know why. This is only recognizing them as a group of individuals with individual powers of reasoning and thinking. We don't want the children running the school, but we don't want them sheep, either."

Investigator: "As you've no doubt already sensed, I'm getting around to the point of asking whether there aren't some ways, short of deciding important things by majority vote, that students can participate democratically in matters concerning them. And......."

Respondent: "Yes, I knew I was being a little self contradictory. Sure, organized controlled ways of making the democratic way more real would be valuable in schools. The trouble is, it seems that democracy is used as an excuse by teachers for their own lack of control and for the chaos, wasted time, and so forth, that we see in school today."
Investigator: "When you refer to schools, do you imply some knowledge of schools in general or do you mean Ashby High?"

Respondent: "Ashby High. I've talked to several people since our last session, and they have the same fears I do about attempts to operate democratically. It seems to result in too much disorder. Yet, we know there have to be ways found to make children want to be responsible citizens. Maybe the staff, in fact maybe all of us, need to know more about democracy—how it works when it's working right. I suppose this is true of other schools, too."

Investigator: "Is it fair to summarize by saying that you, and most people you talk with, have doubts about the effectiveness of present ways that schools give students a chance to practice democracy, but that you recognize the need for such practice and would like to have the school find some better forms of democratic practice?"

Respondent: "I think so."

Investigator: "Would it be imposing too much on your time and patience to ask you and your friends to try to think up some suggestions for the schools which would allow for meaningful democratic practice without disorder? Then we can discuss them next time."

Respondent: "What do you mean by 'meaningful'?"

Investigator: "A lapse into pedagogy. I mean chances for students to participate in deliberations and perhaps in decisions on things that really make a difference to
the school—as opposed to selecting prom committees as you suggested for an example, and for students to observe that teachers have a real say in the operation of the school, too, rather than being just hired hands."

Respondent: "We'll do our best, but remember, we're amateurs."

Investigator: "Wonderful. Now, if you're not completely brain-washed, let's switch to another topic............"