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THE CONTEXT OF FREEDOM

ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT exist in a vacuum. Thus to understand the internal dynamics of Ethnic High and Group High, we must first examine the social context within which they operated. The most important factor shaping Berkeley's free schools was the political and cultural ferment of the 1960s and early 1970s, but this chapter will focus on the more immediate context of political actors, institutional interests, and community atmosphere that brought the schools into being and formed their environment. Throughout this chapter I shall be concerned to show how two schools as free and open as Group High and Ethnic High came to exist within a public school system, and how their status as public schools, receiving supplemental funding from private foundations and federal agencies, shaped their organizational concerns. But it is essential to keep in mind the special historical moment at which Group High and Ethnic High came into being. Without the 1960s' peculiar constellation of the student movement, the counterculture, and a multitude of antiauthoritarian social experiments, schools like Group High and Ethnic High would have been impossible, particularly within a public school system.

Group High and Ethnic High were not typical alternative schools. As Allen Graubard (1972) points out, most alternative schools are small (thirty to forty students), relatively few are public schools, and most are oriented either toward the liberal upper-middle class or toward ghetto children who have been cast aside by the public schools. Nevertheless, the history of Berkeley's alternative schools captures very well the sometimes contradictory combination of social forces behind recent attempts at educational innovation.

The history of Berkeley's experimental schools displays clearly the sources of the contemporary free school movement: the frustrations of

largely white, liberal middle-class students and teachers with the restrictiveness of traditional schooling; demands by minority parents and students for education suited to the needs of minority children; the impact of the student movement within universities and a "professional revolt" by some young teachers; fears within traditional schools of a breakdown of order and the desire to be rid of students regarded as ungovernable or uneducable; and, finally, interest on the part of foundations and the federal government in supporting attempts at educational innovation. If we look at the descriptions of the founding of alternative schools provided by Graubard (1972) and at Charles Silberman's reprise (1970) of the themes and sources of educational reform, we see the same elements: concern about the failure of traditional schools to educate the disadvantaged, a liberal educational ideology supported by academic intellectuals, spinoffs of the political activism of the 1960s, and an intensified concern with educational reform in the educated upper-middle class. These same factors were at work in Berkeley, but Berkeley was unique in that they all operated in one community, and that for a period the forces of reform, usually an isolated minority, were strong enough to dominate educational dialogue in an entire city and to build alternative schools within the framework of a public school system.

Berkeley and Its Schools

Berkeley takes its schools seriously. In 1970-71 the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) spent 25.2 million dollars to educate fifteen thousand students, the highest level of per pupil expenditure of any school district in California (Cohen, 1975:1). Berkeley's school politics during the late 1960s and early 1970s were shaped by this active concern with educational issues among two major constituencies: the educated, liberal community directly or indirectly affiliated with the University of California and a large, politically active minority community.[1]

The university is the dominant economic and social force in the Berkeley community. In 1970 one-third of Berkeley's employed residents worked directly for the university, and many others worked for research and consulting firms clustered nearby. Berkeley has a very large upper-middle class of professional and technical workers, and a relatively small blue-collar work force (see table). With a median educational level nearly two years higher than that of the rest of California (in 1970 it was 14.3 years, while for all of California it was 12.4 years [U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973:2-5; 630-633]), Berkeley is, in many ways, a community of the educational elite. As parents and community leaders, these educated professionals had a major impact on the development of alternative schools in Berkeley.

The other major factor in Berkeley's school politics has been a large, or-

1. This section and the next rely heavily on Dennis Cohen's dissertation, "School Bureaucracy and the Promise of Reform in Berkeley" (1978).

Table. Labor force characteristics of Berkeley and San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area, 1970 (percentages for employed population sixteen years old and over).

	Professional, technical, and kindred	Managers and administrators	Sales workers	Clerical and kindred	Craftsmen, Foremen, and kindred	Operatives and nonfarm laborers	Farm and service, including private household	Total
San Francisco-Oakland metropolitain area	18.2	9.4	8.2	23.0	12.3	15.5	13.3	99.9 (1,267,643)
Berkeley	36.6	6.4	5.3	22.1	5.9	10.9	12.8	100.0 (50,562)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population and Housing: 1970*, census tracts, final report PHC (1)-189 San Francisco-Oakland, Ca. SMSA (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 304.

ganized, vocal minority community. Until the Second World War, Berkeley was a largely white university town. During and after the war, the city's economy expanded, and along with that expansion went a substantial growth in the minority population. In 1940 Berkeley had a population of 86,000 and was 94 percent white, while in 1970 its population of 117,000 was 32 percent black, Chicano, Asian, and other minorities (Cohen, 1978: 19). The public school population was 13 percent black in 1950, 37 percent black by 1960, and 45 percent black in 1970, with white students a minority in Berkeley's schools (Scientific Analysis Corporation, 1973:11).

In 1963-64 Berkeley underwent an intense political battle over desegregation. When the smoke cleared, the liberals had won, and the terms of educational debate and the school constituencies had been profoundly changed (Sibley, 1972). Berkeley's secondary schools were fully desegregated in 1964-65, and in 1968 Berkeley desegregated its elementary schools with a comprehensive two-way cross-town busing program. Thus Berkeley became the first major American city to achieve full school desegregation (Cohen, 1978:28-32).

The battle to desegregate Berkeley's schools left three important legacies which were to shape Berkeley's response to the free school movement. First, Berkeley's school public was politicized. An active, informed public attended school board meetings, and the school board was accustomed to responding to direct and forceful pressure from its constituents (Sibley, 1972; Cohen, 1978). Thus during the early period of alternative schools in Berkeley, schools were founded when community groups came before the board with demands for a new school or program or with complaints about existing programs. Berkeley's residents expected to be heard, and the atmosphere of political responsiveness made the creation of publicly funded alternative schools possible.

The second legacy of the battle over desegregation was a commitment to minority education. The desegregation battle was won by a coalition of minorities (largely blacks) and white liberals. Throughout the following period, the school board was continually pressured to meet the educational needs of minority students—to try to close the large gap in skills and academic achievement between black and white students. Hence the Berkeley schools, under pressure from the black community, began to hire minority staff and to create special programs, such as black studies, that would respond more directly to the needs of minority students. The pressure for autonomous minority schools and for an educational environment responsive to the special needs of minority students was, as we shall see, a prime ingredient of the special mix of forces shaping Berkeley's experimental schools.

The third result of this period of ferment in Berkeley's schools was a climate receptive to educational innovation. Because of its early commitment to integration, Berkeley acquired national visibility. It attracted highly

qualified, innovative school administrators oriented, at least in part, to a national audience. These administrators broadened the school district's financial base by attracting outside funding from foundations and the federal government. In the Berkeley schools, educational innovation was considered a good thing, and in the turbulent 1960s the BUSD, with solid community support and a history of active response to minority interests, was an ideal magnet for federal and foundation funding.

Early Alternatives

The history of alternative education in Berkeley divides into two periods —before and after federal funding of the Berkeley Experimental Schools Project in July 1971. Between 1967 and 1971, Berkeley had established ten experimental schools in response to local pressures from teachers, students, parents, and community groups. The federal grant from the Office of Education created fourteen additional schools (only thirteen of which actually opened) and gave the district almost seven million dollars to spend on five years of alternative education.

The confluence of the diverse ideas and interests shaping Berkeley's experimental schools may be seen by examining the history of some early experimental schools established within the BUSD. The first of these experiments was the transformation, beginning in 1967, of Berkeley's continuation high school, McKinley, from a dumping ground for school rebels and failures into an innovative educational environment. Students were given careful personal attention in an atmosphere of respect and support, and the curriculum was transformed to emphasize racial and ethnic identity alongside basic skills. This freer, more intimate, more egalitarian school then began to attract alienated white students who purposely sought expulsion from Berkeley High so that they could attend McKinley (Cohen, 1978: 36).

The second alternative school, Community High School, was not opened until the spring of 1969, but it began in the summer of 1967 as a summer project developed by two young teachers from Berkeley High and a group of teachers from an educational internship program at the University of California. The Berkeley Summer Project emphasized self-exploration, openness, and the artistic and emotional aspects of education. It experimented with flexible scheduling and encouraged student autonomy and self-direction (Sibley, 1972). This program was extraordinarily successful in creating student and staff enthusiasm, but a proposal to implement a similar subschool during the regular academic year met with resistance from more traditional teachers and administrators. However, after two years of planning by interested teachers and students, the school board approved the creation of Community High School, which opened in the spring of 1969. Community High's commitment to student participation and self-direction and its emphasis on creativity and emotional exploration was so popular

that Community High was vastly oversubscribed by middle-class white students. These students and their parents immediately began pressuring the board to create a second alternative school within the regular high school, and in the spring of 1971 Community High II was founded.

A third school, Other Ways, opened in 1968 as an after-school teacher-training center, founded by Herbert Kohl and financed by the Carnegie Foundation. This center, located in an off-campus storefront, began to attract students as well as teachers, and in the fall of 1969 it was made a regular alternative high school accredited through Berkeley High, offering an open, unstructured educational environment. Although the school itself was small, Herb Kohl's influence, along with that of other school critics, was substantial during the period when Berkeley's alternative schools were founded.

The fourth major innovation was Black House, a school created by Buddy Jackson, a black consultant hired by Community High. Jackson argued that black students needed a separate school that would reflect their own identity while avoiding the problems these students had had with the loose, unstructured, countercultural style of Community High. Although the idea of a such a separate school met with resistance in a city committed to integration, the superintendent and the board were finally convinced that alternatives oriented to the special interests of ethnic and racial minorities might, at least temporarily, be the most effective way of serving minority students (Cohen, 1978:42-43). Black House, during its first year, 1970-71, created a curriculum geared entirely to the needs and interests of black students, teaching subjects from legal rights to "Black Survival Skills." Yet the school insisted on greater discipline and a more stringent learning environment than Community High had been willing to offer. In fact, "Black Survival Skills" turned out to mean the ability to read and write, as well as knowledge of law, community organization, and black culture (Sibley, 1972:145-147). Tension between the interest of minority students and staff in an ethnically relevant education—one that included a structured teaching environment for learning basic skills—and the desire of white middle-class students for emotional exploration in an unstructured educational environment, was to be one of the continuing themes shaping the history of alternative education in Berkeley (see Baum, 1974) and in the free school movement as a whole (Graubard, 1972; Kozol, 1972).

A final source of pressure for the creation of alternative schools in Berkeley was a report made in the spring of 1968 by a student-teacher committee on racial tensions and violence in the high school. The committee, headed by a former president of the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, Jeff Tudisco, produced a report arguing that violence in the schools was a result of widespread student dissatisfaction with the content of the curriculum, the impersonality and rigidity of the schools, and lack of student participation in the educational system. It recommended a number of innovations to make

schools more responsive to students; among them was a model school which could experiment with educational innovations to be applied ultimately to the main campus of Berkeley High School (Sibley, 1972:134; Cohen, 1978:37-39).

The immediate effect of the Tudisco Report was to legitimate the creation of Other Ways and, later, Community High School, and to sensitize the school board to the strength of student discontent. Beyond this, it identified the villains in Berkeley's secondary schools as largeness and impersonality. Dramatic changes were needed if conditions in the high school were not to degenerate into chaos and violence. A new principal, appointed in 1969, was given a mandate to "change the huge comprehensive school into a more manageable and friendly place" (Sibley, 1972:141). The principal then appointed a decentralization committee composed of students, teachers, parents, and administrators to plan for a model school to be set up within Berkeley High. The direct result of the committee's report was a proposal for a "school-within-a-school," which began operations in February 1971.

Model A, as the school was called, was conceived to be a model that could be repeated again and again; decentralization into numerous smaller, more personal schools, would ultimately provide the solution to the problems of Berkeley High. Although Model A was only a limited success (Community High School and Community High II argued that Model A was too much like a smaller version of Berkeley High), it demonstrated that the creation of smaller alternative or experimental schools had become a legitimate way of coping with difficulties or demands within the BUSD. During the same period, decentralization and humanization were coming to be seen as the answers to the crisis of American public education by some progressive members of the educational establishment in Washington and in private foundations (see Fantini, 1970; NEA, 1971; Graubard, 1972).

By the 1970-71 academic year, Berkeley had ten alternative schools or experimental programs in operation, seven at the secondary level and three for elementary students. These alternative schools had developed in diverse ways—some in direct response to community pressure, some initiated by staff and students, others founded by groups of parents, and still others prompted by the district's fears about the breakdown of order within its schools. However, two main outlines of change can be discerned. First, there were pressures from black and later from Chicano and Asian minority communities for ethnically relevant education and for special attention to basic skills. Second, there were pressures from white, liberal students, teachers, and parents for open, responsive education that met student needs for autonomy, self-direction, and personal growth. Alternative schools—small schools or special programs set up either within existing schools or as independent "off-site" programs—were an ideal way for the school district to respond to the conflicting needs of white and black parents while preserving the coalition of liberal whites and blacks that had fought for and won an integrated school system in Berkeley. Different groups, with differing needs and interests, could each have schools of their own to satisfy special requirements. In addition, smaller, more intimate units might cure the problems of alienation and violence created by the size and impersonality of Berkeley High.

Federal Funding

The U.S. Office of Education, Experimental Schools Program (OE/ESP) first announced a national competition for substantial grants for experimental schools in January 1971. Because of Berkeley's reputation for innovation, the head of OE/ESP telephoned Berkeley's superintendent directly to suggest that Berkeley apply (Cohen, 1978:52). This federal initiative was not Berkeley's first experience with obtaining outside funding for its schools. In the period 1961-1971, before the experimental schools were federally funded, the BUSD had received a total of almost nine million dollars in outside funding for special projects. Berkeley schools had an office of project development to provide expertise in grant writing and project development (Sibley, 1972). Particularly under the leadership of Dr. Richard Foster, appointed superintendent of Berkeley's schools in 1969, the city learned to make a profitable business out of being a national showplace for educational innovation. In 1969-70, when Other Ways became a public alternative school, it was in part supported by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. For 1970-71 Foster negotiated a large Ford Foundation grant, called "Options Through Participation," which gave some two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in supplemental funding to several alternative schools (Cohen, 1978:42).

Berkeley, both because of Foster's national connections and because of the steps it had already taken, was well situated to propose itself as the site for the sort of educational experiment OE/ESP had in mind. The intention of OE/ESP was to fund educational innovations on a large scale so that the relative effectiveness of various new practices could be documented and evaluated. Rather than strict educational experiments designed in Washington, these were to be exploratory attempts to discover effective new combinations of educational practices while evaluating the various strategies as the projects went along (Cohen, 1978:52-53).

The specific criteria for the program (OE/ESP, *Basic Program Information*, cited in Cohen, 1978:58) seemed almost tailored to fit the Berkeley schools: "demonstrated experience with educational innovations on a large scale," "development of a plan for broad participation in the design, implementation and governance of a project," and a target population of two thousand to five thousand children (while Berkeley had already enrolled almost two thousand students in its alternative schools). After Berkeley had been selected from among almost five hundred school districts submitting letters of interest as one of eight districts to receive sixty-day planning

grants, its superintendent decided to develop a proposal on a scale larger than that of Berkeley's existing alternatives (Cohen, 1978:60-63). He requested proposals for experimental schools and programs from teachers, administrators, parents, and community groups. Out of fifty-five proposed alternatives, the district selected twenty-three, including the ten existing experimental schools and programs.[2] A twenty-fourth school, Casa de la Raza, was added by the school board in response to pressure from the Chicano community. After negotiations with the Office of Education, and substitution of two new schools for two in the original proposal, all ten of Berkeley's original alternatives and fifteen new ones were funded by a grant of 3.4 million dollars for thirty months beginning July 1, 1971, renewable for a second thirty months (Cohen, 1978:67-72).

The grant from the Office of Education (later transferred to the National Institute of Education, Experimental Schools Program) committed the district to maintain the alternative schools it already had and to open fifteen (eventually fourteen) additional schools. The federal government was to fund the schools at two hundred dollars per student per year, while the school district was to continue to provide space, qualified staff, and equipment to the schools on the basis of their enrollments. The federal grant also created an administrative umbrella, the Berkeley Experimental Schools Project (BESP) within the BUSD, which was to care for the special needs of the experimental schools. It was within this context that the two schools I studied operated. As parts of a national educational experiment, they had more money and greater security than most free schools; and to a significant extent, as we shall see, they were also shielded from the bureaucratic pressures that might have been concomitants of their privileged situation.

Group High and Ethnic High

Group High and Ethnic High were among the original group of alternative schools in Berkeley. Both were subschools within Berkeley High School, serving grades ten through twelve, and located in separate wings of the school. Although each school had its own director, as "on-site" alternatives Group High and Ethnic High operated in theory under the authority of the principal and administration of Berkeley High. As we shall see, these limitations were considerably modified in practice.

Because the differences between Group High and Ethnic High in size, budget, staff, students, and curricula were important determinants of the ways the two schools responded to the freedom their external environment made possible, it is important to consider what internal resources the schools had at their disposal.

2. For a fuller description of the political battle to protect the interests of Berkeley's original "indigenous" alternatives within the final proposal to OE/ESP see Dennis A. Cohen (1978:63-66).

When I studied Group High, it was not federally funded but received from a foundation grant a supplemental budget of two hundred dollars per pupil per year above and beyond the staff, space, and supplies provided by the district. This budgetary arrangement was nearly identical to that provided for Ethnic High two years later under the OE/ESP grant. There were, however, important differences in the way the two schools spent their money, and these differences had important implications for school morale.

Group High, with more than two hundred students, was considerably larger than Ethnic High, which began the year with about a hundred students and—when a large group graduated in January—was left with less than seventy students during the second semester. Although both schools were funded and provided with staff at the same per pupil rate, Group High's size allowed it to rely primarily on the seven regular staff provided by the district, whereas Ethnic High decided that to provide an adequate diversity of courses for its students, it needed to spend most of its supplemental budget on hiring part-time teachers, called consultants, to add to its regular staff.

Group High, in addition to its seven regular teachers, hired three consultants (two of whom were employed full time) and a secretary. It also recruited a group of sixteen student teachers from a nearby university and attracted a number of volunteer teachers. By bending formal school district rules to allow both volunteers and student teachers to teach their own classes, Group High was able to maintain an excellent teacher-student ratio, and to provide its students with a great diversity of course offerings, without straining its budget. Its core teaching staff was made up of experienced teachers with a strong commitment to the ideals of open education, and even the student teachers, each of whom taught only a course or two, devoted a great deal of time and energy to the school.

Ethnic High, on the other hand, found its budget almost entirely committed to salary expenditures for teaching personnel. It employed ten consultants (nine part-time) to supplement its three regular teachers, and in addition it attracted one full-time and three or four part-time volunteers. Money worries pressed hard on Ethnic High. During my year there, its enrollment was down from the year before and it had lost both budget and staff allocation. With a reduced budget, Ethnic High had to make do with part-time secretarial help, so that the office, which was a central gathering place, was sometimes locked because there was no one to watch it. The theft of a roll of stamps created a small crisis in the school (see chapter 3). The part-time, noncredentialed teachers worried about their jobs, knowing that if their classes had small enrollments they would be hired for fewer hours per week or not hired at all.

Financial worries and the high proportion of part-time, noncredentialed personnel made Ethnic High different from Group High in terms of staff morale and commitment. The outside consultants hired by Ethnic High—

a poet, a local jazz musician, an unemployed actor, a Spanish teacher, and a couple of impoverished graduate students—were often very popular with students. But many of them were inexperienced as teachers and regarded their jobs largely as not very satisfactory ways to earn extra money. Even the most able and committed among them suffered from the continuing uncertainty caused by the school's chronic shortage of funds.

But more important than staff and budget differences between the two schools were the dissimilarities of their students, curriculum, and educational philosophy. Ethnic High was a multicultural school: when after its first semester the school was split over the issue of ethnic representation, students voted out the original director and decided to create a multiethnic school with equal representation of Chicanos, blacks, whites, and Asians among both staff and students (rather than ethnic representation in proportion to overall enrollment in the district). Later, despite another change of directors and the loss of its Asian component, Ethnic High maintained its commitment to ethnic egalitarianism; a third of both students and staff were black, a third white, and a third Chicano.

Ethnic High's educational philosophy also emphasized the multicultural ideal. A leaflet, distributed in the fall of 1972, concluded: "We hope the most important outcome of three years at Ethnic High to be pride in one's own culture accompanied by the ability to openly relate to people of other cultures. It is this which should be evaluated in assessing Ethnic High's success" ([Ethnic High], 1972). But Ethnic High's teachers were left uncertain as to a philosophy of teaching. They embraced the values of alternative education in the sense that they were determined to respect students and to teach students to respect themselves. Indeed, a few of Ethnic High's teachers were staunch free school advocates, who continued to try to apply free school principles even when their students were unresponsive or resistant. Ethnic High's teachers sought ways to overcome what they regarded as the major barriers to learning: anxiety and self-doubt, engendered by a repressive society and a cruel, insensitive school system. Yet the teachers were unsure about how to put these principles into practice.

Ethnic High's teachers tended to try to reach students by offering them a friendly, supportive environment and leaving them alone—hoping that students would somehow spontaneously regenerate their capacities for academic and personal development. Although teachers tried to develop a curriculum to teach students pride and self-respect (see chapter 5), they did not have a sure sense of the value of an alternative pedagogy. Instead, their commitment to new educational styles was partial and passive, often taking the form of teaching traditional classes without demanding traditional discipline or performance from students.

Group High's teachers had a clearer, more unified educational philosophy. Although they offered a diverse curriculum, ranging from fairly traditional courses in English and history to exotic classes such as "Meditation" or "Women's Studies," the subject matter was less important than the educational approach. The goal was to develop students' sense of autonomy and self-direction, and it was felt that these ends could be attained by allowing students to participate as equals in choosing and shaping their own educations. Rejection of authority and inequality was itself the pedagogic technique that would liberate students' own potentials for creativity and personal growth. Student participation in classes and in the school as a whole was demanded, not just hoped for. Academic exercises were designed to draw students out, to make them participate, to force them to take responsibility for themselves.

Finally, there were great differences between Group High and Ethnic High in the values and skills of their students, and these differences had important effects on the ways each school dealt with the absence of authority. Group High began with the advantages of having a largely middle-class, idealistic, involved student body. About 80 percent of Group High's students were white, most from middle- or upper-middle-class families. Many were children of university faculty or other professionals who shared a belief in alternative education. (Such was the enthusiasm for Berkeley's first alternative schools that some families living outside the Berkeley city limits illegally registered their children as living with a relative or friend in Berkeley to enable them to go to Group High.) Some Group High students were, of course, drawn to the school by the desire to escape academic demands, but most had a history of school success. Although they might believe in rebellion against the constraints of traditional authority, most of these students would have been the cooperative, high-achieving students of another era. They were already in many ways well educated, and in the atmosphere of freedom at Group High they were able to do independent projects, read books on their own, or pursue special interests in the arts or other fields. Even more important, Group High's students shared their teachers' educational ideals: autonomy, freedom, and personal growth were seen as the legitimate ends of education. For them school was not a nightmare to be avoided, but a place to be molded to their own interests.

I do not mean to imply that social control posed no problem at Group High. Many of its students were alienated and rebellious, and even enthusiastic, cooperative students could quickly become resistant and difficult when their high expectations were disappointed. Group High often had problems with low attendance and student apathy. But a core of about half the students were active, involved participants, and these students set the tone for the school as a whole. The same free school ideology that provided a basis for defiance was also a resource upon which Group High's teachers could draw to create group cohesion and cooperation in the absence of authority. It was this resource that was less available to the teachers at Ethnic High.

Many of Ethnic High's students were politically aware and had chosen

Ethnic High precisely because of its emphasis on ethnic identity and intercultural understanding. This ideological commitment did not, however, translate into a positive educational ideal. There was a small group of middle-class white students and academically successful black and Chicano students at Ethnic High, but they had little influence on the tone of life in the school. (The classes most popular with middle-class white students—such as "What Is White?", "Women's Studies," and "International Cooking and Human Awareness"—were held off-campus in the evenings, so that these students were less visible).

The large majority of students at Ethnic High had a firmly entrenched pattern of resistance to school authority, compounded by poor academic skills and histories of school failure. Students sometimes claimed they wanted to learn basic skills such as reading, writing, spelling, and grammar, but they sabotaged attempts to teach such skills. Students valued the freedom and dignity Ethnic High accorded them, but they lacked the countercultural ideology that made such freedom legitimate. Sometimes students saw their permissive teachers as simply weak and ineffective. One must ask why Ethnic High's teachers did not simply assert traditional authority in order to teach basic skills and special ethnic classes. Both students and teachers might have been happier had the teachers done so (though we must remember that the students had chosen an unstructured alternative in preference to the regular high school and in preference to the more structured ethnically oriented alternatives the district offered). Other Berkeley schools, like Black House, had effectively combined an emphasis on ethnic identity with a structured school environment designed to teach basic skills. However, because Ethnic High's teachers were influenced by the alternative school ideology, they tried to establish an open, egalitarian, participatory school. Once they had given up the right to exercise authority over students, they were both unwilling and unable to reassert it, especially in the case of students who would have provided stiff opposition to the authority of even the most traditional teachers. Some of the teachers, furthermore, felt strongly that traditional authority damaged students, even though they were uncertain what to put in its place. Thus Ethnic High's teachers lacked authority, and they were unable to turn this absence of authority into a positive ideology that would place a new burden of responsibility on students.

Freedom and Constraint

In the first part of this chapter, I traced the history of Berkeley's experimental schools in order to explain how schools as open and unstructured as Group High and Ethnic High came to exist at all within a public school system. In this section I analyze the combination of constraints and opportunities placed on these schools by their environments. If we are to understand how these organizations solved the internal issues of authority and social control, we need to understand the parameters within which they operated.

Both Group High and Ethnic High had extraordinary freedom from supervision and regulation during the periods when I studied them. In the years before the OE/ESP grant was obtained, the independence of Group High was protected by an atmosphere that encouraged innovation and by the direct political support of the superintendent and the board of education. During the period when I studied Ethnic High, enthusiasm for open education had begun to cool, but the autonomy of Ethnic High was protected by the structure of the Berkeley Experimental Schools Project itself.

Group High rode a wave of political enthusiasm that had begun during Berkeley's period of great political ferment prior to 1970. The community atmosphere added to the sense of certainty that seemed to pervade Group High—the conviction that while they might now be a beleaguered minority, the advocates of alternative education would inherit the future. When Group High fought for some particular privilege against the principal of Berkeley High or district administrators, the school took the offensive, convinced that both right and history were on its side.

Group High's sense of ideological legitimacy was also supported by more concrete political realities. As I noted earlier, alternative schools served, in the late 1960s, as a way to preserve the coalition of minorities and white liberals that controlled Berkeley's schools. The possibility of massive federal funding, at a time when the school district was facing a budget crisis (without the OE/ESP grant the district faced a 2.6 million dollar deficit), gave the superintendent and the school board additional reason to support the alternative schools (Sibley, 1972:172).

When the alternative schools met with resistance from school administrators, they were supported by the superintendent and the school board. When, for example, the principal of Berkeley High rejected a proposal for a second alternative high school on the grounds that it would not meet the minimum enrollment specified in the decentralization plan for the high school, he was overruled by the school board. As a board member described it, "the students and their parents, *encouraged by the Superintendent*, brought their case to the Board for decision. After thorough discussion . . . the Board granted permission . . . but cautioned the planners to undertake all possible efforts to bring the registration up to the recommended two hundred minimum" (Sibley, 1972:143, emphasis added). Although conflict between Group High and the Berkeley High administration meant that Group High was subject to occasional harassment, with the backing of the superintendent and the board it won the right to go its own way.

During the period when I studied Ethnic High, Berkeley's political life had settled into a mood of discouraged quietism. Although the community was still sensitive to issues of social justice, the exhilarating atmosphere of po-

litical activism was gone. Within the BESP, some of the glow of alternative education had begun to fade, and political changes in Washington under the Nixon administration were making themselves felt in the national ESP. Yet despite this atmosphere of political retrenchment and uncertainty about the future, Ethnic High was protected from external interference by the administrative apparatus of the Berkeley ESP.

It can be argued that neither the BUSD nor the Office of Education ever intended to establish a radical school experiment that would give real autonomy to groups outside the established school bureaucracy. Dennis Cohen (1978:111-112) has written that the project as a whole never escaped central control:

> The surface argument of the [BESP] plan, that . . . ESP . . . be a vehicle for full debureaucratization of a portion of the system, does not fit what we have learned about either the project's origins or its design . . . [F]rom the moment the idea of an Experimental Schools project in Berkeley first reached the Superintendent, control over the design of its structure and composition lay primarily in the hands of top decision-makers in BUSD and the Office of Experimental Schools in Washington. The project's creation was itself a complex example of the conditions and mechanisms that maintain exclusive, hierarchical authority in public bureaucracies.

Federal funding also weakened the local political strength of Berkeley's alternative schools by making them dependent on the federal granting agency rather than on the maintenance of active community constituencies.

Despite these limitations, with the establishment of the BESP Berkeley was committed to its alternative schools for the period of the grant. In addition, the BESP provided an administrative umbrella protecting the alternative schools against scrutiny by the regular school district administration, the federal granting agency, or the local community. The BESP saw its role as supporting the experimental schools within the district. Its public relations staff kept the community informed about the schools by producing films and photographs and distributing beautifully designed brochures to every Berkeley home. When the schools appeared before the board of education, the BESP staff decorated the meeting room with soft, romantic enlargements of photographs of the children in each school.

In addition to providing for public relations with the community, the BESP protected the experimental schools from supervision by either the board of education or the Washington experimental schools administrators. There were three levels of evaluation written into the Berkeley ESP contract: Level I was to be carried out within the district, and Levels II and III were to be contracted out to independent evaluators. No contract for a Level III evaluation was ever given. The BESP Level I evaluators argued that since each school had a different conception of its purpose, each should be able to develop its own instruments for evaluation. Claiming that the standardized test (California Test of Basic Skills) the district used to evaluate student progress was a biased, racist test, the off-campus alternative schools persuaded the superintendent to grant a "testing moratorium" for spring and fall of 1972, so that evaluation was first possible for the 1973-74 academic year. Although the on-site alternatives, such as Ethnic High, were never formally released from testing, they administered the tests so casually that the data obtained were totally unreliable. (At Ethnic High, for example, some students were told that they could take the test home if they did not have time to finish it in school.) When the school board asked the BESP to present test-score data for the alternative schools individually, the BESP evaluators offered the board only aggregate data for all the alternative schools. In June 1974 the director of the Level I BESP evaluation was fired, in part because of his unwillingness to provide either Washington or the Berkeley school board with information that could be used to assess the relative success of individual alternative schools. As a result, the evaluation of Berkeley's alternative schools was left in chaos, and no systematic evaluation could be undertaken until the fall of 1974.

The Level II evaluation was contracted to a university-oriented research group, Documentation and Evaluation of Experimental Projects in Schools (DEEPS). DEEPS, like the Level I evaluators, saw itself combining advocacy with its research role, and so the Level II evaluation also failed to provide the federal granting agency with information that could be used to monitor the success of Berkeley's alternative schools. In early 1973, amidst charges of misrepresentation on both sides, the Washington ESP closed down DEEPS, leaving Berkeley without a Level II evaluation until 1973-74. Confusion about the purposes of the evaluation, conflicts over the original mission of the project, and uncertainties about the uses to which evaluation data might be put effectively insured that at least during their first thirty months Berkeley's alternative schools proceeded without effective external review.

The BESP staff, in addition to protecting the experimental schools from outside scrutiny, provided them with important services. Skilled writers helped the schools prepare statements of their objectives, outlines of procedures for self-evaluation, and proposals to submit to Washington to qualify the schools for the second thirty months of the OE/ESP grant. Ethnic High's staff therefore spent time discussing how to describe to the Washington funding agency the school's unique educational contribution, but during the time I observed the school it was not evaluated nor did it develop any internal procedure for evaluation. The school's relation to Washington and to the district involved occasional meetings devoted to promoting itself and defending the value of alternative education in general, but there was no interference with the day-to-day life of the school.

Finally, one can look at the ways in which Group High and Ethnic High dealt with the specific problems of staffing, attendance, and course accred-

itation, finding extraordinary freedom despite the limits they faced as public schools. Tension between formal school district regulations (as well as state and federal law) and the unorthodox practices of Berkeley's free schools was handled through "administrative slack." In part, Berkeley's central administrators did not know and did not want to know about the irregularities of the alternative school operations. In matters such as staffing and testing the alternatives were granted temporary informal releases from normal requirements. Thus the traditional school bureaucracy was preserved intact, while a lush garden of exotic practices flourished briefly in its midst (Cohen, 1978).

Both Group High and Ethnic High were required to recruit their core staff (those staff provided by district funds in proportion to the school's enrollment) from among the regular credentialed teachers in the district. (Some of the off-campus alternatives were, for a period, able to convert even this core allotment of staff into classified positions which they could fill with staff who were not regularly employed teachers in the district, but the on-site alternatives were never able to do this.) For Group High this staffing limitation was not very important since the innovative teachers who had founded the school were already employed by the district. For Ethnic High the limitation was more significant, but within it the school was free to choose its own teachers. Ethnic High students voted out their first director and hired as their second director a dynamic black woman who taught black studies in Berkeley High School. She in turn found the team of a black director and a Chicana codirector to replace her the next year. These staffing decisions were made neither by the Berkeley High administration nor by the Berkeley ESP administrators nor by the Washington experimental schools office. The schools were in this case autonomous, self-perpetuating organizations.

Although the core staff of credentialed teachers had to be chosen from among those already employed by the district, Group High and Ethnic High were free to use their supplemental funds to hire any outside personnel they wished—trained teachers, creative artists, or dynamic individuals—as consultants, without regard to certification or other formal criteria. The BESP was able to persuade the district to create a special personnel category, "professional expert," to allow the schools to pay these new teachers at a higher rate than consultants were usually paid. After a battle with the district's central personnel office, the schools were able to hire these teachers outside of the district's regular merit system for classified staff until this loophole was closed in 1973-74 (Cohen, 1978).

Both Group High and Ethnic High hired additional staff and also used numerous student teachers and volunteers to teach regular classes. They dealt with course accreditation by developing a system of legal fictions. Each class for which students received credit was listed under the name of one of the regular certified teachers but was taught by whomever the school had recruited to teach it. Hence, community members who had received no teacher training and had no legal status as teachers could teach and grade classes for which students received regular high school credit.

The issue of course structure and content was handled in much the same way. Group High, during 1970-71, was engaged in a continuing battle with the Berkeley High administration for certification of its right to offer courses, such as history, English, and math, that were required for graduation (so that alternative school students would not be forced to take some classes in Berkeley High in order to graduate). But once Group High had won the right to teach all the courses necessary for graduation (as it did for all the required courses except foreign languages and some science courses), it offered classes in whatever it wished—from meditation, to feminism, to Tai Chi—simply by recording them as courses the school was legally entitled to offer. So flexible was this system that students in the same class could get different kinds of credit depending on how they wanted the class listed on their transcripts. In the women's studies class, some students listed themselves as taking "History I," some "History II," some English, and some psychology. Ethnic High was also able to teach whatever it wanted simply by listing its classes—from "Crime in the Streets" to "International Cooking and Human Awareness"—under some more conventional course title. Ethnic High did not teach science classes, for which it had no laboratory facilities, but its teachers were able to give students credit for the other basic high school courses including English, math, history, social studies, family living, and Spanish—either by teaching their own versions of these standard courses or by substituting some altogether different course under the legally approved course title.

Group High and Ethnic High were thus only marginally affected by the legal framework of the public school system. They were wary about violating school regulations against smoking and drinking on campus, though drinking was common at off-campus school social events. Group High's teachers were cavalier about the laws prohibiting teachers from driving students on school outings in private cars; Ethnic High's teachers were more cautious. Finally, Berkeley High insisted that both schools turn in attendance figures, since the subschools contributed to the average daily attendance figure upon which federal and state aid to the schools was based. Group High's students voted to keep attendance on a daily rather than class-by-class basis and to leave it to each student to come in at some time during the day to mark herself present. (In typical Group High style, students had a serious discussion about whether students should mark off other students who either forgot or did not care enough to do so, and the conclusion was that each student should care about the school and be responsible enough for herself to perform this task.) Ethnic High's teachers kept regular attendance records, but classes were so casual that even a brief appearance would suffice to have a student marked present. Nonetheless, Ethnic High

had very high rates of absenteeism. But when Berkeley High briefly threatened to enforce overall school policy suspending students who never attended classes, both teachers and students at Ethnic High felt that their school should be exempted from the policy. Although Berkeley High never made this exemption formal, the administration did not take action against Ethnic High students.

In summary, then, Group High and Ethnic High were subject to some administrative restraints because they were part of a public school system, but they still had a great deal of freedom. They could hire whom they wanted, teach what they wanted, and organize (or disorganize) the day-to-day life of their students as they saw fit. As small enclaves within a large, fairly conventional high school, they were subject to a few minor restrictions, but in many respects they had greater autonomy than many privately run free schools. As public schools, they were not dependent for funds on private tuition nor were they continually engaged in the desperate search for funding sources which exhausts many free schools. In addition, the informal system of legal fictions that allowed students to receive regular Berkeley High diplomas meant that Group High and Ethnic High did not have to face the difficult issue of accreditation. They could give their students the same chance at college or jobs as other students without subjecting them to the same restrictions. Indeed, college-bound students were probably advantaged by their stay in Berkeley's experimental schools since they tended to have uniformly high grades and the kind of close, personal relations with teachers that produced excellent letters of recommendation.

The forces that shaped alternative education in Berkeley were a microcosm of the social forces shaping the free school movement. What was distinctive about the context of Berkeley's free schools was simply that the forces were stronger and their impact was intensified by being concentrated in one place. The special features of Berkeley's situation—widespread community support for educational innovation, direct political pressures facing Berkeley's superintendent and its board of education, and federal funding—allowed Berkeley's alternative schools to operate with remarkable autonomy in the context of a public school system. That this arrangement was fragile and began to unravel before the experiment was well under way does not deny the fact of an extraordinary period of freedom which allowed Group High and Ethnic High to thrive in the early 1970s.

And what of the differences between Group High and Ethnic High? How did the contrasts between the two schools affect the ways they were able to respond to the absence of authority? As I shall argue, both schools developed similar strategies for replacing authority, despite their dissimilarities in staff and student bodies. Where they differed was in the resources they could bring to bear to replace authority—and in their motivation for doing so. In one sense, Ethnic High started at a great disadvantage. Its students were more difficult, its staff less experienced and less uniformly committed to their work, and most critical, its ideology less clear, less agreed-upon, and less conducive to a sharing of the responsibilities of open education between teachers and students. Group High was better endowed with the energy, motivation, and enthusiasm necessary to make an alternative school work. Coming at a slightly earlier period in Berkeley's history, Group High had a greater sense of optimism and evangelism about its role.

There were some advantages, however, to the disadvantages of Ethnic High. Ethnic High's teachers, because they were less committed to the goals of alternative education, were also under less pressure to make it work. They were less driven to balance their lack of authority with alternative mechanisms of social control, and as I noted in chapter 1, there were benefits of a sort in the ability to let things slide. A second advantage was more subtle and has to do with the fact that Ethnic High's teachers, being less committed to their roles as teachers, were also freer to stop being teachers and to settle for roles as friends and companions to students. This strange double task of the free school teacher, who can teach only by distancing himself from his role as a teacher, will be explored more fully in the following chapter. As we shall see throughout this book, the initial disadvantages of Ethnic High point up the conditions necessary for successful implementation of various strategies for social control without authority.

PART TWO

alternatives to authority

3

CHARISMA AND PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

IN THE ABSENCE of authority, those who aspire to lead others may use their personal assets—charm, attractiveness, or prestigious accomplishments—to achieve social control. When teachers at Group High and Ethnic High sought leverage over students, they reached first for what was closest at hand: the material provided by their own personalities and their private lives. By making themselves into confidantes, admired role models, or desirable companions, teachers could attract and influence students. A teacher with a forceful personality might charm, persuade, or cajole students into cooperating. But personal leadership, although a significant source of influence, could also prove both costly and unreliable.

Those familiar with published accounts of free schools are apt to be disconcerted by the prevalence of magnetic, gifted teachers in such schools. When one learns that teachers such as Leo Tolstoy (1862), A. S. Neill (1960), or even Herbert Kohl (1967) produced dramatic results using open teaching techniques, one may rightly suspect that their extraordinary personal gifts are the real explanation for their success. Furthermore, this relationship between open, unstructured education and dynamic, exciting teaching is not coincidental. Schools without authority require, and help to produce, charismatic teachers.

All teachers rely on personal influence. Teachers of young children see their work as an extension of mothering (Jackson, 1968:150) and judge their success in large part by their ability to engage children emotionally, to make them enjoy learning (Lortie, 1975). Even teachers of college students find that their personal styles and emotional attitudes—their narcissism, altruism, or moral convictions—have a profound influence on what they communicate to students (Adelson, 1968; Mann et al., 1970). Teachers need to supplement their formal authority with personal influence in part because

they lack effective formal sanctions.[1] As Willard Waller (1932:383) noted, "the teacher-pupil relationship is a special form of dominance and subordination . . . not much supported by sanction and the strong arm of authority, but depending largely on purely personal ascendancy." The difficulty is that, although the teacher has authority, there are serious limits to the effectiveness of that authority in producing compliance, particularly the willing engagement necessary for learning.

Traditional teachers are authority figures, responsible for disciplining and controlling students, yet "teaching demands affective bonds between teacher and student which are foreign to the enactment of a bureaucratic office" (Bidwell, 1965:979). Herein lies the great structural contradiction of teaching: on the one hand, the need to maintain formal authority, and on the other, the need for emotional ties that tend to undermine that authority. The teacher is doomed, as Waller points out, to a perpetual alternation between the "authority role" and the "friendly role," since excessive adherence to authority breeds resistance or superficial compliance, yet too much friendliness undermines the teacher's authority. Usually, in the long run, "the authority role eats up the friendly role, or absorbs so much of the personality that nothing is left for friendliness to fatten upon" (p. 386).

Free schools release teachers from the authority role so that the friendly role can flourish. Teachers renounce authority, and they are no longer responsible for maintaining orderly classrooms or for forcing students to learn. Without the need to maintain authority, teachers can afford to develop close personal ties with students to reach them at a deeper level than traditional teaching normally allows. Free school ideology holds that these conditions of direct personal contact between teachers and students are the only circumstances under which real teaching and learning can occur.

1. Charles Bidwell (1965) has pointed out that all teaching is shaped by a continuing tension between the authority (and discipline) teachers are expected to maintain and their meager resources for social control. Schools lack the major incentives and sanctions that make authority in most organizations effective: they do not pay their student members, nor can they fire them. Although schools provide a service, for most students the potential rewards of schooling are far in the future, while the costs it imposes are immediate and often galling. This imbalance between the need for social control and the incentives available to produce it accounts for teachers' attempts to influence students through intimacy and personal affection, but it may also explain why teachers sometimes resort to such unkind tactics as intimidation and humiliation of students. Strategies of social control such as "stripping the self," attacking inmates' sense of identity, and so forth, which Erving Goffman (1961a) has identified as characteristics of total institutions, may in fact be not so much a product of "totalness" as of this imbalance between the need for social control and the availability of sanctions. Prisons, mental hospitals, monasteries, and other total institutions have in common with schools the fact that they do not pay their members and they have difficulty bringing to bear other relevant punishments and rewards. They therefore develop more indirect means of social control.

Pressures for Intimacy

Everything about life in free schools tends to drive teachers, metaphorically and sometimes literally, into the arms of their students. As I have already noted, the informal atmosphere of Group High and Ethnic High facilitated the formation of close personal ties between teachers and students. School life continually spilled over into personal life, so that students and teachers learned a good deal about one another as individuals. Teachers felt free to express the attractive, charming, funny sides of their personalities; they also allowed themselves to appear vulnerable, in need of comfort or reassurance. Similarly, teachers could come to appreciate students for their sense of humor, good judgment, or sensitivity in a variety of informal situations where teachers and students found themselves interdependent in ways that traditional schools seldom allow.

For some teachers, involvement with students fulfilled personal needs. Some unmarried teachers, for example, turned to students for companionship. At Ethnic High Gloria, recently divorced, became close friends with Lisa, a student; at Group High Alice, also divorced, spent considerable time outside of class with students. She occasionally went to a movie with students on a weeknight, and she once had the women's studies class to her house for a weekend slumber party. Some male teachers at Ethnic High went to student parties and joined students on weekends smoking dope, attending political rallies, or just riding around.

But student-teacher intimacy was more than a solution for occasional loneliness. Even teachers who had full personal lives or other absorbing interests were continually pressured to come to school meetings, attend parties, and go on school outings. For both students and teachers school life continually encroached on personal life—absorbing family, friends, evenings, and weekends. Teachers found themselves inviting students into their homes, sharing more and more of their time and their personal histories, and becoming increasingly involved with students' private lives. Even teachers who valued their time and their privacy sacrificed both to make their teaching work.

There were strategic as well as personal reasons for cultivating friendships with students. Free school students had significant power over their teachers. Although it is true that teachers in general are more effective if students like them, their destinies are usually controlled by colleagues, principals, and school boards, not by students. But at Group High and Ethnic High, some teachers' jobs depended directly on enrollment, and popularity with students was often the most important determinant of a teacher's eventual fate. Because the schools' budgets were based on enrollments, a teacher who attracted numerous student admirers won security and status with other teachers. In addition, pressure from the Office of Education and the school district to ensure that the schools were racially balanced placed a

special premium on attracting students from particular ethnic or racial groups. A teacher with a following of minority students had great bargaining power. When Ethnic High's Asian teacher left, most of her students left with her; Group High lost almost all of its black students when a popular black teacher left the school. Attracting students was a necessity for all teachers, and a loyal student following could be a source of security, status, and power.

Teachers also needed access to the student peer group and to information about students' personal lives in order to do their jobs. For instance, when Denise, the Ethnic High codirector, noticed that a group of students had stopped coming to school, she stopped Cisco, one of her student friends, in the hall to ask him what was wrong. Janet, despite her weaknesses as a teacher, was well liked by students and could be counted on to know what students were thinking and what was troubling them. She could find out why they had turned sullen and unresponsive in a class, or what was behind a wave of vandalism in the art room. When a student couple broke up and Ethnic High's leading clique was in an uproar, Janet was the first to be told, and she was given a detailed description of the reconciliation. She also learned about personal crises that affected students' school participation: one student was pregnant and ashamed to come to school; another student, also pregnant, was being pressured by her boyfriend to get an abortion; a third student became hostile and aggressive because he was having trouble at home.

Understanding students' personal lives was central to the teachers' conception of their proper role. Like most free school proponents, they had a fundamentally "therapeutic" model of the educational process, which says that since children learn spontaneously unless their capacity for learning has been stunted or inhibited, the role of the teacher is to penetrate students' emotional and social worlds and open them to the experience of learning. For example, George Dennison (1969:45) at the First Street School reported that he sought to break down the emotional barriers that prevented students from learning. When Maxine, a bright but difficult student, became so aggressive she was unable to learn or to get along with other students, Dennison used his knowledge of her family situation to deal with the problem. He helped her act out her feelings about the birth of a new sibling, releasing the unconscious anger that was interfering with her school performance. In a similar way, teachers at Group High and Ethnic High felt they had to understand students' private lives to teach them effectively. At Group High teachers' goals included making students more independent of their parents, helping them handle sexual anxieties, and freeing them from excessive reliance on the opinions of friends and authority figures. At Ethnic High teachers frequently discussed students' difficulties and their progress in terms of their family problems, drug usage, or the ups and downs of their romantic lives. This approach to teaching required that teachers maintain extensive friendly contacts in the student world.

Intimacy between students and teachers had other advantages as well. Teachers could involve students in class discussion by asking them to share personal experiences or relate the class material to their own lives. Some classes, like the women's studies class at Group High, consisted largely of personal exchange. Alice, the teacher, described dilemmas in her love life, her own attitude toward marriage and children, and her feelings about being a woman. Students in turn discussed many personal, sometimes painful, experiences: virginity and fears about sex, conflicts with parents, and problems in love relationships. In such a class, Alice's willingness to share her own life was in some sense the precondition for openness and commitment on the part of students. The class was suspicious of anyone who wanted to participate without becoming personally involved. Such shared intimacy made the class engrossing for students, while it gave Alice the satisfying feeling that she was reaching students and helping them deal with important issues in their lives. Even in classes with a less explicitly personal focus, personal discussion could be used to fill time, to reach students, and to win student favor. Raymond, a teacher at Ethnic High, usually organized each class by asking students for personal experiences related to the day's topic. He also reminisced freely about his own life, sharing his experiences with students in an effort to win their understanding and affection. Intimacy was both useful and necessary for teachers at Group High and Ethnic High; it provided the informal context and much of the content of their day-to-day teaching.

An incident in Janet's class at Ethnic High illustrates how personal ties with students could create a reserve of good will, protecting a teacher against student dissatisfaction or rebellion. During a student-run course evaluation, the students in Janet's class, meeting without her, agreed that the class was disorganized and that they were learning very little. Some students then pointed out that Janet was young and new to teaching and that the students themselves were at fault: they were lazy and sabotaged the class by talking too much or teasing Janet. One student said, "Hey, you know her husband? He's that Williams, the brother of Bobby Williams. He's good looking!" Other students chimed in to discuss Janet's baby and other aspects of her private life. The students then muted their criticism, reporting to Janet only that she should give them a little more to do.

The Monday following the evaluation, Janet was a bit worried about student dissatisfaction with the class. She reacted by trying to deepen the personal bonds between herself and the students, by sharing herself with them even more fully. When her suggestion for a class assignment was met with the complaint that it was Monday and students were too tired to work, she said, "Okay, I'll give you guys a break. But tomorrow we're going to practice note-taking." Then, sitting on the edge of the desk, she said, "I'll have to tell you guys how I got into teaching." Janet confessed that she had not initially wanted to be a teacher. She had started out substituting because it was the only job available. However, she happened to find that her per-

sonality was suited to teaching and she liked it. "I'm naturally easy-going, and I think I get along well with people, so that's my teaching style." She said, "I think you guys have just accepted me, you feel comfortable with me and accept me the way I am." Jerome, one of the students, interjected in a friendly tone, "Of course. What can you do? You can't change a person." Janet then concluded, "I'm pretty nice and I can communicate with students pretty well. Maybe my one fault is that I'm not tough enough." This friendly talk filled up the time without straining Janet's resources as a teacher or the students' willingness to work. But increased intimacy was also Janet's way of warding off the implicit criticism of her teaching, while she made explicit her notion that being a good teacher meant being friendly and getting along well with students.

The Uses of Personal Appeals

Teachers were particularly likely to invoke intimacy when they needed student cooperation. A personal appeal or an admission of vulnerability compensated for the attempt to assert control. For example, when a Group High art teacher wanted to make his class more organized, he put the issue in personal terms. He announced that from now on the class was going to be more structured and he was going to exercise more authority. He explained that his psychiatrist had said that unstructured situations made him anxious. Fred's announcement was made half humorously, but the admission that he was seeing a psychiatrist was clearly meant to blunt the effect of his demand for more structure.

George Dennison, in *The Lives of Children* (1969:112-113), emphasized that personal involvement was essential for his influence on students (in this case José, a difficult but rewarding thirteen-year-old): "My own demands, then, were an important part of José's experience. They were not simply the demands of a teacher, nor of an adult, but belonged to my own way of caring about José. He sensed this. There was something he prized in the fact that I made demands on him."

Personal appeals, and corresponding admissions of vulnerability, were the major ways in which teachers at Group High and Ethnic High tried to influence students. A dramatic example was Carol's response when, as director of Group High, she found herself faced with a serious violation of school rules. She had taken a large group of students on an overnight camping trip. Although students had been told that regular Berkeley High rules would apply, they smuggled in wine and some hallucinogenic drugs. Two of the students had "bad trips," and Carol had to take them to the hospital. Although the school did not get caught for this incident, Carol was shaken. At the meeting which was called, her whole collective was to deal with the issue. Carol made the opening statement. She said, "I felt personally, emotionally abused by what happened this weekend." She then went on to say that students claimed equality and yet they still expected her to take responsibility when something went wrong. Some students replied that that was "your hang-up"—that they didn't expect her to take responsibility. Others pointed out that Carol's job was at stake and the students had been unfair to her. In a situation in which a traditional teacher would certainly have reasserted authority, or at least have appealed to school loyalty, Carol chose entirely personal terms in which to lay her case before students.

In both Group High and Ethnic High, teacher defeats were often followed by a personal revelation. Whether these self-revelations, pleas, and reminiscences were designed to gain sympathy by exposing the teacher's vulnerability, or were a way of acknowledging student victory by renegotiating the relative statuses in the relationship, I do not know. However, the pattern was quite regular: each defeat or difficulty stimulated increased intimacy.

Erving Goffman (1961b) points out that breaking role is often a way of dealing with a stressful situation. During a particularly tense operation, a surgeon will forego the deference he normally receives from nurses and interns: he will joke with his subordinates and allow them to joke with him. As Goffman describes it, this informality is "a kind of bargaining or bribery whereby the surgeon receives a guarantee of equability from his team in return for being 'a nice guy'—someone who does not press his rightful claims too far" (p. 122).[2]

Since teachers at Group High and Ethnic High did not have many rightful claims to dignity or deference, it is surprising that they so often tried letting down further barriers to intimacy when they were in a tight spot. Yet over and over, when teachers made one of their rare attempts to assert control they became even more personal, less teacherly than usual. When Janet made an uncharacteristic attempt to bring some order into her classroom, she turned to the unruly students and shifted dramatically into black dialect, saying, "I'm getting tired of you. You better behave or I'm going to hit

2. Peter Blau (1963:312) has noted that such informal bargains are basic to all authority. Full compliance with authority—"willingness to work hard or to exercise initiative"—cannot be ensured solely by the formal powers of bureacratic superiors: because there is an imbalance between the formal powers of management and the kinds of cooperation it seeks from workers, the bureaucratic official must win his subordinates' good will by relinquishing some of his formal power to sanction. By this process of negotiation "coercive power is transformed into personal influence." Personal influence is then transformed into "legitimate authority" when subordinates feel "collectively obligated" and "group norms enforce compliance" (p. 313). Similar informal negotiations—in which superiors demand less formal compliance than they might in order to procure fuller voluntary compliance—can be observed in all "people-changing organizations" where clients cannot be transformed without their willing cooperation. It has been noted, for example, in a treatment-oriented institution for delinquent boys (Street, Vintner, and Perrow, 1966:168-180) and in junior high schools where "developmentally oriented" teachers exchanged relaxed classroom discipline for greater academic effort on the part of students (Metz, 1978b:114).

you across the mouth." Raising her hand in mock anger, she said, "I'm going to slap you in your teeth." The effectiveness of these threats depended on Janet's abandoning teacherly style for an in-group persona she seldom employed in school.

But personal appeals did not always succeed. Indeed, many of the most dramatic moments at Group High and Ethnic High occurred when teachers threw themselves on students' mercy and were rebuffed. Yet despite repeated failures, teachers persisted in making personal appeals when they wanted to influence students.

Raymond began one of the first school meetings at Ethnic High by saying that since all members were part of a community and had to live right on top of one another, they were very interdependent. He said, "I am sorry I have to start this way, but I want to take care of this at the beginning. During the summer there has been some stealing. I personally have lost some of my most valuable possessions. Gloria's purse has been stolen." Raymond turned to Gloria and asked her how much money she lost. She said thirty-five dollars. Raymond said this really hurt him. "I don't know if they [the thefts] were directed at me personally or if they were somebody's idea of a way to get back at the system. If I catch anyone I will let the school as a whole deal with them, and if the school doesn't want to do anything about it, then maybe I have come to the wrong place. Maybe I will have to reconsider my commitment to the school." This combination of threat, appeal, and admission of personal vulnerability received a cool response from students at the meeting; and when similar incidents occurred during the year, students made it clear that they were not particularly moved by either remorse or compassion for Raymond. Indeed, in the following incident, students responded to a personal appeal by explicitly distancing themselves —saying, in effect, "That's your problem, not ours."

Raymond began another meeting by saying that he was sorry to start the meeting this way, but he had almost decided not to come at all because he was so angry. But he wanted the school to deal with this problem. "We had printed up a whole lot of information about [Ethnic High] and we were getting it ready to mail out to the parents. Yesterday, a hundred stamps were taken from the office . . . We got no full-time secretary now, and I'm trying to run the school, teach, and run the office all by myself. It's almost more than one person can do." Students sat through this speech without responding. Later in the meeting, Gloria raised a problem and also appealed for personal sympathy. She said: "I also have been having a problem of kids coming in class and disrupting the class. Also, when Fernando [her three-year-old son] is here in the halls he gets what I would call abused. Also, he learns patterns of behavior I don't like. I can't afford to pay a sitter. It would take most of my salary." Rather than sympathizing with this appeal, the students turned on Gloria. Bernette, one of the leading women students, said: "Now, I don't want to insult you, but that kid's a monster." (Laughs.)

"I can't have that kid coming around here, cussing, calling me names. He call me names, I'm going to slap him around. You got to control that kid." Gloria answered that you could not "control" a three-year-old child. The students were outraged. Manuel said, "My father controlled three of us boys. He hit us till we couldn't sit down." Danny chimed in, "You got to slap his butt!" to which there was a chorus of assent. Gloria, by bringing her personal life into the discussion, had opened herself to an attack which became almost bloodthirsty. Tony said, referring to Gloria's son, "If he come up and spit on my slacks, I'll knock his teeth down his throat. I pay a lot of money for my clothes, and I'm not going to put up with that." Yvette burst out, as if pushed beyond endurance: "He's going to go around some day and he's going to call some big person a name, and they not going to be here [sarcastic], oh no. And they going to work your kid over. They're not going to just hit him, they going to really work him over."

The Limits of Personal Appeals

What accounts for the relative ineffectiveness of personal appeals? And why did teachers persist in this way of handling their difficulties? In approaching these questions, the differences between Group High and Ethnic High must be taken into account. Personal bonds between teachers and students were important at both schools, but only at Group High, with its largely middle-class, counterculture students, were personal appeals legitimated by ideology. The students at Group High believed in equality with teachers, particularly in matters of personal style. And the interpersonal norms of the counterculture, with its emphasis on openness and self-actualization, made personal appeals a way to prove one was honest, straightforward, and willing to share oneself with others. Because students embraced this ideology of openness and mutual honesty, the success of personal appeals was not dependent solely on students' liking a particular teacher. When Carol said she felt "emotionally abused" by student misbehavior on the campout, she was making the kind of appeal students believed they ought to respect.

The working-class minority students at Ethnic High had a very different attitude toward teachers' use of intimacy as a source of influence. As Janet's case illustrates, warm personal ties could lead students to protect a teacher in a tight situation, to "help her out," but student ideology concerning intimacy was more ambivalent. Although students liked the freedom and respect they felt at Ethnic High, they themselves often had a relatively traditional conception of the proper role of a teacher. Indeed, if we reexamine Gloria's interchange with students over the problem of controlling her three-year-old son, we may see in it the students defending their conception of authority: rather than acclaiming freedom, openness, and self-expression, the students wanted Gloria to control her son, to hit him if he failed to obey, and to force him to show respect. However little they themselves obeyed

rules or respected their teachers, they believed in the principle of respect. Toward the end of the debate about Gloria's son, the students gave what they felt was the clinching argument: "Then he going to call you a name, his mother! You going to put up with it? You can't put up with that!" Gloria, half-shocked, half-amused, muttered softly, "Call me names! He does much worse than that." Cassie, a woman student, said, "If I cussed at my mother, she'd beat me 'til I couldn't stand up straight." Manuel said, "You got to hit him," and Bernette, laughing, summed up the students' view: "That kid going to get lynched."

The students advised Gloria to demand respect from her son as their parents had done and as they did with their own children (some of the students were themselves parents). However, the discussion also bore on the relations between students and teachers at Ethnic High. Gloria made the connection explicit early in the debate. She said, "My philosophy is that I won't punish Fernando for what he *says*. When he actually *does* something bad, I spank him. But I don't believe he should be punished for just talking. In my class I don't punish students for what they say." Gloria's attempt to link her leniency toward students with her philosophy of child-rearing was what precipitated Yvette's angry outburst about how someone was going to "work your kid over." The students seemed to be saying that they should be disciplined by the teachers, made to show respect for their elders.[3] An appeal for personal sympathy, to the ties of friendship between teachers and students, did not seem to the students an appropriate basis on which to resolve a school problem.

A direct rejection of shared responsibility for school problems occurred later in the same meeting. Gloria was again the teacher-protagonist. Raymond announced that the school had to deal with a very serious situation, and Gloria then described a complex prank in which a group of students had tried to hot-wire her car. She concluded her account by trying to see the humor in the situation: "Now when I got there, I gave the situation a kindly interpretation. After all, if they wanted to steal a car, they wouldn't steal mine which I had just left them in. In addition, they know I have a violent nature. What I saw there was a group of four-year-olds." Raymond asked what the students were going to do. Bernette again took the lead, saying, "This is between those two [Gloria and the students involved]." Raymond said, "But aren't we a community?" Bernette retorted with great emphasis, "We ain't in a community with no guys down there hot-wirin' no car! You can just call the *po*lice." Students were not impressed by having teachers' troubles laid out before them. These teachers, at least, would have to take

3. Mary Metz (1978b) reports very similar attitudes among lower-track (largely poor and black) students in the junior high schools she studied. Students tried to get away with as much as they could, yet in response to an interviewer's questions about examples of nonconformity in the classroom, "these students were the fastest to recommend that the teachers turn to punishment and they gave the most severe punishments" (p. 82).

care of their problems themselves. And such failures of personal appeals were made more likely by Ethnic High's more traditional ideology of authority, although teachers at both Group High and Ethnic High found the effectiveness of personal appeals limited.

THE SECOND POINT to be made about the limits of personal appeals is that, apart from differences between Group High and Ethnic High in ideologies about student-teacher relationships, in both schools intimacy was likely to be most effective for teachers whom students liked or admired. When students were hostile or indifferent, increased intimacy was of little value, and personal appeals inspired little empathy or concern. Janet, whom students liked, was able to use intimacy to protect her position and to compensate for indifferent teaching. Gloria, who had fewer close ties with students, found them unsympathetic when she turned to them for help. Raymond (who, in his forties, was considerably older than the students and the other teachers) frequently appealed for sympathy and support, but it was seldom forthcoming. He often talked to students about his own feelings, about his childhood, and about his philosophy of life. But they found his reminiscences, like his problems, boring and irrelevant to their own lives. Intimacy, then, did not work for all teachers. The effective use of personal appeals was dependent on friendship, admiration, or attraction, which only some teachers were able to generate. (At Ethnic High, the question of personal compatibility between teachers and students was often confounded with that of ethnic and racial identification: teachers had the best chance of establishing personal ties and a basis for identification with students from their own ethnic group—particularly if they also shared with students a common cultural style.)

Another weakness of personal appeals is that they are so easily overdone: intimacy is most valuable when it is sparingly bestowed. Because teachers have adult status, students may at first find it interesting, or a privilege, to see into their private lives. But when students are already on familiar terms with teachers, when teachers are not distant, intriguing figures, students may not set great store on friendship with them. At Group High, for example, Andrew had become an object of friendly condescension for his students. When he wanted students in his room to turn down a transistor radio, he yelled, "Turn that off or turn it damn low." A student mimicked him, "Damn low," and said, "Andrew, you're so crabby." Andrew occasionally tried to turn a conversation to titillating allusions to his own broad sexual experience, but students found even this unimpressive. Revelations of his private life no longer held much luster. Familiarity could easily breed contempt.

Even a teacher who is liked by students may overuse intimacy. Alice, who taught the women's studies class at Group High, was so friendly with students that she worried at times whether they were tired of her, whether

they still enjoyed her companionship. They sometimes talked about her like a younger sibling: "I'm worried about Alice. She seems to be unhappy this semester." Teachers who want to use intimacy successfully have to work to retain some glamour. They must exploit the adolescent crush and develop the subtle art of seeming friendly and egalitarian while preserving some mystery about themselves. A teacher who would use intimacy to gain influence must, like Salome, worry about what to do when the last veil is removed.

It is also possible to make a different, more psychological argument about the limits of intimacy. To the extent that students see teachers as parent figures, they may wish to be closer and more equal to them and at the same time want the teachers to retain their distance and superiority. This ambivalence would then be expected to show itself in scenes like that described above between Gloria and the students at Ethnic High. The students were angry at Gloria for failing to be a competent, authoritative parent, both to her own child and to the students. Students in free schools sometimes complain that freedom is really just an excuse for the indifference and laziness of adults. Whatever the underlying motives—whether intimacy is a resource that may become devalued or whether there are more complex issues involved—the teacher's problem is much the same. Teachers in free schools are dependent on warm, intimate relationships with students, yet they must also try to maintain a sense of distance and mystery.

A question remains as to why teachers so frequently turned to personal appeals even though these often failed. I do not have a complete answer to this question. Intimacy may be less a resource for influence than a way of reequilibrating status when the stock of one party has slipped. Perhaps when students won a battle, the teacher had to be slightly humbled, intimacy serving symbolically as a status equalizer. The other possible explanation for the teachers' continuing reliance on intimacy is simply that they had no alternative. When they were in trouble, the traditional options—to get angry, make threats, and reassert control—were closed off. Personal appeals were the only strategy teachers had for coping with the alternative school setting. The effect of this strategy was to put a tremendous premium on a teacher's ability to make himself charming, interesting, or glamorous enough so that intimacy would be an enticing reward.

The Public Use of Private Lives

Free school teachers cannot rely on their status as teachers for authority over students, but alternative sources of influence such as intimacy or friendship are easily depleted or devalued unless backed up by outside resources. Teachers in free schools find that their private selves, what they are as adults in the larger culture, is essential to their effectiveness as teachers. They are then driven to self-dramatization—and to self-exploitation—as they ransack their private lives for material that will make them interesting

to students. The demands of teaching fall on the whole personality of the teacher, with the frequent consequence that even the best free school teachers are drained and exhausted by their work.

George Dennison (1969:113) explains that his success as a free school teacher depended on his having an eventful, interesting private life:

> It was important to José that I was not just a teacher, but a writer as well, that I was interested in painting and had friends who were artists, that I took part in civil rights demonstrations. To the extent that he sensed my life stretching out beyond him into (for him) the unknown, my meaning as an adult was enhanced, and the things I already knew and might teach him gained the luster they really possess in life. This is true for every teacher, every student. The life meaning which joins them is the *sine qua non* for the process of education, yet precisely this is destroyed in the public schools.

For teachers at Group High and Ethnic High, the lack of separation between their roles in school and their "real" selves created enormous pressure to have independent interests outside the school—ideally, a second career—to provide teaching material and a source of personal prestige. The two art teachers at Group High, for instance, were both practicing artists who continued to produce and show their work while they taught. This activity both glamorized the teachers, enhancing their status and personal influence with students, and directly contributed to making their classes work. For example, students were excited by photography field trips, partly because these trips exposed them to new ways of thinking about visual images and partly because, on these trips, their teachers took photographs that were later shown in galleries and museums. Students on occasion could see their own faces on a museum wall.

At Ethnic High the celebrity of a published poet hired to teach creative writing inspired an enthusiasm the regular teachers were unable to elicit. Two other popular and effective Ethnic High teachers were a professional jazz musician (with a locally successful band) who taught jazz and an intermittently employed actor who taught drama. The latter's prestige among students soared when he used his media contacts to have a student production of a play he had written filmed for a local television station. Other teachers with distinctive talents drew on them for both inspiration and status. Steve, who taught psychology and physical education at Group High, was skilled in judo, Tai Chi, gestalt psychology, backpacking, and other countercultural specialties. (To these were added a wife and baby, hippy van, and an earthy, rugged style.) Carol's involvement in civil-rights activity and union politics lent her an aura of moral authority and political commitment. Alice, when she became interested in the women's movement, started a course on women's studies.

But even possession of a second career provided no guarantee of respect from students. A worldly Group High student reported that in an argument

with Fred, her art teacher, she said, "If you were a real artist, you'd be in New York, not hanging around here teaching high school." And what about teachers who were "just teachers"—for whom teaching was their only career? The most telling evidence of the peculiar pressures created by alternative schools is that teachers who were not artists, actors, or activists, who did not have a second career with which to nourish their teaching and buttress their status, felt the strain and with striking regularity tried to develop outside resources to shore up their position within the school.

Alice, for example, was a good and experienced teacher with a master's degree in English and a genuine commitment to alternative education. Though popular with students, she complained that the school had swallowed up her whole life, that she didn't "have any friends my own age any more." She felt exhausted and drained by her job. Diagnosing her teaching troubles as stemming from her uneventful private life, Alice enrolled in an evening course in gestalt psychology. The class gave her something to talk about in her own classes, led to a romantic involvement which made her personal life more exciting (and more interesting to discuss), and taught her group process techniques she could use in teaching.

Raymond, during his first year as director of Ethnic High, developed a passionate interest in film. He bought video equipment for the school and tried to induce students to use it. Very often, instead of chairing school meetings or even participating in them, he videotaped them. Although his success in involving students in film was only partial, videotaping or showing a film gave him something to do if a school meeing went badly or he ran out of things to discuss in class. Raymond's interest in film was at least partly an escape from teaching, but most other teachers also drew on their outside activities for their teaching. Gloria began attending an extension class in psychological symbolism and claimed that the class inspired her teaching. Marion, an expert seamstress, began a sewing class for students and another class in how to work in a fabric store. As a partner in an interracial marriage, she also drew on her personal life as a resource for teaching. Paula was involved in civil-rights activity and developed a class whose subject was how to work for political change. In contrast, neither Luis, who taught ethnic studies, nor Mark, who taught folk music and American literature, had an exciting personal style or was involved in outside activities that particularly interested students. Without these supplemental sources of attraction, both teachers eventually lost their jobs. Successful teaching depended on the ability to generate, and communicate, an interesting private life.

To the degree that free school teachers are made personally vulnerable by the ethic of openness, they need alternative sources of self-esteem and emotional sustenance. To the degree that their personal experiences are the major ingredients of their teaching, they need a life outside the school to provide raw material. If teachers rely on personal attachment to influence

students, they must try to be people who have exciting or glamorous enough personal lives to be worthy of student interest. Herbert Kohl (1967: 158-163) says that his students were interested in the fact that he had recently fallen in love and that they learned from his recent exposure to graduate school, to Harvard, to life. Despite his already sophisticated background, Kohl "did a lot of probing and research, tracing Greek myths to earlier African and Asiatic sources, discovering the wonders of Sumer and Akkad . . . Other teachers thought there was something ludicrous in researching to teach at an elementary level" (p. 54). But for less outstanding individuals, who perhaps have not just fallen in love or who may not have engrossing outside interests, free school teaching can make demands they are unable to meet.

There is evidence in other reports on free schools that these problems are not unique to the schools I studied. Joel Meister (1972:172) describes the unique pressures on teachers at a small, extremely open free school:

> We saw the teacher as a craftsman, the student as an apprentice. The student's recognition of the teacher's superior competence would legitimate his authority; and, we hoped, a change in role-defined relationships would result in more extensive and intensive personal contact through which a student could also learn from the manifold experiences of his teacher . . . The resulting pressures on the teachers were considerable. In effect we offered ourselves as models of adulthood; at the most, embodiments of maturity, creativity and wisdom.

Teacher Exhaustion

The requirement that free school teachers be personally involved with students and that they sustain an interesting life outside school leads to another phenomenon typical of free schools: teacher exhaustion. Free school teachers tend not to last very long in their jobs. In the published accounts, except that of Summerhill, teachers last only a year or two. They may not lose faith in open education—indeed, they often move from school to school or found new schools—but they feel a need to start afresh.

At Group High the teachers found that the school, although successful, was consuming their whole lives. Alice left Group High at the end of the year and returned to school to study humanistic psychology. Carol, the director, left to take an administrative post. Fred, saying he was tired of teaching, went on half-time leave the next year and on full leave the year after that. Although he eventually came back to teaching in a free school, he swore at the time he left that he would never teach in a free school again because it was so demanding. Steve, the psychology teacher, left to complete graduate school; and Andrew, who had been elected the new director, stayed another year, during which he was deposed, and then left. The three teachers who were still teaching by the beginning of the second year after my study were Phil, the math teacher, who had never taken up the school's

intense interpersonal style, Joe, an English teacher, who went on to become director of another alternative school, and Ricardo, an art teacher, who was not rehired by Group High but went on to teach art elsewhere.

At Ethnic High, which was a more discouraging place to teach than Group High, the two codirectors, who were new the year I studied the school, were by the middle of the year both talking longingly about going on leave. They had each limited their commitment to the school to two years and both planned to leave after that time. Denise said she just wanted some time to herself. Raymond talked about expanding his interest in film into a career, and when I once talked to him about a college to which students might apply, he asked whether he might be able to get a job there. Gloria left the school at the end of the year, while both Luis and Mark were let go before the year was out. Marion and Paula both planned to stay only one more year. Only Janet seemed unaffected by the school's peculiar pressures. She stayed on, friendly and relaxed with students, without trying too hard either to challenge or to impress them.

The relatively pessimistic evaluations of free schools that have appeared in recent years give evidence of that exhaustion, that sense of having invested too much, that plagued teachers at Group High and Ethnic High. Herbert Kohl (1973:48), in an article on open education, says, "We placed the school at the center of our lives and then began to realize that school was only a small part of the children's lives and that we were using them as a means for our own re-education." The themes of teacher exhaustion and frustration are heard again and again. In a disenchanted look at Bensalem, an experimental college, its former director writes, "We come full of enthusiasm, yet as quickly leave, often with bitterness. In the three years of its existence, Bensalem's faculty turnover has been well over 100 percent" (Freeman, 1973:31). Faculty, he notes, have difficulty living entirely in a student-dominated environment where they lose the advantage their superior knowledge might give them. They have little time to prepare material and no forum in which to present what they know. Inevitably, they fail to meet the demands students make on them. "The demand is to become involved in a loving, supportive relationship with students. It is frequently more important that the professor be 'one of the boys' on recreational trips than that he has some learning to impart. In indirect ways the students seek in the lives of faculty members the embodiment of the ideals of the experiment. It is something like a small town where the citizens forbid the pastor to smoke but smoke themselves" (p. 35).

John Holt, in *Freedom and Beyond* (1972:73-74), analyzed the problem of teacher exhaustion after reporting his conversation with a friend at an open alternative high school in Norway: "Anyway, she was telling me about some of the teachers who had been in the school when I first visited it. So-and-so has left; he was just exhausted. What about So-and-so? She is leaving too; she has to take a rest. And So-and-so? Oh, he has been there three years; he is completely exhausted." Holt asked why free school teachers who had "taught for years in conventional schools without getting exhausted, saying all the time how they hated the narrowness, the rigidity, the petty discipline," were now so worn out. His answer was that teachers, like a waiter desperately trying to satisfy a rich customer who found fault with every dish, were frantically trying to please children who no longer had to accept what teachers offered. Holt concluded, "It is not a proper task or a right relationship. It is not a fit position for an adult to be in. We have no more business being entertainers than being cops. Both positions are ignoble. In both we lose our rightful adult authority" (p. 75). His solution for this dilemma was that teachers should teach what they themselves were interested in, not something prepared especially for children: "What we really need are schools or learning resource centers that are not just for kids, but where adults come of their own free will to learn what they are interested in, and in which children are free to learn with and among them. How can children be expected to take school learning seriously when no one except children has to do it or does it?" (p. 76). But this solution—that adults should teach out of their own adult interests, should feed their teaching with their private lives—creates precisely the kinds of exhaustion that occurred in Group High and Ethnic High.

Teachers are not fatigued only by failing at alternative education. Quite the contrary: in Group High and Ethnic High, the most successful, enthusiastic, and lively teachers paid the heaviest toll. Wearing out teachers is part of the way free schools work: because teachers have responsibility without authority, they must fuel their teaching with their private lives. This process is exhausting, and the more successful teachers are at it, the more worn out they become.[4]

"That an adult, with a life of his own, was willing to teach [them]" was, says George Dennison (1969:113), the modest demand children at the First Street School made upon their teachers. But many free school teachers find that being such an adult, creating an independent life in addition to the life of a teacher, and being in intimate contact with students having one's personality, charm, and interests as one's only resources, is too wearing to sustain for very long.

4. Joyce Rothschild-Whitt (1976), studying several alternative organizations in the same community, discovered that although "burning out" was a problem in each of them, staff who left one free school or free clinic often turned up later as committed members of a food collective or an alternative newspaper. This finding is compatible with my own, reported above, that while some free school teachers left teaching altogether, others solved the problem of exhaustion by changing schools. Thus, perhaps, it is not the teachers as persons who wear out but their reserves of fresh revelations, insights, and idiosyncrasies. In my terms, teachers use up their supplies of intimacy and can restore the mystery and interest of their own personae only by moving to a new context.

Social Sources of Charisma

The kinds of personal influence discussed so far—friendship, intimacy, charm, prestige—are all subject to the same basic limitation: they are easily depleted or devalued. Teachers find themselves hard pressed to make their personalities and their private lives substitute for the authority they lack. Impelled to search for ways to amplify their personal leadership, some teachers attempt to tap collective symbolic meanings to generate new sources of psychological attachment. This attempt depends upon an ability to create an aura of extraordinariness around oneself, to appear larger than life, and to make claims on others for loyalty, respect, or obedience—what sociologists normally call *charisma*. Though the social worlds of Group High and Ethnic High were small, and by most standards relatively commonplace, they created the conditions for a process of general sociological significance: the creation of charismatic leadership.

The term *charisma*, as Reinhard Bendix (1968) points out, is widely used but seldom with the precision of Max Weber's original definition. As the latter (1925:358) defined it, charisma is "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities." Charismatic authority rests on "devotion" to the extraordinary qualities of the leader and "the normative patterns of order revealed or ordained by him" (p. 328). Individuals differ greatly in their charismatic gifts, and none of the teachers at Group High or Ethnic High was extraordinary in the sense of the great prophets or leaders Weber had in mind. Although some features of the free school situation are compatible with certain sociological models of charisma[5]—characterized by lack of structure and the participants' sense of being an embattled group united by shared values—these situational factors hardly explain charisma's appearance in free schools. One crucial aspect of charisma (in the full Weberian sense) is lacking altogether in the free school situation, that is, the principled claim of the leader to absolute obedience and the followers' corresponding belief that obedience is a duty. This intellectual aspect of the phenomenon is central to charismatic authority; it is the basis of legitimacy. Thus the amplified influence sought by teachers at Group High and Ethnic High was not *authority* in the sense of a right to rule. But the teachers at Group High and Ethnic High tried to nurture a charismatic aspect to their personal style. They did what they could to make themselves mysterious, unpredictable, and appealing. And the schools permitted and even encouraged this development. In a modest way, teachers could transcend the limits of personal influence by tapping *group* resources.

5. The search for a sociological understanding of that most individual, mysterious form of authority, charisma, has been a frustrating one. Many theorists have noted that charismatic leaders arise and are accepted in periods of social disruption. William Friedland (1964) has tried to systematize this insight by arguing that charismatic leaders are successful only when they express widely held but previously unarticulated popular sentiments, when they appear to take unusual personal risks on behalf of the group, and when their endeavors appear crowned by success. Richard Bord (1975), taking a more microsociological approach, analyzes the charismatic leader's dominance over his followers. According to Bord, the "uncritical receptiveness" of the charismatic leader's audience can be explained by conditions that cut them off from alternative sources of information, disorient them, and heighten their emotional arousal, by traits of the leader that make identification possible, and by characteristics of the leader's message—such as simplicity and repetition—that make it hard to resist.

Because social institutions embody larger cultural meanings, charismatic leadership is a continuing possibility in all organizations (Eisenstadt, 1968). Some organizations, however, facilitate charismatic leadership, whereas most organizations in modern societies systematically suppress charismatic possibilities. One of the circumstances under which organizations encourage charisma is the absence of other more conventional forms of authority.

The link between lack of authority and charismatic leadership is beautifully illustrated in Paul Harrison's study (1959) of the American Baptist Convention. The Baptists are committed to a "congregational" rather than an "ecclesiastical" church polity, and authority rests in the local congregation and ultimately in the spiritual autonomy of the individual believer. Thus "the Baptist denominational executives are given responsibility and limited power, but no legitimate authority." Instead, they have developed "an informal system of interpersonal and intergroup relations which bypasses the formal rules of order" (p. 62). Although the denomination is bothered by the "periodic appearance of some superman who gains too much power" (p. 76), the central executives are continually forced to rely on personalities of dynamic leaders in order to coordinate the business of the organization. An official described his approach by saying, "I operate in such a way that my programs are carried out by pastors because they want to carry them out, and I have to make them want to" (p. 76). Other church officials acted as "pastors' pastors," defining their influence as spiritual guidance. In the Baptist church hierarchy, as in alternative schools, a commitment to minimizing authority stimulated the proliferation of charismatic leadership.

Similar patterns develop in other alternative organizations: without institutionalized roles and rules, personality (and in some cases expertise) inevitably comes to the fore. If other mechanisms of group coordination are absent, charismatic individuals must be tolerated, or even encouraged. In the somewhat jaundiced account cited above, Bensalem's former director notes, "Another obvious aspect of self-government at Bensalem is that it is a game largely without rules. In such a situation those with individual power and individual gifts of rhetoric and persuasion tend to rise to the top of the heap. Self-government becomes the law of the jungle in which control goes to the strong" (Freeman, 1973:18). A more generous view of the same pro-

cess appears in a study of alternative mental health programs: "Clear informal status hierarchies develop within the programs. These are based on many of the same factors and fulfill some of the same functions as formal status hierarchies. In each program there are obvious leaders, staff members who, because of their longer association with the program or their clinical expertise, are set apart from the others. Other staff members achieve leadership through attractive personal traits" (Holleb and Abrams, 1975:127). Egalitarian groups, as Jane Mansbridge notes (1973:363), must rely on personal influence, and they also suffer the consequences: "Some people, through a joyous disposition, an accumulation of social skills, physical beauty, or a taste for the dramatic, draw others to them. Other members want to be close to them and feel hurt when rejected."

Some organizations actively generate libido, "collective effervescence," or highly charged symbolic patterns, which add to the charismatic appeal of particular individuals. The classic examples are, of course, charismatically inspired religious communities where, despite a theoretical equality of all believers, leadership is validated and obeyed through the institutionalized appearance of "divine inspiration." In Charles Nordhoff's description (1875) of the nineteenth-century Amana colony, for example, it is clear that the community expected charismatic leadership, and in such an atmosphere inspired leaders were forthcoming. The leader of the congregation, called by God, ruled through inspiration: "They regard the utterances, while in the trance state, of their spiritual head as given from God; and believe—as is asserted in the Catechism—that evils and wrongs in the congregation will be thus revealed by the influence, or, as they say, the inspiration or breath of God; that in important affairs they will thus receive the divine direction; and that it is their duty to obey the commands thus delivered to them" (p. 47). Here is a clear example of a community's creating an explicit doctrine, a set of emotional expectations, and a set of identifying marks that bring forth and legitimate charismatic leadership.

Some of the mechanisms by which charismatic leadership is generated in otherwise unstructured communities appear in Gary MacDonald's collection of reports on experimental colleges (1973a). Faculty at these alternative colleges developed the same patterns of increasingly intimate and simultaneously unsatisfying contact with students that occurred at Group High and Ethnic High. The degeneration of relations between faculty and students and the increasingly disorderly and depressing atmosphere was a stimulus to the development of charismatic leadership. Faculty could protect themselves only by having a devoted student following, and students could feel inspired only if they had a faculty member to worship. At Bensalem, where students had adopted a 75 percent-majority rule in all hiring decisions, faculty, Kenneth Freeman (1973) argues, could be hired only if they appeared dazzling and somehow managed to stimulate the fantasy that they could meet all students' needs and magically revitalize the community. Teachers were thus ascribed charismatic attributes before they even arrived based on the hopes and frustrations of the community, and their problem was to keep from being crushed by student anger and disappointment when they were found to be merely human.

A different sort of evidence about the sources of charismatic influence comes from the many studies and observations of experimental small groups, "training groups" or "T-groups" (with nearly silent, nondirective leaders), designed to help group members and researchers understand group processes. In these unstructured small groups, intense emotions often develop, focused on the group leader (Bion, 1959; Mills, 1964; Slater, 1966). Philip Slater (1966) suggests that in an ambiguous situation, where group members receive little direction from the leader and are uncertain about the group's purpose, they project fantasies about authority onto the leader. Infantile wishes and fears of parental authority lead group members to exaggerate the wisdom and power of the group leader. Drawing on Freud's model in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,* Slater argues that the group creates a rudimentary though inadequate solidarity through its shared infatuation with the leader. Later, when the leader has disappointed their fantasies of love and salvation, the group members rebel, breaking the spell of enchantment with the leader, coming to evaluate their own capacities more realistically, and freeing themselves to turn more of their libido toward one another.

Group High and Ethnic High resembled these small groups in that they were able to create libido, shared symbols, and a highly charged atmosphere, which amplified the personalities of individual members and generated a charismatic aspect to their personal influence.[6]

Self-Dramatization

Some teachers at Group High and Ethnic High were endowed with unusual personal gifts. On the day I first visited Steve's psychology class,

6. One might ask why these two alternative schools did not resemble small groups in the rest of their dynamics—in rebellion against the leader and its consequences. First, rebellions of this type do occur often in free schools (see MacDonald, 1973a; Deal, 1975). Group High suffered a coup the year after I studied it. Two years before I studied Ethnic High, its founder had been deposed and a new leader brought in. However, there are some differences between free schools and small groups. In the small group it is in some ways the responsibility of the nondirective leader to be an unsatisfying object of fantasy projections, not to provide miraculous cures or libidinal gratifications to the group members, precisely so that they become frustrated enough to rebel, thereby breaking the spell of their own fantasies. In real social organizations, however, charismatic leaders benefit from their position and try to thwart rebellious impulses, satisfying at least some of the demands made upon them. A final reason why the rebellious impulse was muted in Group High and Ethnic High was that in both schools there was no single charismatic center. Rather, many of the teachers were able to derive some glamour from their positions in the school.

Steve was absent, but his spirit was very much present. The students urged me, "You should come back when he's here. He's very charismatic." And he was. He managed to embody both countercultural and conventional virtues —practicing meditation and exploring alternative therapies while excelling at traditional athletics. Strikingly handsome, he had also adopted an unsettling manner, alternating between gruff, aggressive teasing and a sublimely self-contained indifference. He managed to keep students both awed and enthralled. Other teachers found different ways to expand their charismatic appeal, and in part this was accomplished by sheer self-dramatization. They exaggerated personal eccentricities, and worked to appear unpredictable and mysterious while adhering to the school's ethic of intimacy and openness. One teacher hinted at some private unhappiness, finally confessing to a small coterie of student friends a near love affair with a married friend. Each teacher cultivated a distinctive style—aspiring to become the stuff of which myths are made.[7]

Perhaps the most remarkable in this regard was Fred, one of the Group High art teachers. He developed a sort of studied inarticulateness, sounding more like a laconic cowboy than the upper-middle-class university graduate he was. He was known throughout Group High for his brief and somehow alarmingly direct dicta, the most famous of which was "just taking care of business"—which meant, roughly, facing up to things squarely without losing one's composure. Fred sewed strange embroideries on his denim shirts (not conventional hippie designs, but peculiar uncoordinated zigzags, loops, and tangles of thread, like some parody of embroidery), making students ask, "Did you do that yourself?" For months he wore all black, answering, when someone finally asked, that he was protesting the Vietnam war. Another teacher was described in the student "yearbook" as "intelligent, wise, sexy, flamboyantly foolish and childlike, avid motorcyclist, able to leap tall buildings at a single bound . . . or so." The yearbook also presented an elaborate tongue-in-cheek description of another art teacher's battle with students over sculptures of hands giving "the finger."

The recounting of teacher exploits in the student yearbook points up how much teachers' charismatic accomplishments at Group High rested on shared meanings and a group atmosphere that made teacher charisma possible, rather than on the unusual personal magnetism of individual teachers. For example, a teacher encounter group, held during the first year the school was in operation, heightened the aura of mystery and erotic interest surrounding the teachers. The encounter group explored unconscious attractions, resentments, and sexual fantasies—intensifying these feelings in the process—while rumors about what went on in the group aroused student curiosity, focusing attention on the teachers and giving student imaginations something to feed upon.

7. Lest this predilection for self-dramatization seem unique to Group High and Ethnic High, compare a former student's description of faculty at an experimental college: "[T]he original Fairhaven faculty was a euphoric, dedicated lot. One remembers a brilliant Scots hotshot in literature who delighted classes with his acidic wit and clever philosophizing; an unassuming MIT graduate in physics who mortified pubescent freaks with class questions like, 'Do you masturbate?' and 'How would you describe the analogy between sexual climax and intellectual perception?'; the artist who entranced audiences with tales of his gambling exploits on the French Riviera; the wild-haired opera singer (with a Ph.D.) whose fondest dream was to build a harpsichord from scratch; a grand old patriarch of psychology; and a kind Scandinavian with a passion for Wallace Stevens" (MacDonald, 1973b:205).

The erotic mystique of the encounter group was only one sign of the sexual awareness that pervaded Group High, contributing to the charismatic appeal of the teachers. Of course most adolescents are fascinated by sex, but Group High made sexual themes a legitimate, even honored part of public discourse. Students and teachers joked about sex, gossiped about who was dating whom, and discussed details of their own romantic exploits. The school's relaxed atmosphere permitted casual, often revealing clothing for both students and teachers, and students also felt free to kiss, hold hands, or casually touch one another during classes. The school added to the sensual ambiance by encouraging group activities from folk dancing to gestalt exercises to foot massages. This general air of erotic anticipation, although it seldom led to action, enhanced the emotional links between students and teachers.[8]

Students at Group High mythicized their teachers, finding in them symbols of the school's central values and thereby adding to their charismatic stature. The teachers' distinctive accomplishments—of style or substance—were amplified by collective imagination. Student interest made the teachers seem larger than life, whether as objects of admiration or as objects of aggression.

Each student collective had two teacher-sponsors, and they were sometimes referred to as "Carol's" or "Andrew's" collective. The collectives also took their distinctive character and traditions in large part from the teachers affiliated with them. But the teacher's position was something between that of symbolic center and that of group mascot. In the egalitarian atmosphere of Group High, teachers could be central symbolic figures only by putting up with considerable ritual joking and teasing (and occasional rebellious confrontations), a largely affectionate form of status degradation. Still, such group attention did contribute to teacher charisma. Even ordinary actions, when made a focus of collective interest, can become signs of "ex-

8. Despite this overtly "sexy" atmosphere, student-student romances were rare, and what is more, teacher-student romances seemed to go against school norms. However, the ethic of "freedom" in some free schools apparently permits such relationships. Joel Meister (1972:81) calmly reports that the director of the small, experimental boarding school where he taught slept with several female students. Group High teachers reported that the director of a local free school they visited bragged that he and one of the students had just been making love.

traordinariness." Friendly surveillance of teachers' behavior was common at Group High, and although it robbed teachers of privacy, it also magnified their personal traits. The sociological rule seems to be that a figure on which much social attention is focused automatically increases in stature. (We all know the feeling of excitement and awe at seeing someone we know well suddenly transformed by public attention; whether performing in a school play or a wedding, giving a speech, or receiving a diploma, a familiar person appears grander in the public spotlight.)

Shared Values

Teachers were also able to enhance their personal charisma by embodying group values. At Group High some teachers were admired as individuals, but more important, all the teachers were symbolic authority figures who had undergone a radical transformation. Teachers who acted as students' equals represented the new values the school was trying to create. The teachers sensed this connection and played upon it, using that space between traditional expectations of the teacher role and relaxed free school style to enhance their personal charisma. With some sense of how to play the scene, a teacher could make himself (or herself) intriguing simply by cracking a joke or saying "fuck" during a class. Teachers could turn to advantage the fact that they were adults who acted "kidlike." They were like perfect fantasy parents—young, tolerant, interesting, and lively. Thus by gratifying students' fantasies, in addition to exaggerating their own peculiarities and submitting to a sometimes excessive attention, many teachers obtained a charismatic boost to their personal leadership.

Ethnic High's teachers had a similar resort to charisma based on shared values, but their use of it took a different form. Ethnic High's focus was multicultural; the school sought to create self-acceptance and mutual respect among different racial and ethnic groups. This value was neatly embodied in the pair who directed the school during its first year as a multicultural alternative. Ruby, a dynamic black woman in her forties, was director, and Tom, a much younger Chicano, was codirector. They were lovers during the year they ran the school and married shortly thereafter. Students were thrilled by their picturesque romance and felt their energetic, forceful personalities and exciting teaching to be the core of the school's program.

The following year (when I was studying Ethnic High), another symbolic pair ran the school: this time a black man (Raymond) was director, while a Chicana (Denise) was codirector. These two, however, did not become lovers, and they did not have the dynamic personalities of their predecessors. They, along with other teachers, continued to stress the values of ethnic pride and political militancy they shared with students, but the school's enrollment decreased throughout the year. Although a number of factors contributed to this decline, the most common complaint was a lack of excitement and a general slackening of morale, frequently linked to a nostalgic tribute to Ruby and Tom: "School was so exciting when they were here."

It is difficult to know what inhibited the formation of effective charismatic leadership at Ethnic High. The teachers, as I have argued, did their best to exploit their personal resources—to make themselves seem exciting and interesting. But this scramble for personal prestige undermined efforts to develop a symbolic center that could supplement teachers' private achievements with collectively generated charisma. Rather than students giving mythic significance to even the ordinary actions of teachers, the process seemed to work in reverse, with teachers able to establish credibility and win esteem only by attaching themselves to symbolically central members of the student peer culture.

The school's multicultural identity was most effectively embodied in the romantic relationships within the dominant student clique. Bernette, a black woman, lived with Tony, a Chicano, who was the father of her child. Maria, a Chicana, was Bernette's closest friend. She had a child from a previous relationship, and her current boyfriend, Bobby, was black. Ken, also black, and Julie, who was Asian, were married and had a child. The final members of this central group were Anita and Malcom, both black. At the beginning of the school year they were not romantically involved, but by the end of the year they were a steady couple and Anita was pregnant with Malcom's child.

The distribution of charisma thus differed in Group High and Ethnic High. At Group High the teachers were the major focus of mystery and drama. Students participated in that excitement by sharing teachers' secrets, knowing what was going on in their lives, gossiping about them, and mythicizing their actions. At Ethnic High, on the other hand, during the year I studied the school, the compelling romantic relationships and the major charismatic personalities were to be found among the students. The teachers sought to ally themselves both practically and symbolically with the core student group—praising the students, making much of the students' children, and drawing analogies between their own lives and the lives of these student couples. Janet, for example, enjoyed pointing out how elements in her own life were similar to those of some of the students, explaining that she admired Bernette and looked up to her as an example of a "strong" woman. Bernette and Tony, Maria and Bobby, and the others were spoken of with pride, as a kind of special school achievement. The charismatic focus was on the students. Both Group High and Ethnic High attempted to extract elements of charisma out of whatever raw materials were available. At Group High teachers became central figures, but at Ethnic High teachers shared the symbolic limelight with students whose lives seemed to embody the school's core values.

I do not mean to argue that either school developed full-fledged charismatic leadership in the classic Weberian sense. Certainly they did not. In-

deed, teachers in both schools were often on the defensive, and they could seldom motivate compliance simply on the basis of their personal extraordinariness. Still less were they, like Weber's prophets, embodiments of a new moral order in the name of which they demanded obedience. But certain features of charismatic authority—the fact that it taps collective sources of psychic energy, that it is an authority without presuppositions, and that it relies on a kind of infatuation with the person of the charismatic leader—were encouraged in Ethnic High and Group High. The readiness of both schools to develop charismatic leadership was a response to the need of teachers to expand the resources upon which they could draw beyond the limits of their unadorned private personalities, interests, and abilities.

Dilemmas of Personal Influence

Charisma, ideally, is a solution to the problems of personal influence—to the fact that friendship, intimacy, and even external sources of prestige lose value with continued use. Charismatic leaders, I have argued, draw on collective symbols and emotions to sustain their personal prestige, and thus their influence. Yet even a charismatic leader must work to sustain his claim to possess extraordinary gifts (Bendix, 1968:619-620). For teachers at Group High and Ethnic High, there was pressure to maintain a personal mystique. This fact meant that it was in their interest to be unpredictable, exotic, and complicated. At the same time, many of the teachers' needs were very prosaic. They wanted students to do ordinary, unexciting, routine things like attend class, participate in school activities, and occasionally do assignments. Teachers then found themselves in the dilemma of gaining prestige only by encouraging the unusual or exciting, while depleting their scarce reserves of influence when they tried to get students to do precisely those unexciting things that make a teacher's life easier. This dilemma is similar in many ways to the problems of those who try to routinize charismatic authority—to create a stable organizational structure without destroying the basis of charismatic legitimacy.

The instability of many free schools may be caused precisely by this charismatic aspect of the influence of teachers. The rebellious, disruptive act of a student can be supported because the teacher thereby demonstrates his "cool," his special indifference to the ordinary rewards of this world. When a teacher tries to enforce, or even adapt to, an ordinary school routine, he has great difficulty remaining glamorous. Furthermore, free school teachers are continually tempted to advocate, or engage in, extreme or disruptive behavior. I mentioned in chapter 1 that at Group High meetings, teachers often were more radical and made much more trouble than the students: they were under a kind of pressure for charismatic credibility that did not affect students to the same extent.

Teachers' reliance on charismatic influence also affected school administration. Weber (1925:335) pointed out that every bureaucratic heirarchy has

a nonbureaucratic top. But in an ironic reversal of Weber's classic observation, when an entire organization is filled with charismatic figures, bureaucratic tasks are pushed to the top of the organization. At Group High and Ethnic High, there were a number of regular administrative responsibilities that had to be met for the schools to survive. Someone had to negotiate with the school district, take attendance, and submit budget requests, personnel data, grades, and grant proposals. So in these schools, and in many countercultural organizations, there is a noncharismatic top to the charismatic organization. That person who takes responsibility for practical matters loses much of his flexibility and mystery. He becomes the nag, the one who spoils other people's fun. And so the job of director was not much sought after at either Group High or Ethnic High, and directors, unless they had extraordinary charismatic abilities, were likely to find themselves disliked and continually losing influence because of the bureaucratic role they played. Indeed, Group High went for a semester without a director because no one would take the job. The teacher who agreed to take the title refused the responsibility and was unwilling to use his personal influence to make sure administrative matters were handled in a reliable, routine way.

Indeed, it is the torment of alternative organizations that they both need and abhor leadership. This ambivalence appears in most alternative organizations and is a source of difficulty both for the organizations and for those who undertake leadership roles. Joyce Rothschild-Whitt (1977:148) points out that alternative institutions "need informal leaders," but "the very presence of leaders signifies that inequalities in influence exist in an organization where such unequalities are not freely admitted." Because leaders must seek influence through informal means, they are always treading a dangerous path. Although the organization may temporarily encourage them, it is always ready to turn upon them, rejecting precisely the informal, personal domination implied in their leadership role.[9] Alternative organizations then show an erratic pattern, vacillating between encouraging charismatic leadership as an antidote to structurelessness and more or less cruelly rejecting that leadership. The one way out of this dilemma, as Rothschild-Whitt and Jo Freeman (1972-1973) point out, is institutionalization of mechanisms of collective decision making and control, which minimizes the need for individual leadership.

In summary, social control through personal intimacy has its own peculiar dynamics: as teachers throw more and more of their private lives into their teaching, what they have to offer becomes less and less valuable to students. Teachers find themselves exhausted, drained, and sometimes neglected. Yet personal relationships still have greater capacity to motivate

9. For examples, see Joyce Rothschild-Whitt (1977) on an alternative newspaper collective; George Fitzgerald (1971) on communes; Gordon Holleb and Walter Abrams (1975) on alternative mental health centers; and Jo Freeman (1972-1973) on women's groups.