ABSTRACT
          This paper defines alternative schools, exploring
such critical parameters as their organizational context and
structure, their curricular focus and pedagogical approach, and their
governance. Also reviewed are some of the studies of experimental
schools. Prior research is placed in the context of a critique which
argues that more detailed information is needed about the quality of
everyday life in the programs rather than on traditional evaluative
measures of outcomes. The paper has two stated purposes: first, to
dispel some of the popular misconceptions about alternative schools
by describing various programs and practices that use that term; and
second, to impose some conceptual order on the large number of
alternatives through a review of some of the dimensions along which
these schools vary. The data on alternative schools were gathered
through the author's personal experience and through a review of the
literature. It is suggested that more ethnographic research be
conducted on alternative schools. (Author/AM)

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ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS:

A REVIEW

David Thornton Moore
Assistant Professor of Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, New York

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During the early years of this decade, the debate on the value and effect of alternative education raged in many school districts.   Since that time, the rhetoric has cooled somewhat: Schools have survived and been accepted, or have died out.   Here and there a new controversy flares up centering on funding cuts for one school or a startling proposal for another, but by and large, public attention has waned.   Yet many of the stereotypes and misconceptions which gave energy to the early disputes live on. People only peripherally connected to education either know nothing at all about what "alternative school" means or cling to some peculiar image of barefooted hippies or roving street gangs.   What discussion there is of options in public education--a term popularized by Mario Fantini (1974, 1976)--often betrays an ignorance of what is currently known about alternative schools.

The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, to dispel some of the popular misconceptions about alternative schools by describing various programs and practices that use that term; and second, to impose some conceptual order on the melange of alternatives, reviewing some of the dimensions along which such schools vary.   Perhaps the most solid argument of this paper--though certainly not the most enlightening or helpful--is this: No single definition of alternative schools can accommodate all the programs which go by that name.   Generalizations about any aspect of alternative schools --the characteristics of students and teachers, achievement and attendance rates, funding, structure, curriculum--must ignore the vastly contradictory data available.   My plan, therefore, is to suggest several sets of options open to people who would design or analyze alternative schools, that is, to confront the question, "What do different people mean when they use the term alternative school?" In addition, I will review some of the studies of experimental schools, placing prior research in the context of a critique which argues that we need richer and more detailed information about the quality of everyday life in new programs.   I will suggest that many studies use the wrong measures to document and evaluate alternative schools, and that more work of an ethnographic sort must be done before we can say we comprehend educational innovation.

A caveat regarding the nature of the data utilized in this paper: My information comes from two types of sources, neither entirely reliable.   The first source is my own experience.   I taught in one alternative school in Philadelphia for over two years; I did an intensive study of another in Boston over the course of a school year; and I have visitied perhaps a dozen others.   The second and far more

- 1 -

4

broad-based source of information, then, is the body of literature
generated over the last decade by members of alternative schools,
by various scholars, by observers from the popular press, and by
one or another government agency.   Some of that literature is in
my judgment accurate, sound, and useful.   Much of it, I will argue,
is at best questionable.   In this paper, I will describe alternative
schools as I believe them to be; I will also critique some of the
available writings.   The degree to which my versions of phenomenal
reality reflects the "truth" is a question I cannot answer.

WHAT IS AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL?

     Numbers alone make impossible a single description of alternative
schools.   No survey has ever adequately identified all experimental
school programs in the United States, although several have made valiant
attempts (cf. Wolf, Walker, and Mackin, 1974; Barr, 1975; Harch, 1974;
Flaxman and Homstead, 1978; Graubard, 1971).   The problem lies both in
the arbitrary quality of the definition--one survey (Harch, 1974) listed
the Miquon Upper School in Philadelphia, but excluded the Miquon Lower
School--and in the tremendous difficulty in simply locating all of the
programs.   In 1973, the International Consortium on Options in Public
Education (ICOPE) found 464 public alternatives in thirty-five states;
in 1975, it estimated that there would be as many as 5,000 (Barr, 1975).
Finding the "free schools"--the term used for most nonpublic alternatives
--is even more troublesome, particularly given their relatively short
life spans.   What is clear is this: Within the last ten years, hundreds
and probably thousands of new programs defined by their designers as in
some way alternative have been created inside and outside public school
systems.   Hundreds of them survive (Flaxman and Homstead, 1978).

     But what are these schools?   How are they organized?   Who are
their students, their teachers?   What do people do in them?   Alterna-
tive schools vary along a number of dimensions.   People who design
innovative programs must decide on a wide range of issues.   Sometimes,
one decision tends to follow another--for instance, free schools, by
virtue of their funding sources and governance structures, are generally
small--but many of the choices may be, made independently.   As a result,
the schools and programs cannot be placed into a unidimensional typology.
Some of the critical parameters are described below.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT AND STRUCTURE

     One very clear decision facing school developers is whether or not
to stay within the public system.   The choice carries profound conse-
quences for the nature of the school population, funding, staffing,
stability, curriculum: all of these may vary depending on whether or not
the school is operated by a local Board of Education.   Which option is
selected depends, of course, on the people who are making it.   Many of
the free schools documented by Graubard (1972) were created by people who

were buoyed by the radical spirit of the times and were convinced
that the public school bureaucracies would inevitably crush their
innovations. Other reformers, concerned perhaps about the vast
majority of students who would necessarily stay in the public
system, and wary of the endless struggle free schools face in
securing funds, chose to work within official channels. I have
discovered no pattern in the backgrounds or politics or tempera-
ments of those who made the different decisions: Some public
school teachers left their jobs to found new schools, while some
radicals decided to become public school teachers and spark change
from within. One way or another, the choice had great importance.

The origins of a school could shape its future profoundly as
well. The Alternative Schools Project in suburban Philadelphia
was initiated by administrators, while many of the magnet school
programs in Boston were organized by teachers. Students themselves
participated in founding some schools (cf. Elizabeth Street Cleaners
School, 1972), and parent or community groups began others. Again,
no systematic study has been done to compare schools started by
different types of people, but the source of the initial conception
and momentum must make a difference.

The organizational format or structure of alternative schools
varies along at least one crucial dimension: the degree to which the
program is embedded in the context of the traditional schools. Free
schools, which are by definition independent of the public school
system, enter the typology several steps along, roughly where indepen-
dent public alternatives are; the degree of similarity between free
and independent alternative schools is an empirical issue which must
be confronted on a case-by-case level. In the following paragraphs,
I will describe several structural options for alternative programs
varying in their autonomy from the traditional schools.

Classroom-based Programs. In terms of numbers, perhaps the
most common form of innovation exists in isolated classrooms in other-
wise conventional schools. Within the confines of his or her own
room, a teacher may experiment with ideas ranging from the British
infant school model (cf. Silberman, 1970) to the microsociety idea
proposed by Richmond (1973). While teachers attempting such
innovations generally need the support (or at least noninterference)
of their principals, they may be completely independent of other
instructors in the school. Some members of Philadelphia's former
Affective Education Program, for instance, were the only teachers in
their schools using the new curriculum; their support came instead
from the central program office and faculty members in other schools.
The Open Corridor Project, initiated in New York's Upper West Side by
Lillian Weber, also worked with individual teachers but tried to
develop support networks within schools. Still, the essential reform
affected the classroom and perhaps its neighbors. What distinguishes
this form of innovation is that it i classroom-based and does not
necessarily alter the functioning of the rest of the school. At the

high school level, for instance, a student may participate in an
experimental social studies class--one, say, which uses oral
history methods to study a town's black community--and spend the
rest of the day in conventional English, science, and math classes.

Schools-Within-Schools. Slightly more distinct from the
regular schools are programs variously called schools-within-a
school, minischools, or magnet programs. In essence, such a pro-
ject establishes within the organizational and physical context of
the larger school a subunit with which a student may spend some
or all of the day. The degree of autonomy may vary: Some schools-
within-schools remove a group of teachers and students entirely from
the standard round of classes and activities and leave them to enact
a wholly different school program; others keep the program members
together for only part of the day and expect them to participate in
conventional classes the rest of the time (cf. Liebrader, 1977;
Wharton, 1975; Balsam, 1976).

Schools-within-schools are created for various administrative
and pedagogical reasons. One significant function of the magnet
schools in Boston and other cities is to attract students from
different areas to a special program, thereby improving the racial
balance of the student body. Rather than reassign students solely
on the basis of race, the idea here is to encourage parents and
children voluntarily to choose to enroll in other schools because of
certain educational options. Other programs may be invented to
accommodate specific groups, such as pregnant teenage women; a mini-
school of this type was attached to Gratz High School in Philadelphia.

Independent Alternative Schools. In many cities, entire schools
are designed as alternatives to the conventional model. Some, like
Philadelphia's famous Parkway Program, New York's City-as-School, and
Boston's LAB School, are newly created, established specifically as
alternatives. Others, like four different elementary schools in the
Southeast Alternatives system in Minneapolis, were traditional schools
revamped to try new methods. Independent schools are occasionally
affiliated with regular schools: The School for Human Services in
Philadelphia was known as an "annex" of John Bartram High Schools.
In that case, students may come only from the home school, may take
courses in the home school, if necessary (many do enroll in science
and math courses at conventional schools, since alternatives are oft-
weak in those areas), and they receive their diplomas from the home
school. Other schools are truly independent: off-site, with their
own principals, autonomous staff, and diploma-granting powers. If
they choose, as all public schools and many free schools do, to offer
state-accredited diplomas, the schools must satisfy certain local and
state requirements; but the independent alternatives manage to develop
a wide range of ways of creating new definitions for school (cf. Bremer
and von Moschzisker, 1971; Simon, 1973; Moore, 1978).

Alternative Systems. A few districts in the country have instituted

full-blown alternative school systems, offering an array of educa-
tional options at every grade level.   Some of these, such as
Berkeley, California, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, were instigated
by the United States Office of Education and later supported by
the National Institute of Education (NIE) under the Experimental
Schools Project.   In order to create "comprehensive change" in
these systems, NIE funded elementary, intermediate, and secondary
alternative programs and encouraged coordination of the projects
so that students theoretically could progress through their entire
school careers within the alternative system.   At its height, the
Berkeley Experimental Schools Project (BESP) reached up to 30 percent
of the school population in twenty-three separate sites ranging from
independent schools to modified classrooms. Results overall were
disappointing, however.   According to an evaluation report, only
seven of the twenty-three programs survived the end of NIE funding
of BESP, and five of those seven antedated BESP itself (Institute
for Scientific Analysis, 1976:3).   Southeast Alternatives in
Minneapolis--incidentally one of the most thoroughly researched sets
of alternative schools in the country--seems to be in better shape
(cf. Nelson et al., 1975).

Alternative school programs assume many different organizational
forms, then, both inside and outside the public education system.
With varying degrees of autonomy from the conventional schools, the
experimental projects may be modified classrooms, schools-within-
schools, independent alternatives, or entire systems.   Much more
remains to be said about the people who participate in the schools
and what they do together.

Membership: Students and Teachers.   Alternative schools are
created by and for many different kinds of people.   One dimension
along which schools might be analyzed is the degree of universality
or specificity of their student populations. / On one end of the
spectrum are those schools designed for any and all students.   They
often use self-selection or lottery procedures for admissions: Either
a student chooses to apply for admission to the school and is auto-
matically enrolled, or applicants' names are chosen at random.   The
distinction is whether or not the program is oversubscribed.   At the
other end of the spectrum are programs designed for narrowly defined
groups of students, such as adolescent mothers or members of a gang.
Even those schools differ in the extent to which students have a
choice about attending.   Many critics argue that programs in which
students are forced to enroll--by court order, guidance referral, or
test result--are not in fact alternative schools regardless of format
or atmosphere.

· No generalization can describe the students who attend alterna-
tive schools.   Academic aptitude varies enormously not only between
schools, but often within schools.   Students in the school where I
taught in Philadelphia (roughly 175) scored from the ninety-ninth to
to the first percentile on virtually every subtest of the Stanford

Achievement Tests (Gibboney and Langsdorf, 1972).   There are, however,
schools designed exclusively for students with academic problems; even
those may be for either low-aptitude or under-achieving students.

Many schools--seemingly more and more, in fact--cater to students
who for one reason or another have trouble m.eting the demands of a
conventional school.   This issue is tricky and difficult: To what
extent are such programs created to serve the needs of individual stu-
dents, and to what extent are they designed to remove troublesome kids
from the regular schools? ' The rhetoric of most programs, at least,
sounds supportive rather than punitive.   The School of Survival (SOS)
in Minneapolis lists some criteria which qualify a student for admission: ,
poor academic skills, low tolerance for large group situations, short
attention span, irregular attendance, an inability to meet regular time
requirements, poor authority relationships, low motivation, poor social
interaction skills, and others.   A skeptic could easily rephrase those
traits as laziness, trouble-making, antisocial behavior, and talking
back to teachers.   But the tone of the rest of the program description
suggests that staff members are genuinely concerned to help students
rather than to keep them in line (Wharton, 1975).   Such programs must
be judged on their individual merits.   Inputing control motives to ad-
ministrators without assessing their practices is unfair.

Racial and ethnic composition of alternative schools tends to re-
flect student populations as a whole.   According to the survey conducted
by the National Alternative Schools Program in 1974, roughly two-thirds of
the students attending alternative schools in the United States are white,
one-quarter are black, and the rest represent other minority groups; these
figures are statistically similar to overall numbers (Wolf, Walker and
Mackin, 1974)..   More will be said about the issue of student diversity
later in the paper.

As is true of stud nts, no easy generalization accommodates the people
who teach in alterna: e schools.   The stereotype of eight or ten years
ago--young, radical, upper-middle class, bearded, dungareed--no longer
obtains, if it ever did.   Wenokur (1976) surveyed teachers in independent
alternatives, schools-within-schools (SWS), and regular schools in New York
City, and found that distinctions among them were rather subtle.   Faculty
members in independent alternatives tended to be slightly younger than
those in the other two types of schools (a majority were under thirty);
they were also less likely to be married and had less experience in teach-
ing and in graduate study.   In addition to demographics, Wenokur examined
such attitudes as Task Orientation, Occupational Expectations, and Profes-
sional-Bureaucratic Orientation.   He found the three groups roughly
matched in Task Orientation (commitment to students over school); SWS
teachers were slightly more professionally oriented than those in the
other types, and they also showed the highest "internal" orientation
(teachers in regular schools were the most "externally" oriented).   Most
significantly, the survey demonstrated that the differences among the
three groups were not so drastic as to suggest that various types of
schools attract different personality types as teachers.   That is not to

say that the jobs or the schools are identical, but rather that
the people who choose to take them on are not radically different.

What is clear from the literature on schools across the
country, then, is that they serve an enormous variety of students:
all classes, races, religions, academic backgrounds, aptitudes,
and interest.   Teachers vary less, but widely still.

CURRICULAR FOCUS AND PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The alert reader will hardly be surprised to hear that no
simple generalizations can characterize the range of curricula
and pedagogical strategies employed in alternative schools.   Curricu-
lum and teaching-learning styles do not vary along a single dimension,
and many schools display an eclectic spirit as well, mixing their
choices.   With the caveat that the types overlap and that some pro-
grams defy typing altogether, I suggest that most schools utilize one
or more of the following curriculum models.

Smorgasbord.   A school may offer a dizzying array of courses
(also called learning experiences, modules, packages, seminars,
workshops) with no clear organizing principle beyond credit demands.
The course catalogs of alternative schools make fascinating and
often amusing reading.   Except for the requirement that they satisfy
distribution regulations--covering English, social studies, math,
science, and some others--students pick virtually at will from among
such courses as: Fix It Yourself; Geodesic Domes; The American
Character; Rock 'n Roll in the Fifties'; Everyday Math; Ecology;
Critical Thinking and Expository Writing; Cycling; SAT Math; Communi-
ty Studies; Writing a Newspaper.   The list could go on endlessly,
limited only by imagination and nerve.

Many of the courses in such a format cross disciplinary bound-
aries.   One which I co-taught was called Men and Women, and examined
sex roles and behavior from the perspectives of psychology, sociology,
history, physiology, literature, and art.   Teachers from all those
fields collaborated in designing and implementing the syllabus.   Some
other courses may be more narrow in focus. SAT Math, a listing in
more than a few alternative school catalogs, trains students specifi-
cally for the college boards.   Enthusiasm for the "far-out" courses
of the early seventies--Who Am I?   Batiking, Beyond the Looking Glass
--appears to have waned somewhat in this back-to-basics era, but some
titles still sound bizarre.   The essence of the smorgasbord model of
curriculum development survives in many schools, though, and provides
the student with a tremendous variety of courses.

Themes.   Some schools organize their entire curriculum around
one or two themes, issues, or areas of inquiry which can be approached
from a number of perspectives.   Students at the LAB School of Boston,
during the first semester of the 1976-77 year, chose either Life Cycles

(the study of human development from prebirth to postdeath) or En-
vironmental Discovery (the study of the city as a built environment).
Each group spent the bulk of its time investigating one or another
aspect of its central question: visiting neighborhoods and archi-
tects, building a childrens' playground, or drawing maps in Environ-
mental Discovery; seeing films on childbirth, working in nursing homes,
or interviewing social workers and psychiatrists in Life Cycles.
English, history, and even some science were woven into the overall
plan (Moore, 1977). The Lower Kensington Environmental Center in
Philadelphia, while requiring work in basic skills and other academics,
focused much of its curriulum on the study of urban ecology (School
District of Philadelphia, 1977. Magnet schools, as mentioned above,
attract students from many neighborhoods by offering special programs
in such fields as aviation, agriculture, and bilingual studies.

     Schools Without Walls. These programs, of which the Parkway
Program in Philadelphia is perhaps the paradigm, use the city as a
classroom. Students schedule their learning in a variety of public
and private institutions, ranging from museums to banks to prisons.
While these forms are normally subsets of the organizational type called
independent alternatives, they are sometimes found in regular schools.
In effect, they are at least as much a curricular and pedagogical in-
novation as an experiment in structure. The very idea that students
can learn from resources outside the school, that "external learning"
is valid and accountable, speaks to the most basic questions regarding
the nature of education in an urban society.

     The form which external learning assumes varies from program to
program, from student to student. In some cases, it may mean holding
an algebra class in a bank; while the physical setting is changed, the
substance of the algebra lesson may be the same. In other cases, it
may mean that a student serves as an apprentice to a sculptor, learn-
ing the technical and aesthetic secrets of that art; or it may mean
that several students write articles for a community newspaper, inter-
viewing local residents about neighborhood issues and conditions; or it
may mean a student takes a course in anthropology at a nearby college.
City-as-School, an external learning program based in Brooklyn, last
year published a thirty-seven page catalog with literally hundreds of
such options for its 350 students. Each of the "learning experiences"
had been carefully developed by resource coordinators in cooperation
with people at the learning sites (cf. City-as-School, 1977).

     Basic Skills. Many school districts offer alternative programs
which focus on basic skill development. The problem with identifying
them as a distinct type of alternative curriculum is the implicit sug-
gestion that neither conventional schools nor other alternatives
concentrate on such matters as learning to read and write. That is
clearly not the case. The National Alternative Schools Program (NASP)
at the University of Massachusetts discovered in a national survey that
75 percent of the experimental schools responding listed basic skills
as a major program emphasis, many as a primary goal (Wolf, Walker, and

11

Mackin, 1974). What may distinguish these programs from traditional schools is the approach to basic skills: There may be more individualized instruction, more varied materials available for each student, more time spent on skills. Some alternative schools center their entire curriculum on basic skills; the Council on Basic Education found at least nineteen districts with what they called "fun lamental schools," and seven more preparing to start such programs (Broad, 1977 41). This form of alternative swings away from the "barefooted hippie" image back toward the traditional teacher-centered, highly organized, disciplined efforts to teach students the basic reading, writing, and computation skills. Philadelphia's Fitler Elementary, for instance, instituted a program called Academics Plus and stressed hard-nosed skill development.

Another kind of alternative school which focuses on skills is called the "continuation school." Designed for dropouts, returnees, teenage parents, drug abusers, and gang members, these schools attempt to help students complete their education who otherwise would not (Broad, 1977:22). Their services aim at two related goals: building basic skills so that students can function adequately outside of school; and dealing with immediate problems of drugs, child care, employment, violence, and the law. Counseling, therefore, constitutes a large part of the program. If basic skills include survival methods, then these schools clearly fit this curriculum model.

Career Education. Another curricular thrust supported by NIE is career education, particulary in the form of Experience Based Career Education (EBCE). Several educational laboratories around the country have contracted with NIE to develop EBCE programs and to test their effects. In one Appalachia project, for instance, juniors and seniors may spend up to 80 percent of their school time at work sites for one to thirteen weeks. The goal is to expose students to work experience so that they will be able to make more reasoned judgments about their own careers (cf. Johnson, n.d.; Bucknam, 1976; Shively and Sanders, 1976).

Pedagogical strategies outnumber curricular forms and are even more difficult to distinguish. Options range from highly structured, teacher-directed, even programmed instruction methods for teaching reading, writing, and math to relatively formless, collaborative investigations and activities. Most alternative school teachers tend to use somewhat informal styles of interaction with students: They may dress more casually than conventional teachers, may insist that students call them by their first names, may invoke fewer behavioral rules in classrooms. Students I have interviewed frequently mention the easier relations with teachers as a favored feature of their schools. Still, teachers often take the primary responsibility for designing and supplying material for courses. Students, I have found (Moore, 1977), expect and want their instructors to assume that role.

12

Discussion is a favorite method in alternative classrooms.
Students enjoy expressing their ideas and feelings on subjects
ranging from the Vietnam War to Billy Budd. Curiously, lecturing
happens more than one might imagine, but open talk is far more
common. Films, guest speakers, simulation games, frequent field
trips: these and many other strategies are used. How different
these methods are from conventional school classes remains to be
studied more; certainly on the surface, many alternative school
techniques will sound familiar to regular teachers (cf. Verner and
Conley, 1976; Barrett-Goldfarb, 1977). Testing may be rarer in
alternative schools--teachers frequently require final papers or
projects instead of examinations--and competition may be played down,
since the goal is to help each student experience success in learn-
ing.

Group study is often encouraged. Students may collab rate
on preparing a report for presentation to the rest of the class.
Many alternative school teachers emphasize what they call "experi-
ential learning": They get their students engaged in activities
both inside and outside the classroom through which they can learn
facts, skills, and attitudes. The focus on affective learning
constitutes both a curricular and a pedagogical reform. Exploration
of community settings--government institutions, neighborhoods, museums,
and so on--provides a basis for focused work in history, literature,
sociology, and other fields. The range of pedagogical strategies
in use in alternative schools, then, defies typing. No single
strategy revolutionizes teaching, but the flexibility of the options
may be new in American education.

GOVERNANCE

Many alternative schools, in addition to serving the needs of
a variety of students using a variety of curricular and pedagogical
approaches, attempt reforms in the decision-making procedures shaping
policy and program. The essential dimension in the analysis of
governance in new schools is the degree to which constituencies
normally excluded--students, teachers, parents, even community people
--may take part. Once again, different schools opt for very differ-
ent forms.

Most early free schools, encouraged by the model of Summerhill
(Neill, 1960), practiced a nearly total democracy: Everyone connected
with the school, from teachers and cooks to small children, had an
equal vote on any question. Public alternatives modified that
principle: Elementary school children were less likely to take part
in decision making; and administrative regulations, such as hiring
and firing procedures or bans on drug and alcohol on campus, were
more often imposed from above. Still, a vast spectrum of decisions,
from course design and cut policy to planning for trips and graduations,
were left to the whole school community. Most typically, decision

making was to take place in the congregation variously called "town meeting," "all-school meeting," or "student-staff meeting." All members of the student body and faculty were expected to attend and to particpate in deliberations on such issues as smoking in class and grade policies. In reality, many students absented themselves from these plenary sessions, sparking heated charges of apathy and woeful predictions of the collapse of democracy.

At the other end of the scale, many alternative schools make no pretense of opening up their governance structures. At the LAB School in Boston, for instance, students enroll for only one semester (with some extensions), and are presented with already-made decisions about courses and rules. The administrator argued that including the students in basic policy formulation would confuse them and immobilize the school unnecessarily (Moore, 1977). However, while the staff and administration decided such basic issues as course offerings, credit, and attendance requirements, students did take part in formulating many other day-to-day policies, from details of the curriculum to plans for school trips. That fact raises an important distinction in the understanding of governance in alternative schools, a distinction which speaks to the breast-beating about student apathy: It is between formal and informal decision making. Even in those schools which do not place students on official policy boards, students often make decisions sig...fi-cant in their day-to-day lives. Students in Philadelphia told me that even though they chose not to attend the town meeting, they felt empowered, able to make decisions about where to go and what to do between classes, about selecting courses from a considerable range of options, and about telling their teachers what they did and did not like about their classes. Formal decision making was to them boring and pointless. Moreover, they felt incapable of expressing their opinions as forcefully and articulately as teachers could at all-school meetings. Thus, they were content to leave formal policies to the staff and to continue shaping their everyday lives (Moore, 1974).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM RESEARCH ON ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS?

All these descriptions make implicit claims about the "object-ive reality" of alternative schools. Obviously, many putative facts are open to challenge; others raise far more questions than they answer. In this section, I will try to identify what we "know" about alternative schools based on careful study. What quickly becomes apparent is that we do not know very much. While many of the new programs undergo regular and seemingly exhaustive--cert in-ly exhausting--evaluation, the information generated by those pro-cedures is often sketchy and difficult to compare. Moreover, much of it fails to speak to crucial questions about the nature of every-day life or the texture of people's experiences in the schools. Many, if not most studies on alternative schools focus on traditional evaluative measures of outcomes: reading and math scores, drop-out

rates, attendance figures, demographic characteristics of students or teachers. Some studies which claim to address quality of life issues rely on survey questionnaire methods, with little actual observation of schools (cf. Wolf, Walker, and Mackin, 1974).

Both kinds of studies--tests and surveys--are of questionable value. One must question their validity and reliability, that is, for a variety of reasons. First, conditions under which tests are administered are often not controlled adequately to yield reliable results. I witnessed the Stanford Achievement Tests being given to a large group of students spread haphazardly around an open space, some literally sitting in each other's laps. Second and more telling, the value orientations of many alternative school people make them less than cooperative subjects: They consider such tests unfair and irrelevant as measures of their school performance, and they take the tests less than seriously. I have no way of determining the degree to which these observations affect test reliability, but I submit that the test-givers do not either.

Another sort of problem plagues the survey method: the variable interpretations of the terms selected to identify participants' attitudes and experiences. Researchers often pose questions in terms which fail to speak to members' own constructions of their school lives. An example from the school where I taught: One survey attempted to measure the extent of student participation in decision making by asking them to specify the number of hours per week they spent in activities such as town meetings and committees. The response, predictably, suggested low involvement (Gibboney and Langsdorf, 1972). But as I have noted, students reported in conversations that they felt themselves to be empowered in making important decisions about their everyday lives. The survey failed to tap that sentiment.

Conventional tests and measures, then, must be approached with a healthy skepticism. That is not to say that they are useless. Reading and math gains are clearly significant in the evaluation of any educational program, and tests are one way of determining achievement. Measures claiming to reveal attitudes and behaviors, however, must be shown first to do what they say they do, and second to be reliable in a population which doubts their validity. More to the point, one must ask what aspects of alternative school life are entirely overlooked by these measures.

TRADITIONAL MEASURES

Caveats aside, what can these conventional tests and measures tell us about the characteristics, performance, behavior, and attitudes of alternative school members? What conclusions can we draw about the learning environment or climate within the schools?

Achievement and Attendance. Most evaluations of alternative schoo

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if they share nothing else in common, report two figures: relative
gains in reading and math scores, and relative attendance rates.
Two eminently reasonable premises underlie those measures: first,
that students in alternative schools ought to learn to read, write,
and compute at least as well as students in traditional programs;
and second, that students ought to be attending school at least as
regularly as they did when they were enrolled in conventional schools.
Alternative school advocates sometimes claim their students improve
markedly in both areas. Critics have argued that the lack of rigor
and discipline inhibits academic progress and may even encourage
erratic attendance (cf. Broudy, 1973). Where is the truth?

Predictably, the truth defies easy description. On the
achievement side, results have been mixed but largely favorable. In
all the schools listed below, and in hundreds more, students made at
least the expected gains in reading and math scores: the Open School
Alternative in Edina, Minnesota (Stiggins, 1974); the School-within-a-
School at Hilo High in Hawaii (Nagoshi, 1970); the Southeast Community
Education Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan (Erickson, 1975); the Edison
Project (Lipton, 1977a); Alternative East (Wroblewski, 1977); and the
Girard Alternative Music Program (Lipton, 1977b) in Philadelphia; and
the Lower East Side Prep in New York (Seidman, 1971). Some schools
fare less well. At the School for Human Services in Philadelphia,
forty-seven students attained or exceeded expected growth between 1975-
1976 and 1976-1977, but seventy did not (Vincenzi, 1977a). Similarly,
the city's Sunnycrest program showed more students falling behind than
moving ahead (Vincenzi, 1977b). Dr. Seth Wohl, who has done exten-
sive evaluation and research in alternative schools in New York City,
suggests in a comprehensive review that reading and math skills continu
to be a problem for students in experimental programs (Wohl, 1974).

Given the enormous range of students and pedagogical strategies
in alternative schools around the country, the hard (if fragmentary)
statistics on achievement suggest one conclusion: The schools are
neither the learning revolutions promised by some supporters nor the
academic disasters predicted by some critics. Scores vary somewhat
from school to school (as, certainly, from student to student within
schools), but this generalization appears warranted: By and large,
students in alternative schools acquire basic reading and computation
skills at least as well as those in more conventional programs. By
all traditional measures, attendance at an alternative program does
not retard a student's academic growth, and for some, achievement
improves. For the thousands of students who might otherwise drop out
of school altogether, any gain at all might be seen as a success.

In terms of attendance, statistics again suggest that most stud-
ents perform as well as they did in traditional schools. Of course,
that is not inevitably the case. Wohl (1974) notes that while four
of the ten independent alternative high schools in New York had attend-
ance rates better than the city-wide average, six did not; he points
out that the schools with better attendance tended to be those with

14

strong external learning components and/or a regular accountability
system. In Berkeley's Experimental Schools Program, researchers
found no significant differences in rates of either truancy or
dropouts between regular and alternative programs (Institute for
Scientific Analysis, 1976). Many other schools, however, found
that individual students did tend to improve their attendance re-
cords (cf. Nelsen, 1975; Sulack, 1975; Johnston and Parker, 1975).

Two caveats on the interpretation of attendance figures: First,
there is no way of knowing how many students who are enrolled in al-
ternative schools might have become dropouts had that option not been
available. More than a few students I have interviewed asserted
that they would not have gone back to their old schools. One
sophomore, being chastised by his teacher for having missed six days
in the first term, replied, "You've got to realize that I cut 135
days last year!" But since adequate control groups cannot be found
for studies, claims about improved attendance and dropping out must,
remain speculative. Second, while knowing whether a given student
would be truant more often in different circumstances is nearly im-
possible, knowing what that truancy means to the student (boredom,
fear of failure or punishment, alienation, availability of better
things to do, conflicts with authorities or peers) is even harder.
Moreover, attendance figures say nothing at all about the quality of
the student's experiences on the occasions when he or she does attend.
A student in an alternative school may for some reason stay away from
school as much or more than he/she did from traditional school, but
it is at least conceivable that the student learns more when he/she
manages to come. Attendance figures alone can never answer that
question.

Behavior and Attitude. A number of studies use various survey
methods to identify behaviors and attitudes of alternative school
members. The evaluation design for many of the alternative programs
in Philadelphia for 1977 called for measures of behavior problems as
reflected in performance ratings. The results were mixed. At Sunny-
crest, in a program for "male students characterized as disruptive,
truant and/or alienated from the traditional school system," fully
48 percent showed improved behavior ratings, and only 3 percent were
worse than before (Vincenzi, 1977b); but at the School for Human Services,
there was a 17 percent increase in the number of unsatisfactory perform-
ance ratings (Vincenzi, 1977a). The report offers no interpretation of
the figures.

Without extensive supporting observation, in fact, interpretation
of behavior statistics must be speculative. In the school where I
taught, many "behavior problems" were simply defined out of existence.
Chewing gum in class, walking barefoot, wearing a hat indoors, and
swearing produced no confrontations between authority figures and stu-
dents. Even potentially "disruptive" behavior resulted more often in
discussion of problems and solutions than in punishment. The descrip-
tive literature on other alternative schools indicates that this approach

is common.   Camparative statistics on behavior must account for
these differences in definition.

Attitude surveys appear frequently in studies of alternative
schools.   Students are often asked to rate their courses, teachers,
and schools on a number of dimensions.   The results tend to be
positive: Students seem to "like" their schools.   Johnson (1975)
found that pupils in three private free schools in Minneapolis saw
their programs as relevant, their teachers as friendly and fair, and
their cognitive and affective learning as satisfactory.   Walizer
(1975) examined both "hard" data on achievement and attendance and
"soft" data on questionnaire responses, and concluded that students
and teachers at the Sweet Street Academy in Grand Rapids liked their
program in similar ways.   Gibboney and Langsdorf (1972) asked stu-
dents to rate their own learning in addition to the quality of their
teachers and courses, and discovered that most believed they were
learning well, that their teachers were responsive and skillful, and
that the school provided a useful alternative to traditional models.
Almen (1974) sought the opinions of parents of students in the South-
east Alternatives in Minneapolis; they tended to approve of the
programs overall, believed their children were learning adequately,
and were interested in participating in school affairs, but had mixed
feelings about the testing program and the school's approach to
minority children.   Students in Berkeley's Experimental Schools Pro-
ject seemed to be more sensitized to racism and saw fewer overt racist
acts in the new program than they had in conventional schools; on
measures of anomie and self-concept, however, they were not radically
different from the standard student population of the district
(Institute for Scientific Analysis, 1976).

In addition to ratings of self, staff, or school, questionnaires
have been used to try to identify attitudinal and behavioral features
of student groups.   Gaite and Rankin (1974), for instance, compared
a group of alternative school students and a control group from a
traditional high school in order to determine what kinds of people are
attracted to experimental settings.   Their standards for comparison
included intelligence test scores, tests of mental maturity, achieve-
ment scores, and grades; they also used a questionnaire to measure
study attitudes and habits.   They claimed that alternative school stu-
dents tended to have lower IQ's and achievement scores, and to show
higher approval of their teachers.   Willard and Glick (1975) applied
the Delphi Technique to a school in New York City to determine the
congruence and clarity of goals held by various members.   Despite
fragmentary returns, they asserted that lack of agreement on basic goa.
issues divided school constituencies.

Once more, I must reiterate my skepticism regarding these survey
data.   As both teacher and researcher, I have seen participants'
"attitudes" fluctuate wildly over time.   Students have told me that
they were reluctant to jeopardize support for their schools by checkin;
off negative responses on questionnaires.   Even if the methods are

intrinsically sound, they must be employed more systematically than
they have been to date.   Interpretation of the survey data must be
very cautious at this point.

         School Culture Indices.   Another approach to the study of
alternative schools seeks to identify salient features of the school
culture or learning environment.   The extensive study of the Berkeley
Experimental Schools Project (BESP), for instance, used six "indicators
of educational diversity" to determine whether or not the project had
succeeded in producing "comprehensive change" in the system: non-
graded classrooms, peer teaching, interdisciplinary approach, multi-
cultural emphasis, controversial or avant garde subjects, programmed
instruction.   How these particular items were selected and others re-
jected was not made clear.   Of the twenty-three programs in BESP,
twelve had two or fewer of the six indicators, and eleven had three or
more.   Diversity of innovations increased during the first two years
of the project and then declined (Institute for Scientific Analysis,
1976).

         A classic example of the use of survey techniques for identify-
ing school culture characteristics is a study by Fletcher and Spady
(1975).   In order to discover how five basic functions of schooling
(custody/control, evaluation/certification; instruction, socialization,
selection) were manifested in an alternative school, they created a
questionnaire which sought respondents' views on organizational climate
and classroom environment.   The instrument contained no fewer than
406 items.   Trickett (1977) used only 90 forced-choice items to compare
normative classroom environments in five different kinds of schools
(urban, suburban, rural, vocational, and alternative).   Both studies
propose broad-scale assertions concerning the culture of alternative
schools--without observations to substantiate them.   Hoaglund et al.
(1976) examined elementary alternative schools along such dimensions
as teacher preferences for classroom structure, student perceptions of
learning environments and classmate behavior, student attitudes, class-
room activities and interactions, and parent attitudes.   Their study,
still underway, seeks to differentiate types of alternative programs.

QUALITATIVE STUDIES

         Implicit in my critique of the literature on alternative schools
is a call for more extensive studies of a qualitative, ethnographic
nature.   Claims about school culture must be regarded as tentative
when they rest on the measurement of indicators selected solely by out-
side researchers.   There are reputable scientific models for studying
the nature of everyday life in schools.   A growing body of work on the
social organization of classrooms in conventional schools utilizes such
methods as participant-observation, open and structured interviewing,
and the microanalysis of film or videotape recordings of actual school
scenes (cf. Wolcott, 1973; Mehan, 1976; McDermott, 1976; Erickson and
Shultz, 1977; Florio, 1978).   The approach may be classic Malinowskian
ethnography, or what Geertz (1973) calls "thick description," or what

Mahan (1978) labels "constitutive ethnography": studying the pro-
cess by which participants in a social encounter assemble and
produce such social facts of education as "the role of the teacher"
or "discussion." The premise in this last approach is that members
of an encounter use a body of social knowledge and certain interpre-
tive procedures to generate and maintain social contexts which are
to them sensible and orderly. Careful observation and analysis can
reveal how members display the social order to each other through
their situated behavior. Very little of the work in alternative
schools has used this latter approach, or even the more conventional
form of ethnography. The qualitative understanding of new schools
generated by such studies is, however, substantial and promising.

Perhaps the richest set of writings on alternative schools has
been produced by the Center for New Schools in Chicago (CNS). Since
the early 1970s, CNS has placed staff members in alternative schools
as both consultants and researchers. Using a combination of methods
including participant-observation, structured and unstructured inter-
views, questionnaris, tests and document searches, researchers docu-
mented the process by which members of Chicago's High School for
Metropolitan Studies (Metro) created a new form of schooling which
redefined rules, roles, and resources. Without ignoring measures of
inputs and outcomes, they analyzed the structure of behavior in a
range of situations, around a range of issues (cf. Johnson, Moore,
and Wilson, 1971). One early study focused on the process of decision
making, identifying some patterns of participation by various subgroups
within the student body. The insight that different types of students
construe the school in different ways seems almost a truism but illum-
inated a good many facets of alternative school functioning. More-
over, the CNS studies showed that "participation" can take a variety
of forms.

My own study of a small alternative school in Boston (Moore, 1977
1978) used both conventional and constitutive ethnographic methods to
discover the principles of organization underlying face-to-face inter-
action in a number of school contexts. I argued that students and
teachers from very diverse backgrounds showed a remarkable ability to
invent new forms of schooling: using new kinds of learning resources
both inside and outside the building, altering traditional role
definitions, and breaking down common divisions between racial and
residential student groups. I also suggested that a problem in this
school (and probably many others) was the ambiguity of many social
contexts: Participants often used vague or contradictory definitions
of situational roles and behavior, and as a result interaction demanded
a good deal of work. Ambiguity is a coin with two sides. On the
one hand, it allows for creativity, experimentation and freedom; on
the other, it sometimes leaves people confused and frustrated. The
continual strain of redefining roles, inventing new social forms, and
interpreting novel behavior is an important factor in the high rate of
teacher "burn-out" in alternative schools, and is reflected in the wild
fluctuation of morale and participation among students.

The ethnographic approach is neither easy nor flawless. Stephen Wilson (1974), a member of the CNS staff, reports candidly on the problems and benefits of the qualitative study of a school in Cleveland. The mismatch between evaluation and ethnography, the members' demands for premature feedback, and the high cost of the method in both money and time are but a few of the drawbacks in ethnography. Still, Wilson maintains, the rewards are great, and they help both researchers and participants understand the schools considerably better. Many more such qualitative studies of alternative schools are needed. General questions of social order and more specific issues of decision making, instructional methods, student-teacher interaction, and innovative contexts for learning demand careful observation of members' actual situated behavior, not just measures of outcomes or surveys of attitudes.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND STUDENT DIVERSITY

One crucial issue remaining to be considered is the proposition that alternative schools represent a response to student population diversity. The term diversity might be used to refer to any of a number of student characteristics, some more clearly defined than others: learning styles, aptitude, academic and vocational interests, ethnicity or race. To what extent might it be said that alternative schools accommodate these types of diversity?

The rhetoric of the early alternative schools movement emphasized the needs of individual students and criticized the tendency of conventional schools to force children into a single educational mold (cf. Graubard, 1972). That philosophy was realized through many pedagogical means: small classes, individualized instruction, self-pacing, student participation in course design, smorgasbord curricula. In that sense, diversity of learning styles was at least acknowledged and accommodated in theory. Whether alternative school staffs, low in number and limited in resources, could actually provide appropriate learning opportunities for each individual student is another matter. The state of the art of assessing children's educational needs still falls short of providing precisely the right formula for everyone. Nonetheless, the steady commitment of alternative schools as institutions adjusting to differences in learning styles signals a change in educational priorities.

Similarly, many alternative school teachers struggle with the diversity of aptitude among their students. Being opposed to ability tracking, teachers must find or invent strategies and materials which meet the needs of a tremendous range of children. I taught American studies in a class where some students could barely read and others were ready for graduate work. The relatively small size

of the group helped me to relate directly to individual students
and to find approaches right for them, but the problem was never
completely resolved. Inevitably there were some left behind and
others bored. While there are some alternative schools geared
toward students with roughly similar aptitudes, many continue to
be committed to heterogeneous grouping. By concentrating on the
process of inquiry rather than the mastery of testable facts or
skills, experimental schools can accommodate a greater diversity
of aptitudes without neglecting individual needs. More must be
learned about this issue.

Depending on the type of alternative school a student attends,
his or her vocational and academic interests may be more or less
clearly met. In many smorgasbord schools, teachers try hard to
discover opportunities outside the school for students who want
them; and the very nature of the curriculum validates the diver-
sity in academic interests. Some courses may focus on vocational
options for people with varying educational backgrounds. Experi-
ence-Based Career Education, as a different model, explicitly
recognizes and encourages diverse occupational interests.

The issue of ethnic and racial diversity poses a considerably
more thorny problem. Certain types of alternatives, such as the
magnet programs in Boston and many other cities, were originated
specifically to encourage voluntary desegregation of the schools.
While it is impossible to measure the precise effects of such pro-
grams on the choices parents make for their children, statistics
suggest that the student bodies of those schools reflect a better
racial balance than the average. Both the Alternative Schools Pro-
ject in Philadelphia (ASP) and the LAB School of Boston, the two
programs I know best, were created at least in part as experiments
in cross-district integration.   They brought together students
from the city and the suburbs. Many other alternative schools
across the country claim to break down patterns of ethnic and
racial isolation. In that sense, then, one can safely say that
alternative schools are in fact a response to student population
diversity.

Bringing students together in a single program, however, is
not necessarily the same as meeting their different needs. Very
little research examines the differential performance by and treat-
ment of students from different backgrounds. One Center for New
Schools study (Johnson, Moore, and Wilson, 1972) describes the
various student cliques found at Metro High School. Equalitarian
rhetoric notwithstanding, students in the school demonstrated very
different interaction styles: There were the radical-hippie types,
the school-alienated gang types, and several others. In my school
in Philadelphia, racial tension surfaced only rarely, but black
city students and white suburban students tended to keep to them-
selves. Interaction across racial and residential lines at the LAB
School, on the other hand, was frequent and friendly. Perhaps the

20

difference between the two lay in the distribution and the size of
the respective student bodies: LAB was considerably smaller, and
the racial balance was much closer to 1:1. One way or another,
alternative school people must consider what happens once people
from different backgrounds come together.

In part, the differences may assume curricular form. Again,
little research exists to inform this issue. I am not prepared to
extrapolate from my own experience to posit broad generalizations,
but the details are intriguing. In both ASP and LAB, black stu-
dents and white students appeared to favor different kinds of
learning modes. Whites tended to want the more experimental, un-
usual, flexible courses. Blacks, interestingly, sought out more
traditional, academic offerings and expected more "teacherly" be-
havior from their instructors. Several black students in each
school told me that they had enrolled in the alternative program
"to get a better education," by which they meant harder work, more
reading and writing, better chance to get into college. The fact
that they often did not do any more work than white students is
another matter: What is significant here is the nature of the
symbolic differences in the definitions of school. The staffs of
the two schools never succeeded in adjusting the curriculum to ac-
commodate both sets of definitions. In that sense, then, altern-
ative schools may fall short as a response to student population
diversity.

In some districts, schools have been established which seek
to attract students of a single ethnic or racial background. Such
New York "street academies" as Harlem Prep and Harambee Prep served
almost exclusively black populations and geared much of their
coursework and counseling toward black identity, pride, and history.
In Berkeley, three schools in the BESP system focused on specific
groups: Black House and United Nations West were all-black, and
Casa de la Raza served Chicanos. According to the study of BESP
by the Institute for Scientific Analysis (ISA) (1976: 5), Black
House maintained that

> Students from ethnic minorities, which have been
> historically oppressed, discriminated against and
> consigned to an inferior status by the dominant
> majority, could be better motivated to achieve
> their educational potential in a setting that was
> informed with the culture, historical experience and
> contemporary reality of their ethnic group. Such
> a setting, it was argued, would cultivate ethnic
> pride and self-esteem among the students. ... It
> was argued further that autonomy for the given
> ethnic group was best designed to create such a
> setting.

Here is the rub: While the ISA evaluation team regarded these
three schools as among the most innovative in the BESP system,
the United States Office of Civil Rights ordered them closed for
violations of laws against racial separatism.

The dilemma of student diversity continues to plague altern-
ative schools. On the one hand, schools may attempt to recognize
diversity by consciously attracting students from many ethnic and
racial groups -- but no one has yet invented a unitary school pro-
gram which accommodates differences in learning styles and aca-
demic needs of different populations. On the other hand, schools
may focus on one specific ethnic or racial group, seeking to
create a program uniquely suited to those students' styles and
needs -- but that form of separatism may fly in the face of the
movement toward school integration advanced so painfully over the
last twenty-five years. The basic questions are whether we can
learn to value and adjust to diversity within the school, bring-
ing together different kinds of students without making them be-
come identical; and whether we can learn to accept and enhance
diversity at the institutional level, offering different schools
for different people without implying that one type is "better"
than another. The choices are not mutually exclusive.

SUMMARY AND PROGNOSIS

The state of the art in alternative schools is complex, frag-
mentary and in many ways unknown. No comprehensive historical
study traces the recent wave of experimental schools, public or
private, perhaps because there is no unitary movement to be found.
Even the research positing stages of development for individual
schools (cf. Deal, 1975; Ray, 1976) must be regarded as highly
tentative until the ideas are tested on many more schools. What
can be said, all these cautions aside, about the present status of
the alternative school movement?

The free schools so popular seven or eight years ago still
exist -- at least some of them (cf. New Schools Exchange; Apple-
sauce). Some are thriving, but by and large they are as isolated
from one another and as fragile as ever. They continue to struggle
for day-to-day survival, in both a financial and a spiritual sense.
Some have been absorbed by the public school system, but many re-
main autonomous; some manage an uneasy balance between the two,
receiving substantial grants from various state and federal sources
and yet insistently remaining politically distinct. To date, no
one can say with any certainty why some schools survive and others
collapse.

Within the public system, alternative schools assume more different forms than they did eight years ago. From modified elementary classrooms to independent schools-without-walls at the secondary level, each form serves different students using different approaches. Each type has its advocates and detractors. If surveys by the Center for Options in Public Education and the National Alternative Schools Program are accurate, more and more school districts across the country offer one or another type of experimental, innovative education. That fact suggests that the future is relatively good for alternatives.

The picture is not entirely rosy. In Philadelphia, where fully 102 separate programs were listed in the 1977 catalog of the Alternative Programs Office, a massive budget deficit resulted in the elimination of all but thirty-five for the 1977-78 year -- and the Alternative Programs Office itself was absorbed by External Operations. Interestingly, such back-to-basics projects as Academics Plus were retained under the auspices of the Curriculum Department and were not categorized as alternatives at all. What that administrative fact says about the district's position on alternative education is open to interpretation.

In New York City, on the other hand, alternative schools seem to be surviving at least as well as the conventional schools. When regular school budgets are cut, alternative schools' are as well, but no more than the rest. One symbol of the level of support from central administration is this fact: Last year's edition of the brochure explaining and describing high schools listed the independent alternative schools in a small-print section in the rear, but the new booklet affords each independent the same full-page format as the conventional high schools. The alternatives are growing in enrollment and are available in more and more schools. New York alternative schools, that is, appear to be entrenched, at least for the foreseeable future.

Berkeley has problems, Minneapolis is thriving; Philadelphia is cutting back, but Grand Rapids is expanding. In different localities, different personalities and conditions place alternative schools in different spots. The primary argument of this paper has been that one cannot generalize about the success or failure of alternative school programs on the basis of what is currently known about them. The trend nationwide seems to be toward offering more options for students at all levels, and that at least is a positive sign. As the questions and methods used in analyzing alternative education are progressively refined, practice may improve. Knowing more about the nature of various processes, strategies, and formats, educators will come closer to the essential goal of the alternative school movement: to provide for each child a stimulating, nurturant, and humane environment for learning and growing.

Acknowledgments

2

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