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American high school adolescent life and ethos: An ethnography

Chang, Heewon, Ph.D.
University of Oregon, 1989

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AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL ADOLESCENT LIFE AND ETHOS:

AN ETHNOGRAPHY

by

HEEWON CHANG

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Division of Teacher Education
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

March 1989
APPROVED: ____________________
Dr. Harry F. Wolcott
An Abstract of the Dissertation of

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Title: AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL ADOLESCENT LIFE AND ETHOS: AN ETHNOGRAPHY

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This ethnography provides description and a cultural interpretation of American adolescent life. Based on anthropological fieldwork among adolescents in a small high school and its surrounding community, it presents a description of their social life, an interpretation of the cultural ethos reflected in their lives, and a discussion of procedural and personal dimensions of conducting ethnographic research.

Many adolescents expressed their desire to "get along with everyone," "be independent," and "get involved." Reflecting American ideals of egalitarianism, inner-directedness, and competition, respectively, these aspects of the adolescent ethos affected their relationships with family, peers, school staff, and community members. Many adolescents not only recognized these ideals as favorable guidelines but made conscious efforts to live them. However, few young people succeeded in observing these ideals in their "pure" forms. In their daily lives, they sometimes demonstrated opposite ideals of elitism, other-directedness, and cooperation. Depending upon situations, the adolescents pragmatically negotiated a middle course.
within the duality of the contradictory ideals, locating their positions along the continua of egalitarianism/elitism, inner-directedness/other-directedness, and competition/cooperation. Social pressure—in particular, peer pressure—discouraged young people from expressing either extreme.

Finally, this ethnography addresses issues involved in humanistic anthropology, in which the ethnographer, as a female adult, Korean born, non-native speaker of English, analyzes her experiences with American adolescent informants in terms of examination of self, dynamics between self and others, the inequality of languages, and continued friendships with informants after the fieldwork.
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DEDICATION

To my Heavenly Father
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I. LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION TO A GREENFIELD ADOLESCENT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing Up Close to Nature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Dynamics</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different Faces with Different Friends</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School As a Source of Fun and Stress</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Successful Balance Keeper</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. GREEN LAKE COMMUNITY</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School District As a Community</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community Economy</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Population Makeup</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Participation in Community Activities</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support From the Community</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. GREENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Environment</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiles of Greenfielders</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Place for Academic and Practical Learning</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Place for Discipline: Awards and Punishment</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Place for Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Place for &quot;Democratic&quot; Practices</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Place for Friendship and Courtship</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. A TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before the School Bell Rings</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Classes</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch Time</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Classes</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the School Bell Rings</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. ADOLESCENT LIFE OUTSIDE SCHOOL</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Occasions</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART II. ADOLESCENT ETHOS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. &quot;GETTING ALONG WITH EVERYONE&quot;: ETHOS OF PEER INTERACTIONS</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Close-Knit Society</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Interactions As a Social Necessity</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Popularity</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing a Reputation</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between General Friendliness and Close Friendship</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. &quot;BEING INDEPENDENT&quot;: ETHOS OF BECOMING ADULT</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Adolescent Perception of Independence</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Markers of Independence</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Adulthood and Childhood</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. &quot;GETTING INVOLVED&quot;: ETHOS OF ACTIVENESS</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Active Adolescent</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Activities</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives for Active Involvement</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity As a Social Virtue</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Activeness and Stress</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. DUALITY OF ADOLESCENT IDEALS</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism and Elitism</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner-Directedness and Other-Directedness</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition and Cooperation</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

## Part I. Negotiators Within the Duality of Ideals

| Pragmatic Negotiators Within the Duality of Ideals | 225 |
| Notes | 230 |

## Part III. Doing Ethnography

### X. Doing Fieldwork

| Selecting a School and Its Community | 232 |
| Gaining Entry Among Adolescents and Maintaining Rapport | 234 |
| Collecting and Recording Data | 238 |
| Data Analysis and Cultural Interpretation | 243 |
| Notes | 246 |

### XI. Reflecting on Ethnographic Experiences

| Examination of Self | 249 |
| Dynamics Between Self and Others | 254 |
| "The Inequality of Languages" | 262 |
| After the Fieldwork | 266 |
| Notes | 275 |

## Bibliography

| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 276 |
LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page
--- | ---
1. Greenfield High School Student Enrollment in 1986-87 | 48
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A Sketch Map of the Green Lake Community</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A Sketch Map of Greenfield High School</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Sketch Map of Ann's Movements in School</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART I

LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO A GREENFIELD ADOLESCENT

I met Marylinn accidentally two months after my fieldwork began. During lunch hour on a sunny day in March, I sat in a courtyard talking with Donna, a sophomore, who was sitting next to me. Our conversation attracted her friends, who otherwise may have been too shy to approach me.

Donna's friend, Marylinn, stopped to talk with me: "I thought at first you were one of the students. I'm surprised to know you're doing research," she said. I had been aware of Marylinn since January when I first saw her singing in a trio in the school talent show. My first impression of active students like her had kept me from approaching her; they seemed to be so involved in their own lives and not particularly interested in meeting new people. When it was time for the girls to go to class, I asked both Donna and Marylinn if I could talk with them later. I did not realize at that time how much this encounter with Marylinn would affect my research on American adolescents.

In about a week, another meeting with Marylinn convinced me that she would make a good informant: she was easy to talk to, articulate, informative, open-minded, and personable. Since then, she, along with several other Greenfield adolescents, became an important contributor to my research.

This chapter introduces Marylinn as a likable human being, an
embodiment of American culture, a defender of ideals, and a vulnerable teenager. Although frequently mentioned throughout the dissertation, she will be treated as symbolic of American adolescents rather than as a main character. Marylinn shared many common characteristics with her peers: e.g., her concern with grades, social life, independence, and activities. I do not claim, however, that she was a typical American teenager because I found it impossible to typify American teenagers. The stereotypic image of American adolescents might misrepresent reality. To borrow Max Weber’s concept of "ideal type," the image of typical adolescents is a mere "logically precise conception" constructed with certain elements of reality (Gerth and Mills 1958:59). Therefore, the ideal type could not be present in the real world where Marylinn existed. However, Marylinn was not an atypical adolescent: she had been reared by American parents in American society and had studied in American schools.

Growing Up Close to Nature

Marylinn was born about 25 miles away from where she lived during my fieldwork. When she was two years old, her family moved away to a small city in Idaho, where her mother grew up and her grandparents still live. A highlight of her childhood was living in a "little and tiny caretaker’s cabin" on the edge of a lake about 15 miles away from the small city. While her father worked away from home most of the time as a log truck driver and later as a ski instructor, for a year and a half, Marylinn lived in the cabin with her mother and a dog. They could live rent free in exchange for taking care of the property and a boat owned
by a retired couple who stayed there only in the summer. Marylinn recalled that the cabin was greenish, which she did not like, and remarkably small with "a little kitchen, small living room, small bedroom and tiny, tiny bathroom." In winter, water pipes were often frozen and the family was snowed in.

Nevertheless, life there was remembered and discussed with excitement and nostalgia by both Marylinn and her mother. When they described their life there, they vigorously interjected their opinions to make the description vivid, even poetic:

It was very rustic, very small, very crowded, but it was beautiful... out there because we were away from the city and you could... look across the lake and see the lights of town. And winter time, we were just surrounded by snow and we could see elk and moose walk by our place. [Interview Transcript 7-8-87:2]

Since the cabin was remote, their only neighbors were the landowners during the summer. Marylinn spent a lot of time with her mother, going swimming in the lake, taking walks, and listening to music on the radio. Her puppy was a constant companion, and a tiny yellow swing was a source of entertainment. That year and a half, before moving to the city where her grandparents lived, gave Marylinn ample opportunities to enjoy nature.

After living in her grandparents' hometown for one and a half years, Marylinn's family (having added a newborn brother) moved to a single-wide trailer on private property in Woodland. Woodland was the smallest of a few little towns encompassed by the Green Lake School District. Since then, her family had lived in the same house, surrounded by woods, with a small pond formerly inhabited by wild ducks. Woodland was sparsely populated, with less than a hundred residents, and
its area was largely wooded. Her house was located about 15 miles away from Peaceland (the community center of about 2,500 in the Green Lake community) and about 30 miles from Riverville, a closest middle-size city. The house was not as isolated as the caretaker's cabin in Idaho, but her neighbor houses were so surrounded by woods as to be out of sight.

In all directions from their house, Marylinn and Dan, her younger brother, found woods to explore, trees to climb, trails to hike, and streams to fish or just paddle in. These natural resources were always there to entertain them, especially on weekends or during vacations when indoors activities were running short. In the eighth and ninth grade, she had opportunities to learn how to ride a horse in exchange for cleaning out horse stalls for her neighbors. Since horseback riding is more feasible in a rural community than in a city, Marylinn certainly took advantage of her rural life.

Marylinn was quite content with living close to nature. Although she sometimes missed living in a city where much action took place, she objected to her friends' pity of her "isolated" life:

Sometimes I hate when people make it sound as if I'm deprived because of where I live. Randy [a young male friend] makes it sound as if I probably don't (or can't) have any fun unless we go out and do something...I do have an imagination. I can come up with things to do outside like taking walks, riding my bike, or going down to the river. [Personal Journal 2 7–6–87]

During the summer of 1987, Marylinn wrote in her journal that she and her brother often enjoyed hiking on the hill behind their house and going fishing in the stream across the highway in front of her house.

This nature-loving life-style was nourished by her family's way of
vacationing. Their favorite vacation spots were Pacific ocean beaches. They took frequent trips to the coast, as well as to inland lakes for weekends or summer vacations. Almost every summer, the family visited her grandparents in Idaho, camping along the way. These frequent outings had enhanced Marylinn's familiarity with nature. Her remarkable knowledge of animals and vegetation on high school biology field trips was truly impressive.

**Family Dynamics**

Marylinn's family represented a typical American nuclear family of four including her parents, a younger brother five years her junior, and herself. Marylinn's father had worked at different jobs such as commercial fishing, log truck driving, and welding. He went wherever jobs were available, which kept him away from home for lengthy periods of time. He worked as far away as in Alaska, coming home only once every couple of months. Despite her husband's frequent absences, Marylinn's mother observed that he tried to keep his presence at home alive by writing, telephoning, and making visits as often as possible.

Marylinn's mother had been a homemaker for most of the time since her marriage. She said that she liked to be at home with her children. It was almost inevitable that she did not have a job, because once her children began schooling she had to take them to extracurricular activities.

Most of the time, Marylinn got along with her brother, Dan, who appeared intelligent and mature for his age. They were not, however, immune to sibling quarrels, especially when Dan tagged along too much.
when Marylinn's friends were there or when Dan felt Marylinn took charge too much. Despite their conflicts, Marylinn and her "little" brother often attended each other's activities as supporters.

Marylinn had a close bond with her family. The family had many activities together, but most of them were not extravagant. On weekends, the whole family drove 90 miles to visit her father's mother, or perhaps got home video movies and ate popcorn while watching them. Marylinn's mother attributed their family-oriented activities partly to their isolated living situation, which encouraged them to create their own entertainment. She insisted that their close family tie was embedded in her husband's vision of "a good family life." According to her, he liked to spend time with his family, even after his long work trips. They would rather do things with their children than go by themselves to adult-only functions. Marylinn also contributed to keeping this family-centeredness alive by choosing family activities over competing peer interactions.

Another way of keeping family ties close was communication. Marylinn said that she spent much time sitting down and talking with her mother about everything from school to friends. When Marylinn brought up her problems, her cheerful mother became a good listener and counselor. Marylinn said that it was fun to talk with her and Marylinn's friends sometimes liked to become a part of the conversations. Her mother appreciated her daughter's willingness to communicate and was convinced that family communication was a key to their good relationships.

Marylinn's parents showed their interest in what was going on in
their children's lives. Her father remarked:

We've been involved in the kids' development. We've involved in schooling....We've been in their schools. We know their teachers. We've been actively involved in their friends. Their friends are welcome here. We want to know who the people are. [Interview Transcript 7-20-87:14]

The parents demonstrated their interest by attending their daughter's activities: e.g., sports, award ceremonies, Honor Society banquets, and a homecoming parade. Despite his frequent absence from home, Marylinn's father attended all of the children's activities whenever he was in town. Both parents considered sharing activities with their children as a privilege that would last only until the children leave home. Therefore, they liked to take advantage of it while they still had their children at home.

Marylinn's parents felt proud of their daughter. They openly expressed their pleasure at being parents of a teenager and did not look forward to seeing their daughter leave home in the near future. They had their reasons to be proud of Marylinn. She had close to a 4.0 GPA (i.e., a straight "A" grade point average), participated in sports, was a member of the Honor Society, and was voted homecoming princess in her freshman year. She did not take drugs, drink alcohol, or have problems with boys. It seemed that she was an admirable teenage girl for any parents.

What made Marylinn's parents proud of their daughter was more than her merits; it was her mature character as "a good person." They identified one element of her maturity as conscientiousness. She consciously made rightful judgments and abided by them, although her parents sometimes thought that she became "too straight-laced." The
second element of her maturity, as noted by her father, was her
sensitivity to weaknesses in her peers: "She's surprisingly adept at
identifying her friends' weaknesses and trying to help them with them
rather than being judgmental." She attended to one friend's hearing
problem by making a conscious effort to raise her voice and to direct
conversation to her "better" ear. On separate occasions, I also noticed
Marylinn's sensitivity when she attempted to protect a "special
education" boy and an "unpopular" volleyball player from their peers'
unfair treatment (I illustrate these cases later). Thirdly, as
Marylinn's mother pointed out, she showed her maturity by her ability to
"get along with adults as well as children of her age." These praised
elements--i.e., conscientiousness, sensitivity, and ability to get along
with people of all ages--reflected Marylinn's family values and possibly
the ideals of the adult society.

Marylinn's parents transmitted their values to their children in an
allegedly democratic way: "You have choices to make and then have to
face the consequences." They also verbalized their trust in her
judgment: "She is at the 'young adult' stage...I can find very little
fault with most of her judgments. Some of them show extremely good
insight." On many occasions, her parents put their trust into practice
by allowing her to drive the family car to Riverville or participate in
peer activities.

In general, though, they were not laissez-faire parents; rather,
they verbalized their firm ideas of how their children should grow up.
They only expressed their messages in "we wish" statements rather than
"you should" commands. For example, in respect to smoking, drinking,
"doping," and speeding (all considered common teenage problems), they observed, "We certainly hope that you never do." In order to make their case strong against smoking, her father said, "Our example is extremely poor in that matter." Her parents also encouraged Marylinn to have high expectations, and expressed pride at her being more and doing more than what they had accomplished during their adolescence.

At the same time, Marylinn's parents suggested that she not take her achievements for granted or boast about them. They explained that success in school came easily to some people because of their background: the haves get more and the have-nots get less. Referring to her achievements and awards in the eighth grade when she was active as class president, her father expressed his view of social inequality as follows:

There is a tendency...When you've been there several years, you...got a relationship with your instructors...administrators. They often choose those to receive the awards....It's not always based purely on an achievement....A lot of them are based on a personal preference. And that's what life's all about. So when you don't receive, quite often you can see the unfairness. If you're a recipient of an award, quite often you take it for granted. [Interview Transcript 7-20-87:10]

Marylinn's parents' way of putting across their values was subtle but powerful. It did not appear imposing; yet, Marylinn knew what her parents expected of her and she voluntarily tried to live up to their expectations. Their message of humbleness may have shaped her character: she tried not to judge her peers on the basis of academic status or social popularity, and she was humble about her success.

This style of value-transmission, however, seemed to have put her on a "guilt trip" about outperforming her parents and her peers. She
felt guilty that she got good grades, thinking that she did not work as hard as others. Her parents reminded her that she did work but things came easier for her than others. They also said that many more things "go for her" than for them in their high school days. Her mother added that she was perfectly happy with her "C" grades and was never voted a homecoming princess in her high school. Marylinn's ambivalence between the expectation and the guilt of success seemed to prevent her from making a career plan that would allow her to transcend her parents' socio-economic status. Thus, despite her academic standing, excellent activity record, leadership skills, and personal abilities, her future aspiration reached as far as attending a community college. She also said that she did not know yet what she wanted to do with her life.

**Different Faces with Different Friends**

Marylinn associated with a wide range of peers from active "socialies" to shy "nerds." Among them, she identified Amanda as her best friend. She spent a lot of time with Amanda in school as well as out. On school days, they rode the same bus, shared a locker, took some of the same classes, and spent their noon hour together eating lunch or doing homework. Both of them also participated in track and field together. Both had a common interest in school and grades; school-related topics frequently surfaced in their conversation. Outside school, they visited or telephoned each other at home, and did many "fun" things together. Shopping, visiting the county fair, and going to movies were on their list of the "fun things." After Marylinn got her driver's license, Amanda was the first friend to be driven to
Riverville. The following vignette was taken from Marylinn's journal about their outing:

I had a really fun time with Amanda today. First, I drove to her house and picked her up. We decided to go to Grand Shopping Center and to shop and eat lunch there....Amanda and I ate at [the restaurant area in the shopping center]. We both had McDonald's hamburgers. We looked at almost every store there before we decided to drive to the Riverville Mall. At the mall, we went to our favorite store and to the picture booth....When we were done looking around at the mall we drove home....I drove by the Peaceland pool. I saw [several school friends]....We had a lot of fun! [Personal Journal 7-19-87]

The journal shows how Marylinn and Amanda usually had fun together. Just being together and giggling about trivia seemed to be enough to sustain their friendship.

Despite their close friendship, Marylinn said that she and Amanda were different in many ways. Their personalities contrasted: Marylinn was outgoing and social while Amanda appeared introverted and a little reserved. Their life interests also had little in common: Amanda was much more interested in boyfriends and clothes. One day, Marylinn and Amanda counted the number of boyfriends each had had throughout their lives. Marylinn had a total of three; they were able to enumerate 22 boyfriends (not necessarily all serious ones) for Amanda. On the average, Marylinn spent less than 50 dollars each fall on her school clothes, which were bought at thrift clothing stores. Amanda usually bought hers in fashion stores, spending several times as much as Marylinn. Marylinn and Amanda sometimes had conversations about more serious topics than boyfriends and clothes, but most of the time they just had "fun." Marylinn felt that their relationship got superficial at times; she missed conversations on serious matters such as politics.
and religion.

These differences did not interfere with the two girls' friendship, however, because they fully trusted each other. This trust had built up since the fifth grade, when both Marylinn and Amanda felt that they did not have any friends in school. When Marylinn's mother suggested for the first time that she become friends with Amanda, Marylinn was not so thrilled because Amanda appeared to be shy and even "weird." But they got to know each other better and slowly became friends. Since then, Marylinn had realized that Amanda depended on their friendship and appreciated her as her best friend. Marylinn said, instead of feeling burdened, "I felt important because I knew that somebody would always meet me there [at school]...to talk to. That made me feel that actually I have a friend." Their mutual trust was strengthened, when Marylinn was undergoing a heart-wrenching breakup with her boyfriend, Brandt. After that happened, Brandt intentionally ignored Marylinn, and her circle of friends sided with Brandt. Only Amanda stayed with Marylinn throughout her emotional turmoil. Marylinn's mother added, "Marylinn and Amanda are a lot different, but Marylinn knows Amanda is loyal to her." Marylinn agreed with her mother that Amanda was a faithful friend.

Linda was another good friend of Marylinn's. Marylinn enjoyed Linda's company and spent much time with her. They visited each other's home (but probably not as often as Marylinn visited Amanda) and Linda felt comfortable being around Marylinn's parents. One day, instead of asking her own mother, she telephoned Marylinn's mother to ask how to iron a shirt efficiently. To many of their peers, Marylinn and Linda
appeared to be very close since they participated in many activities together, e.g., school dances.

When they were together, they became louder and thought of "crazy" things to do for fun. Since Linda generally gave an impression of a quiet and introverted person in school, this change surprised her teacher. Marylinn said that being with Linda triggered her creative, crazy mood. Marylinn’s mother recalled a light-hearted incident that Marylinn and Linda created with another friend, Mary. One night in the eighth grade, these girls stayed at Marylinn’s house. They kept the family out of her room. When they finally called the family to come in the room, these girls were lying down backward with their heads hanging off Marylinn’s elevated bed. They had scarves from their noses up, covering their eyes. They painted two little eyes, taped paper hair on their chins, and lipsynched a song on a record. As later recounted, the family stood and roared with laughter.

Marylinn also found Linda more compatible for talk about serious issues, which she found lacking in her friendship with Amanda. When she was with Linda, they usually talked with each other or created something in their houses. Comparing the two types of friendship, Marylinn said, “Amanda is a person that I talk to about more fun things...We go into town and do things. Linda and I usually sit down and talk.” Since Linda felt comfortable around Marylinn’s family and knew how to handle Marylinn’s father’s humor, she was easily included in Marylinn’s family conversations.

However, Marylinn hesitated to call Linda her best friend because full trust was lacking; instead, a certain degree of competition
intervened between them. Her uneasy feeling with Linda dated back to the sixth grade when Marylinn had her first "boyfriend" for a week. Marylinn sensed that Linda, who was his friend, "was jealous because [he] was paying more attention to me than to her." The another incident took place when Marylinn began going out with Brandt in her freshman year. Since Amanda, Linda, and a few more friends "hung out" together during lunch, Brandt was automatically included in this circle. Marylinn said that Linda seemed to be interested in Brandt and behaved in an unusually outgoing manner in his presence. When Marylinn broke up with him after a month, she could not stand Brandt's cold shoulder and left the group; Amanda remained her friend.

Marylinn argued, "As soon as we broke up, she [Linda] was kind of waiting so that she could go in and try to get to know him better." While Marylinn was suffering from the aftermath, Linda kept her friendship with Brandt and began dating with him a half year later. Marylinn thought that it was at least considerate of her not to go out with him right away. After a few months of courtship, Linda and Brandt broke up. By that time, Marylinn renewed her friendship with Brandt and became good friends with Brandt's friend, Randy. Brandt treated Linda "worse" than he had treated Marylinn. As a result, Linda underwent even more miserable emotional distress than Marylinn and held a grudge against Randy whom she viewed partly responsible for their breakup. On the one hand, Marylinn sympathized with Linda and tried to help her; on the other hand, she did not deny that she gloated over her breaking up.

Their competition was also subtly manifested over cars. Marylinn got her first car at the beginning of her junior year and
enthusiastically shared the news with Linda. Linda said, "Yeah?" as if it was "no big deal." After having complained for a while that she had no money, Linda finally got her car. She did not tell Marylinn about it, which upset her.

In addition to Amanda and Linda, Marylinn spent time in school with a circle of friends including a few girls from the rally squad, plus Brandt and Randy. Her friendship with the cheerleaders began in her middle school days when they used to invite each other to their homes often. Her friendship with Brandt and Randy was relatively new and had grown steady after the year of the "cold war" with Brandt. Her circle of friends was actively involved in leadership, the music program, and sports. Marylinn enthusiastically participated with them in junior class activities such as making a homecoming float or decorating dance halls. Her circle of friends also took school work seriously and they were academically successful, keeping their grades over a 3.5 GPA (i.e., above a "B" average). During lunch hour, they clustered on the hall floor to do homework.

Marylinn's association with cheerleaders and her involvement might give an impression that she was an outgoing and "in-crowd" girl and, in turn, more likely to be a "stuck-up" (this concept is discussed on Chapter VI). However, she actually criticized some "stuck-up" examples who thought they were the greatest but ignored other people. She mentioned one incident when she and Linda encountered a couple of stuck-up peers. One spring afternoon, Marylinn and Linda decided to go out to play hackeysack with a group of people who generally hung out close to a smoking area and were considered unpopular in school. The
girls did not have a particularly close friendship with them, but did not want to enslave themselves to their own prejudices against them. The hackey-sack players were surprised at their approach, but not as much as those in the girls’ social category. When Marylinn and Linda finished playing, a couple of stuck-up peers told them in contemptuous tones, "You played hackey-sack with them? How gross! Those guys are scums." Their criticism immediately evoked Marylinn's response, "You're so superficial."

While Marylinn spent much of her time with close friends, she tried to be friendly with a wide range of people in her school. She showed particular sympathy with "underdogs." One day, I was sitting with her on a hall floor during lunch. A crowd of boys and girls rushed into the hall with a freshman, John, who suffered mild brain damage. A boy from the crowd asked John to mimic "He Man" (a cartoon movie character) and John proudly acted, using slightly uncoordinated movements. The crowd asked him to do it again. It was repeated a few times. Marylinn appeared uncomfortable watching him while he made a fool of himself. She told the crowd to stop urging him on and also reminded John, "You don't have to do it if you don't want to."

On another occasion, she became furious with her peers who cursed and yelled at her "unpopular" volleyball teammate, Grace. After a volleyball practice, girls were changing their clothes in the locker room while some of them went out, leaving the door open. Grace expressed her annoyance, telling her peers to close the door behind them. It prompted another girl's verbal attack, "Shut your mouth." Marylinn thought that if someone else said the same thing they would not
have responded in that way. This seemingly injustice made her upset and she ended up yelling at her peers, "You are hypocrites."

In general, Marylinn tried to have a good relationship with her peers. However, when injustice seemed to occur, she liked to stand up and to protest it. Her tendency to express her opinions sometimes cost friendships with peers. Drinking was another matter on which she spoke out. Her friends knew that she disapproved of drinking as a way of having fun. She was not invited by her friends to parties where alcohol might be involved. This made her feel hurt and unwanted at times. However, values that her parents had emphasized seemed to have taken hold firmly in her personal life.

**School As a Source of Fun and Stress**

For Marylinn, school was not only a place for learning but for activities as well. On school days, she was at school, usually from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After seven classes, she participated in sports and then came home to have dinner and do homework. She volunteered to help in some community functions off and on. She was not involved in other extracurricular activities off campus. Therefore, school was the major source of activities in Marylinn's life in addition to her family and friends. Marylinn had always been active in school functions in academics, sports, and leadership. However, she tried not to overload herself with multiple leadership responsibilities and activities. She felt that one sport, daily homework from most of her classes, choir, a leadership position, and several field trips a term were almost enough to overwhelm her.
In a community where not much entertainment was offered, school played an important role as a source of fun for adolescents. Sports events provided social opportunities for them. Especially during the football season, many students came to games and stood around bleachers chatting with their friends, appearing to have little interest in the games. Going to football games was Marylinn's favorite activity because it created a festive mood where people from the school and the community gathered to root for the school and to socialize. She usually went to games with her mother, her father if he was in town, her brother, and her friend Amanda.

After the games, she went to dances with her circle of friends without bothering to find a date. She said that it was more fun to dance with her friends because she did not have to constantly worry about her date. In addition to regular school dances, she usually did not miss homecoming and prom dances. In her junior year, however, Marylinn did not go to the homecoming dance because most of her friends found dates and those without one did not want to accompany her. However, the following spring, she managed to go to the prom with a group of girls. She explained that she was more interested in having fun than in worrying about what other people thought of her.

Marylinn also enjoyed opportunities to dress up in costumes during the homecoming and prom "spirit" weeks and for Halloween. Referring to the spirit weeks, she said that she liked it because "it is not like school days." For each day of the week, the student government assigned a theme for dress-up, e.g., peace day, cowboy/girl day, and Disneyland day. Every morning in the week, she got up earlier than usual to dress
according to the day's theme. She enjoyed Halloween equally as much, as far as dressing up was concerned. These special occasions offered entertainment that was not usually associated with normal school activities.

Although some activities attracted adolescent interest, school often became a source of stress. For instance, the fall term of her junior year was almost a nightmare to Marylinn. She had a large amount of homework assignments from Math, Honors Humanities, Field Biology, and English classes. She participated in volleyball practice every day, with games every week. When she had "away" games, she did not come home until 9 p.m. or even later. Her stress built up and she almost considered quitting volleyball, her favorite sport. Since she took her school work seriously, she could not imagine slighting her homework schedule. Her years of athletic involvement seemed to have provided a routine in her life. Her active involvement in other school activities was of importance as well. Nor did her outgoing, active nature allow her to slow down with social activities. For example, she did not like to miss school dances. They provided entertainment and social contact with her peers in a community where "there's nothing" for teenagers. Hence, she found nothing to give up, and she had to cope with the dilemma of being a really active, yet serious and academic-minded adolescent. This dilemma put her, as well as many of her peers, under stress in her everyday life.

A Successful Balance Keeper

Like many adolescents, Marylinn lived in a complicated web of
cultural ideals—i.e., ethos, messages or values—that were emphasized by parents, teachers, and peers. They often presented her with contradictions. For example, Marylinn's parents wanted her to make decisions on her own; nevertheless, they drew a bottom line. Many adults tried to get across the importance of self-assurance and independence from peer pressure; however, teenagers knew that they needed friends to survive and that extreme amounts of self-assurance could hurt their friendships.

The school staff taught students to be patriotic, but their parents criticized the injustices of American society. As a consequence, Marylinn did not feel patriotic on the Fourth of July, nor did she feel proud of her country's government; at the same time, she felt guilty for not feeling patriotic.

Marylinn tried to be friendly with a wide range of peers; however, she was aware that becoming friends with so-called unpopular people could cost her her friendship with other types of friends. She also realized that standing for her ideals could result in losing a reputation as an easy-to-get-along-with person. She knew she was expected to share time with her family and get along with her parents; often, though, her peers teased her for being a "mama's girl" or a "daddy's brat." Marylinn had been brought up to relate well to adults; now, her peers sometimes accused her of being a "goody goody" (one who tries to be too friendly to everyone) or "brown-noser" (one who curries favors from teachers).

How could she survive in this seemingly contradictory world as a successful adolescent? Certainly, she might have learned that going to
one extreme or another did not help her lead either a joyful life involving peer acceptance or a life of little trouble with her parents and school staff. It seemed impossible to remain at the mid-point on continua of contrasting ideals. Who would have a realistic idea of where the mid-points were for all cases?

American adolescents, including Marylinn, reminded me of acrobats who tried to keep balanced on lines in the air. If they succeeded in pleasing all three parties of their "significant others," i.e., parents, peers, and school staff, they might have been considered successful and, at least, acceptable. If they were not able to do so, they might have been viewed as failures, at least, in the eyes of one section of the significant others.
Notes

1 Five ethnographic interviews were conducted with Marylinn and her family, one in March, the others in July and August, 1987. Some interviews took place in their house, others in my residence. Each session lasted between one and three hours. All the interviews were transcribed verbatim.

2 I suggested that Marylinn keep a journal during the summer of 1987. Whenever she was available, she wrote journal entries in a personal letter style addressed to me, for two months beginning July 5.
CHAPTER II

GREEN LAKE COMMUNITY

The Green Lake Community was conterminous with the Green Lake School District, where high school adolescents, the focus of my study, resided. I conducted fieldwork among the adolescents in the high school and the community for the full year of 1987 (see Chapter X). In this chapter, the community is portrayed as the cultural milieu of adolescent lives. I describe the local economy and the population makeup of the community. Then, I discuss the relationship between the community and the adolescents with respect to youth activities and employment opportunities in the area, and the community's support of the young people. I remind readers that this is not a study of the community, but of its adolescents.

The School District As a Community

The Green Lake community consisted of a small city and three semi-rural adjacent towns, all served by the Green Lake School District (see Figure 1). The territory encompassed about 500 square miles and its population was estimated at 7,000-10,000. Student enrollment at the school district in 1987 totaled fewer than 1,800 in four elementary schools, one middle school, and a high school. The ratio of population to territory indicated that the community was sparsely populated. Most people resided in Peaceland, the small city; the next largest number of
FIGURE 1. A sketch map of the Green Lake Community (not to scale).
residents lived in Greenfield, followed by Newland and Woodland. Due to its size, residents of Green Lake did not seem to have a strong sense of community, although some activities attracted participants from all four areas. The Green Lake community was viewed as a unity in this study because Greenfield High School drew students from these four areas and knitted the subcommunities together through high school activities.

A local history book reported that westward pioneers first settled in this area in the late 1800s. In a more recent historical event, Peaceland was incorporated as a city in 1962. Since then, unsuccessful attempts had been made to annex adjacent towns to the city. The three towns were administratively independent of Peaceland, although remaining economically and culturally related to the city. Geographical factors gave the areas a unified appearance to outsiders because the areas were connected by two arterial roads. Main Road connected Peaceland and Greenfield, which, in turn, were linked with Newland and Woodland by a highway. This highway also ran between the Green Lake community and Riverville, a nearby middle-sized city.

The Community Economy

Farming was originally central to the Green Lake community and still played an important role in the community. Crops included fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, and wine grapes. These farms provided city residents with opportunities to self-pick fresh agricultural products. Hay and firewood were common sale items. Raising livestock was also a typical practice for cash, domestic use, or simply as a hobby. Rabbits, chickens, and cows were raised for food or cash. In addition, animals,
e.g., horses, sheep, goats, and rabbits, were raised for fun or trade.

In addition to farming and raising livestock, this area had been known for logging; forest resources abounded. A national corporation established a large lumber mill in the vicinity of Peaceland a couple of decades ago, and two family-owned local mills operated in Newland. These mills attracted workers from Peaceland, Newland and other communities. The logging opportunities thus engendered had stimulated logging-related construction businesses as well. It was said that a majority of the population worked for the mills when the logging industry was in full swing. Although this was no longer true, a few smaller mills were still in operation.

Since the incorporation of Peaceland as a city, the economy of the area had diverged from farming and logging. Even though the city center of Peaceland (approximate population 2,500) did not appear excessively flourishing, it provided necessary functions for residents. The service agencies included public services, e.g., the City Hall, fire department, United States Postal Service, city library, and city park; financial institutions, e.g., two banks, local business offices, and stores; and a local newspaper office.

The economic center of the city lay at the intersection of Main Road and the highway, between the city center and the city limits of Greenfield. This area was conspicuously marked with a shopping complex, a few restaurants, and a cluster of shops. The Green Lake shopping complex included a large chain grocery store (here called Safeway) and various kinds of local businesses. A couple of locally-owned restaurants and a fast-food chain store stood in the vicinity of the
complex. Growing public services and stores had improved local business prospects and added a variety of jobs. The business area also played a significant role in teenagers' lives because they got jobs in the area or "hung out" there during lunch hour. Recently, the Peaceland city government had formed a task force to look for more ways of facilitating economic development in the area.

Compared to Peaceland, other towns contained fewer business activities. For example, the center of Greenfield, the next largest town, had a post office, several stores along Main Road, and a cluster of an elementary, the middle, and the high school. Newland was served by an elementary school, a couple of mills, and a few stores. Woodland, the smallest town, was hardly noticeable except for a single store with multiple functions as a gas station, food store, book and video rental store, and post office. The limited variety of businesses in the small towns made the residents largely depend on Peaceland for grocery and household shopping needs.

The economy of the Green Lake community was also partially dependent on a nearby middle-sized city, Riverville, in terms of income sources and consumption. The relatively short driving distance (about 15 miles from Peaceland and 35 miles from the Woodland store) allowed many Green Lake residents to commute to Riverville for professional, manual, or clerical jobs. The proximity to Riverville also attracted a low-income population into some sections of the Green Lake community where housing was more affordable than in the city. As an administrator of Greenfield High School observed, the area was a "bedroom community" for commuters to Riverville. Green Lake residents not only brought
income from Riverville but also spent money there when dining out or shopping. The Green Lake community provided limited kinds of merchandise and was lacking in clothing stores, a variety of dining places, an automobile dealership, and other amenities. As a result, many families went to Riverville for major shopping. Some local merchants complained that patrons of the community did not support local businesses.

The dependency on Riverville may have also been attributed to the recent arrivals of "city folks" who moved into the Green Lake community to seek a pleasant, natural environment. These people enjoyed living in comfortable residences in remote environments, e.g., wooded areas at the edge of Peaceland or around the Green Lake, while still holding their jobs in Riverville. They tended to associate largely with the social and cultural life in the city. This also accounted for a "low" sense of community in Green Lake.

The Population Makeup

The composition of the community's population reflected the local economy's reliance upon farming, livestock raising, logging, small businesses, and the nearby city. The attractive characteristics of the area, e.g., nature, space, and independent-living, attracted alternative-living advocates and environmentalists to the community. As a result, the diverse residents ranged from old-timers to newcomers; farmers to blue-collar workers to white-collar workers; the poor to the well-off; political liberals to conservatives; illegal drug dealers to straight clergymen; and loyalists, to critics, to indifferent residents.
Although managed to maintain its "rural" character, several school administrators, students, and community members seemed to welcome an image change under way from a poor country "hick" area to a modern and progressive region.

Despite its vocational diversity, the ethnic composition of this community was predominantly white. During a year of study, I identified only a small number of ethnic minorities in the whole student body, including one Black, a few Asians, a few Hispanics, and several American Indians. A well-published controversy over racism probably reflected a negative attitude toward ethnic minorities in a small segment of the population. Personally, however, I do not recall any unpleasant incidents resulted from my ethnicity during my study.

Five family portraits provided below represent something of the diversity of the Green Lake population. They include families of a well-off self-employed professional; an owner of a Christmas tree farm; a politically active, local business owner; a modest-living, retired mill-worker; and a city commuter with an alternative life-style. These families not only represented a variety of life-styles but also varying degrees of involvement in community matters.

The first family, the Walters, was one of the wealthier families in the area. Father and mother were in their forties and college-educated. Mr. Walters was an active attorney before the family moved to Greenfield about five years ago; his wife had been a homemaker. Mr. and Mrs. Walter operated a few businesses in Riverville and in the Green Lake Community while being active in their church. Having five children ranging from nine to 23 years of age, both parents strongly believed in
the value of a good education for all their children. Their children had had private lessons in piano, dance, and voice. Mrs. Walter also showed her support for their children by attending almost all of their activities in school and in the community. The Walters' participation in other community functions, however, seemed minimal except for church activities.

Their affluence was reflected in their residence; an extravagant mansion "hidden" in the woods completed with a well-mowed, small-scale golf course, a swimming pool, a jacuzzi, and a large trampoline. Indoors, one finds a pool table and a few up-right video-game machines, as well as other entertainment devices. Their style of recreation was obvious from their automobiles: two recreational vehicles for the use of 10 people (one for sale), two Yamaha three-wheelers, a Honda motorcycle, several smaller-size motorcycles, and a four-wheeler ("One for everyone in the family," as Mr. Walter stated).

The second family, who owned a Christmas tree farm next to their modest but comfortable trailer, was extremely active in the community. The Wilsons were not natives to this community, but had been living in the area for more than ten years. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were college-educated and Mrs. Wilson used to teach in a local preschool. They operated the farm independently hiring temporary help during the Christmas season.

Besides the family business, Mr. Wilson had volunteered for the past nine years to help the local fire department. In addition to her housekeeping responsibilities, Mrs. Wilson spent most of her days participating in a variety of community committees and parents'
meetings, coaching children's sport teams, and volunteering as a special education tutor. She sometimes spoke out about her concerns and criticisms in order to actualize her vision of improving the community as a safe and healthy environment for young people.

The Wilsons actively showed interest in their children's lives: they attended their children's school and community activities. They also encouraged their sons and daughter to improve their academic and musical abilities, using monetary rewards. They paid the children five dollars for a 4.0 GPA, 50 cents for one-hour of piano practice, 20 cents for learning a new piano piece by heart, and 10 cents for remembering a piece already learned.

The third family, the Martins, operated a local welding shop in the community. Despite their moderate income, the Martins had sent three children to a parochial high school in Riverville. In exchange for reducing their high educational cost, Mr. and Mrs. Martin volunteered to help the school as a part-time maintenance worker and a bookkeeper. Having carried through their activism as "flower children" in the 1960's, the Martins still maintained their political stand in favor of international peace and a nuclear-free world. Mr. Martin's political beliefs and religious convictions as a Catholic led him to participate in a sit-in protest against nuclear testing sites. The parents' activism had been transmitted to their children. Their two girls were involved in a political form of "punk culture" concerning the peace movement.

The fourth family, the Tylers, had lived in the community for over 20 years. They had four grown children, one from Mr. Tyler's previous
marriage and three from his present one. Two youngest children—a son and a daughter—lived with their parents. Before retiring, Mr. Tyler worked at a local mill, a branch of a national lumber company, for ten years. A leg injury received on the job allowed him to take an early retirement benefit. In his sixties, his family depended mainly on his disability retirement pension and Social Security benefits. The family also raised rabbits for cash; in the spring of 1987, they had more than forty rabbits. The children shared the responsibility for feeding them. Mrs. Tyler, a housewife, was proud of her American Indian heritage and tried to instill her pride in her only daughter.

Among the children of the second marriage, the youngest child—the only daughter—would be the only one who graduated from a high school. The oldest son, who lived nearby with his family, had been looking for work but found it difficult to land a good job without a high school diploma. The second son, who lived with his parents, earned pocket money by selling plasma. None of the family members seemed to be particularly concerned about community issues.

Like many other families, the fifth family, the Gibsons, lived in the area but had nothing to do with the community. Mr. and Mrs. Gibson, in their forties and college-educated, were pursuing their ideal of a rustic life. On their property, which lay at the edge of Peaceland, they grew vegetables, berries, and fruits for private use. As professional gardeners, they designed an exotic wildflower and rock garden around their renovated farm house; they also raised goats for milk, sheep for hair, peacocks for a hobby, ducks and turkeys for food, and bees for honey. Their daily life was spent in Riverville; they took
care of their clients' gardens, participated in the city's social and cultural life, and attended church in that city. The Gibsons, distrusting the quality of education at Greenfield High School, sent their two children to a parochial school where they paid high tuition. They were uninterested in local matters and identified with the Riverville community instead.

The five brief portraits dealt with families I observed and with whom I developed friendships, in varying degrees. In most cases, they volunteered to open their homes to me, a complete stranger. Therefore, the reader should not assume that I intend to present random samples from the community. The cases, however, should provide a glimpse of the diversity of the community's population.

**Youth Participation in Community Activities**

"There is nothing for teenagers to do in this community" was a oft-repeated remark among adults as well as teenagers. The community was lacking in opportunities for many adolescent social activities, e.g., movie theaters, department stores, a variety of fast-food stores, drive-ins, roller-skating rinks, a "gut" (a section of a street open for teenagers' weekend motorcade), and dance halls. Adolescents went to find such entertainment in Riverville. In addition, teenagers drove to the city for private lessons in dance, gymnastics, and other activities.

Despite the paucity of such opportunities, Green Lake teenagers enjoyed a natural environment for many other kinds of activities. Outdoor space at home allowed some adolescents to grow their own gardens or raise animals. Through participating in the 4-H club, they learned
"hands-on" skills and competency in horticulture and livestock raising. In addition, some teenagers raised horses to ride, trained them to show or to enter rodeos, or "doctored" the animals when sick. They were amazingly competent in their knowledge and skills in caring for horses.

The natural environment, characterized by ample woods, creeks, and beautiful scenery, also beckoned the young people toward outdoor activities, e.g., hunting, fishing, and bicycling. Hunting and fishing were popular sports among teenagers as well as adults in the community. In their journals, a few boys expressed their pleasurable anticipation of hunting and fishing seasons. Adolescents also took advantage of rustic roads for mountain biking, three-wheeling, and motorcycle trail-riding without worrying about bothering their neighbors. Green Lake opened up another possibilities for recreation. From late spring through summer vacation, many local residents were engaged in motorboating, water-skiing, sailing, wind-surfing, and swimming. Especially during summers, parks around the lake (see Figure 1) created natural meeting grounds for teenagers to hang out for sun-bathing, swimming, and socializing.

Furthermore, the limited variety of urban entertainment turned teenagers' attention to self-created activities, e.g., sewing, working on cars, and watching movies on home videos. Sewing provided something for girls to do and helped them cut down their clothing expenses. Hobbies in auto-mechanics were popular among boys. Their time outside school was occupied with renovating or repairing cars of their own or those of their friends. Since the car was a symbol of independence and gave freedom to "get around," especially for going to Riverville,
teenagers developed special attachments to their cars. Watching video movies was another way of spending spare time, especially on weekends. Many families owned home video machines, not viewed as a luxury item. A few local stores added video tape rental services. To the Green Lake teenagers, a home video was a substitute to driving many miles to movie theaters in Riverville.

The minimal amount of outside "distractions" encouraged adolescents to participate in organized group activities in school or the community. For example, a large portion of the student body participated in sports. Turnouts for evening sport games were remarkably high, particularly for football, basketball, and track and field events. In addition, Campus Life (a non-denominational Christian youth organization) enjoyed high attendance at its weekly meetings which drew, on average, over 50 high school students, i.e., almost 10 percent of the student body (see Chapter VIII).

The young people volunteered to help with community functions as individuals or members of high school organizations. Their activities included participating in the city celebration parade, picking up litter on a clean-up campaign throughout the community, serving refreshments in community meetings, and guiding crowds at health fair.

Although the statement, "There is nothing to do in the community," may have proven to be true for certain types of activities, Green Lake adolescents adjusted their social life to their geographical and economic circumstances. They turned their attention from ready-made entertainment to self-created possibilities; private lessons to school-and-community-related activities; and indoor fun to outdoor
actions.

Youth Employment Opportunities

Youth employment reflected the pattern of adult employment, relying partly on the local economy and partly on Riverville (see Chapter VII). Some youth employment was supported by local businesses, e.g., Safeway (a grocery chain store), local restaurants, Dairy Queen (a fast-food chain store), Christmas tree farms, hay fields, fruit and vegetable farms, and logging businesses. Teenagers approached possible job opportunities and submitted applications in person. Other options, such as agricultural or babysitting jobs, came through the school job counseling office when employers requested competent workers. Some teenagers got jobs such as yard work and babysitting through their neighbors.

While the community thus supplied some employment to the young people, the demand for jobs outnumbered the supply. Many teenagers had to go to Riverville to get jobs in fast-food outlets, restaurants, pizza parlors, shopping centers, and gas stations. The scarcity of local jobs for young people added to the Green Lake community's dependency upon Riverville. Youth employment is discussed in details in Chapter VII.

Support From the Community

Several segments of the Green Lake community played a significant role in supporting the high school and, in turn, the life of adolescents. For example, the newspaper reported on high school sports every week. The sports section editor attended almost every home and
away game, wrote separate articles on each sport and a general commentary, and reported the total results at the end of each season. For his "fair and extensive" coverage of high school sports, he was given an appreciation award from the Greenfield Booster Club during half-time at the homecoming football game.

The newspaper also printed honor rolls, announcements of school events, and district news. It sometimes carried feature articles regarding adolescents. An article about a drop-out of the Greenfield High School presented a portrait of the boy, including his reasons for dropping out, his subsequent resentment, and his uncertainty about his future. The article neither condoned nor condemned his decision to drop out; rather, it tried to shed a fair light on the life of an "at-risk" teenager.

Some community groups showed their support of the high school teenagers in the form of awards. For example, the Peaceland City Council awarded a plaque of appreciation to the high school student body for their services in picking up litter along streets prior to the city celebration. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce granted a Future First Citizen Award to a high school senior at the Annual Community Awards Banquet. Local chapters of nation-wide clubs also provided scholarships for the high school students. These supportive gestures showed the community's interest in the high school and adolescents.

Parents' groups crystallized community support to the high school and teenagers. The groups included four organizations: the Booster Club, the Green Lake Parent Network, the "Grad Nite" Committee, and the Drama Club Committee. The Booster Club, the most active group, was
organized to help the athletic program at the high school. The membership of the club was open to anyone over 18 years of age, but most of the active members had children involved in the high school athletic program. Throughout the year, club members raised funds through a food stand during athletic games and an annual spaghetti dinner auction. With the funds, the club purchased athletic equipment for the high school. The club's major contributions to the school included the establishment of the weight room and the baseball scoreboard.

Unlike the Booster Club that concentrated its assistance on the athletic program, the Green Lake Parent Network sought to better the lives of children at all levels in the school district. The group was launched in 1985 by two enthusiastic parents who were interested in improving the community as a safe, healthy environment for young people. The main purposes of the group were identifying problems in the lives of children, disseminating accurate information about solving these problems, and preventing their causes. The identified problem areas included alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy and sexuality, low self-esteem, and peer pressure. In spite of its limited human resources—only three to six members for two years—the group's activities were impressive. They held a monthly meeting to discuss the problems and remedies, sponsored numerous talks given by guest speakers and workshops, assisted in the organization of a community health fair, distributed brochures containing information on the issues, and expressed the group's goals and activities through the local newspaper.

Like the Booster Club, the Grad Nite Committee and the Drama Club Committee directly supported high school matters. In contrast to the
Booster Club and the Parent Network, however, these groups were oriented toward specific, short-term goals. The Grad Nite Committee was organized by parents, mainly mothers, of several high school seniors. The chief purpose of the group was to hold a "substance-free" all-night party for the seniors at a designated place on graduation night. The parents claimed that the endeavor would be their last "fun" gift to their graduating children and would reduce the hazard of drunken driving on that night. In order to raise money for the party, the committee members planned fund-raising projects and implemented the plans throughout a year. The fund-raising projects included dances, sales of balloons at sports games, a car bash (i.e., part of a celebration in which people pay to strike a designated automobile with a violent blow for amusement) during the homecoming week, food booths, bottle drives, and telephone requests for donations.

The Drama Club Committee also was a temporary group of parents. The committee was organized to express their long-term interest in a more balanced activity program in the high school. The Drama Club was abolished for the 1986-87 school year due to the lack of an advisor and of funds. Parents of students interested in drama started the committee to revive the club, offering to help the high school in searching for a volunteer drama coach from the community and repairing drama equipment, e.g., the stage curtain and lights. The temporary existence of the committee ended as soon as the club was reinstated at the high school.

While some families seemed to be indifferent to their children's lives, in and out of school, many individual families actively showed their support of their children's education. They participated in
school functions and expressed their concerns in parents' meetings. A student teacher commented that she was surprised to see that many parents were eager to express their concerns about the quality of education in the high school. An administrator reminded me, however, that community members generally spoke out more with complaints than with praises. He considered the absence of complaints as a positive evaluation of the school.

The community also served as a critical financial source for adolescent activities. Many adolescents supported their activities of school, churches, and clubs through fund raising. They turned to their neighbors to raise money. Some community members complained that too many young people came to their doors for money, but many others willingly supported the young people's fund-raising projects. This financial support actually played an important role in the adolescent life.

In summary of this chapter, the Green Lake Community, conterminous with the Green Lake School District, was a social and financial context of the adolescents' lives, in which their families and high school were rooted. Encompassing a large area by combining four towns, the community consisted of residents representing diversified socio-economic statuses ranging from professionals to low-income manual workers. The local economy depended on farming, logging, and small businesses as well as urban jobs in Riverville. Several segments of the community provided young people with employment possibilities, recreation resources, and financial and psychological support.
Notes

1 This estimate was given by a high school administrator. School district personnel informed me that they did not have statistics of the general population in the district. The Peaceland city administration did not keep demographic data on residents of adjacent towns.

2 For the seniors of the 1986 class, the Grad Nite committee raised $4,000 to hold an all-night graduation party at a ski resort. After the project was successfully completed, the committee was dissolved. It was the first year of the "Grad Nite Party" tradition. The tradition was not continued in 1987 as a result of the lack of cooperation from seniors' parents. At the beginning of the 1987-88 school year, the chairperson of the 1986 committee volunteered her time and energy to continue the tradition and was able to induce cooperation from parents of the 1988 class seniors.
CHAPTER III

GREENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

This chapter discusses Greenfield High School in terms of physical environment, students, and the characteristics of the institution. As a school, it was equipped with facilities common to schools everywhere, e.g., classrooms, chairs, desks, and chalkboards, as well as with features typical in American high schools, e.g., hall lockers, student parking lots, and specialized athletic fields. The second section of this chapter presents profiles of six male and female students from ninth through twelfth grades. The following sections discuss functions of the school as a place for academic and practical learning; a place for discipline; a place for extracurricular activities; a place for democratic practices; and a place for friendship and courtship.

Physical Environment

Greenfield High School (see Figure 2) was located in Greenfield, the second largest town in the Green Lake community, about one mile from the economic center in Peaceland. The main driveway to the high school branched out from Main Road which connected Peaceland and Greenfield. Most of the properties along the main driveway were privately owned. A sign on the right side of the road read that the school gate opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The straight 150-yard driveway split into two diverging roads which encircled a
FIGURE 2. A sketch map of Greenfield High School (not to scale).
football/soccer field. The left road led to a student parking lot, the one on the right to a faculty parking lot. A baseball field was located on the left corner of the intersection. A large tree stood on its right corner, marking an alternative parking area for one or two cars. The space under the tree was favored by students who were prohibited to drive into the student parking lot because of traffic offenses and those who liked to have lunch or to "make out" with their boy/girlfriends in their cars.

The left road ran in between the football field on its right side and the softball field on its left side. The school buildings stood next to the football field, facing the student parking lot. The lot was divided by a lawn into two sections. One section, called the "junior parking lot," was paved and held approximately 60 cars. The other, a gravel section, was larger than the paved one and is called the "senior parking lot." Since the junior parking lot was paved a few years ago, it has been favored by most students.

From the parking lot, a few stone steps led to a courtyard, referred to as the "junior courtyard" or just the "courtyard." All the school busses stopped in front of the steps. The courtyard provided main access to the school office, a gym, and classrooms. The other courtyard, called the "senior courtyard," was surrounded by more classrooms and a library. Like the parking lots, the use of the courtyards was not confined to any specific class. Close to the seniors' courtyard, a small shed, made of plywood, was erected. This shed, called the "smokers' shed," was the only place where students were allowed to smoke in school. The significance of the shed in student
life is discussed in Chapter VI.

School buildings were connected with covered breezeways. In two school buildings, easily accessible from the stone steps, lockers (standing about six feet tall and one-and-a-half feet wide) stood abreast along the corridors. Most of the lockers were placed in the building on the left side of the steps (referred to here as the main hall). The locker hall in the gym building was called the "freshmen hall." Most lockers were shared by two students. Those who did not have a locker partner were considered lucky.

The Student Handbook clearly pointed out that lockers were de jure school property and students were only allowed to use them. The lockers were subject to inspection if the school administrators decided it was necessary. However, the lockers created de facto private space for individual students. Therefore, the students liked to share a locker with their best friend, sometimes a boyfriend or a girlfriend, because it engendered intimacy. Students added a personal touch with decorations inside their locker doors. The decorating materials varied from photographs of friends or family to posters of pop stars, from fashion magazine cut-outs to Playboy pin-ups, and from memo pads to mirrors.

Classrooms, science labs, vocational education shops, and athletic utilities tended to be clustered according to subject areas. In addition, the school had special facilities including an art room, with a darkroom; a music room for band and choir classes; a home economics room equipped with four sets of kitchen and several sewing machines; a library that provided both books and audio-visual instructional aids and
seated about 50; a theater with about 200 seats; and a school cafeteria that served hot lunches and snacks and was also used for dances or meetings.

The offices were clustered in one area. The office area personnel handled various student affairs. Two secretaries took care of "nuts and bolts" matters such as parental permission forms and locker problems. Two full-time counselors took charge of class scheduling, personal, and college counseling, and one part-time counselor handled student employment matters. An attendance secretary recorded students' attendance. A bookkeeper sold lunch tickets and received all student fees. An athletic director scheduled athletic games and handled individual athletes' matters. A vice principal was responsible for student discipline. A principal, whose office was located farther in the back of the area, took care of student matters referred by teachers and other administrators.

The high school had four athletic fields. One of them, the football field, was equipped with covered bleachers, seating about 800 home fans, and open bleachers reserved for guest team fans. This field was shared by boys' and girls' soccer teams in fall. The baseball field boasted a scoreboard, and open bleachers were shared by home and guest team rooters; the softball field was recently improved. Lastly, the field for track and field events had open bleachers used by both home and guest rooters.

Profiles of Greenfielders

Greenfield High School enrolled 513 students (I refer to them as
Greenfielders) in ninth through twelfth grades in April, 1987. The ratio of boys to girls was about equal. The number of tenth and eleventh graders remained relatively stable; ninth and twelfth grades noticeably increased and decreased respectively between October, 1986 and September, 1987 as shown in Table 1:

**TABLE 1. Greenfield High School Student Enrollment in 1986-87**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade\Date</th>
<th>Oct.'86</th>
<th>Dec.'86</th>
<th>Apr.'87</th>
<th>Sept.'87</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>137</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A district administrator commented that the district experienced a relatively high student turn-over. He attributed this tendency to the location of the community. Since the community was near Riverville, it provided low-income housing for temporary residents while they looked for jobs in the city. In some cases, children from single-parent families increased the mobile student population as they moved in or out of the district to live with their other parent. Some of them alternated years in the high school between their parents.

By contrast, many students had lived in the same school district since elementary school. One senior boy reported that he had gone to the same schools since elementary school with approximately 20 percent
of his high school classmates.

In order to personalize Greenfielders, profiles of six students were developed, representing both sexes and all grade levels. David, a senior, had a wide range of cross-cultural experiences as a result of his father having served in the U.S. Army. He exaggerated his international experience saying, "I was all over the world except Moscow." He was born in England and had lived in 14 different countries in Europe and Asia.

When David came to the United States for good at the age of 14, he knew more about world geography than his social studies teacher. He felt that he was repeating the same materials in other subjects as well, because he had already learned them overseas. School became so "boring" that he dropped out of the tenth grade in California. He looked for jobs, but without a high school diploma he found only low-paying, "dull" ones. So he returned to school in California. This time, family problems made it hard for him to stay at home. He transferred to Greenfield High School in his junior year when he came to live with his grandparents.

Being a little older than his peers, this 18 year-old junior felt out of place. David did not have close friends and had been classified by his peers as a "jerk," which he defined as "one who does not get along with others." In order to change his image, he tried to get along with his peers in his senior. He made some friends although he did not feel very close to them. He also had become involved in school activities as a yearbook photographer. As a result of raising his grades from 1.0 (a "D" average) to over 3.0 (a "B" average) during high
school years, he received the Most Improved Senior Award. Although unsure about his future, he considered visiting his friends and relatives in Europe and going to a university in California after graduation.

Beth, a senior, chose to become legally emancipated at the age of 16 in order to lead an independent life from her "abusing" mother. She paid monthly room and board while staying with a middle-aged couple. She had been smoking since the age of 10 and had frequented the smokers' shed at the high school. In the summer of her junior year, she stopped smoking with help of both her job supervisor and her boyfriend. She still spoke out for smokers' rights in school. She became, however, more involved in "mainstream" school activities, e.g., playing clarinet in the stage band and editing the school newspaper. Her grades had continuously improved since the middle of her junior year. She became visible not only to her smoking peers but also to the general crowd of students. In her senior year, she was voted the Girl of the Month for Dependability.

Dan, a junior, was a versatile athlete who participated in varsity football in fall, varsity basketball in winter, and track and field in spring. His athletic awards in all three sports pointed to his athletic activity and ability. Although he attended after-school practices lasting as late as 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. everyday, he maintained a GPA (grade point average) of over 3.0. He was also known to have kept up relationship with one girl for over a half year (which was considered long for a high school relationship). Like Dan, she was also a well-rounded athlete in volleyball, basketball, and track. Some of
Dan's peers thought that he was fun to be around; others criticized him for having a "big mouth" and frequently embarrassing others.

Mary, a junior, was another example of an active and ambitious teenager. She had been a cheerleader for three years since her freshman year and exercised leadership in the rally squad. She might appear to be "stuck-up" to some of her peers but was described as cheerful and personable by others. She had maintained a 4.0 GPA (a straight "A") throughout her high school years. While many Greenfielders considered going to community colleges or small colleges in the state, if she was to go to college at all, her ambition was to attend a prestigious private university. Since her working class parents could not support her college education, she would have to find financial sources to support herself. Despite the financial obstacles, she was determined and serious about her future.

Jim, a sophomore, attended Greenfield High School for a year following his move to a local group home for troubled juveniles. The group home was sponsored by the Children's Services Division of the state. He lived in the home with eight other boys and their foster parents. He did not like to discuss the reason that he came to the home. He did, however, talk about his mother and his girlfriend living in a large city about 130 miles away. He was not particularly interested in studying, and he usually got low grades. The house rules required him to study for a few hours every school evening in order to bring his grades up. His major interest was in playing classical guitar. Although his playing got on his foster parents' nerves and his school work suffered, Jim practiced his guitar diligently in hopes of
becoming a professional musician. His individualistic life-style conflicted with the house parents' style of discipline.

Kyla was a cheerful and warm-hearted freshman enrolled in the special education program. She was one of the first students who approached me at the beginning of my study. She stated, "When I came to high school as a freshman, I did not know anybody. I was lost. I like to help new students because I understand how they feel." In spite of her lively and personable attributes, her visibility was mainly limited to her special education rooms. She was doing well in the four academic subjects required for freshmen, i.e., language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. She participated in the girls' choir and had sung a few solos. In addition to choir, she helped the school's Special Olympics (i.e., athletic events for physically and mentally handicapped students) basketball team as a manager. She supported her stylish appearance with assistance from her mother and the sale of animals that she raised.

The adolescents described above represent a variety of Greenfielders ranging from outgoing to shy; academic to party-loving; warm and personable to aloof; popular to unpopular; "straight" to smoking; and fashionable to unstylish. Each of the students contributed to the diversified (maybe symbolizing a "free" or individualistic society) atmosphere in school.

A Place for Academic and Practical Learning

Greenfield High School offered opportunities for both academic and practical learning. Academic learning refers to acquiring cognitive
knowledge mainly from books, that was considered the basis of formal education and further schooling. Practical learning means gaining "how-to" skills by "doing" to be applied in daily life or work places.

Students considered school as the setting in which learning was to take place. The high school offered a variety of classes at different grade and academic performance levels: e.g., language arts (English and foreign languages); mathematics (math and computer); social studies (global studies, history, political process, and economics); natural science (biology, chemistry, and physics); and health.

All students were required to take a certain minimum number of hours in these areas in order to graduate from the high school. The requirements included: four years of English, two years of mathematics, four years of social studies, two years of natural science, two years of physical education, and one year of health. The choice of specific courses in each area relied mainly on students, their parents, and counselors. Beyond these requirements, students could take additional academic courses if they planned to go to college or were merely interested in them. While these academic courses stressed book learning, they also integrated practical learning through field trips, experiments, and more applicable projects.

Greenfield High School also offered elective courses in which students obtained skills and knowledge in industrial arts, business, home economics, and clerical work. These areas were designed to prepare the students for the "real" world, either for everyday life or the work force. Industrial arts included courses pertaining to metal, auto-mechanics, and wood; the business curriculum encompassed typing,
accounting, business machine skills and communication; and home economics emphasized sewing, cooking, crafts, and childcare. Such courses taught students "hands-on" skills, e.g., how to handle the machinery in the industrial art workshops, how to type, and how to care for children. Several students gained competent knowledge and a variety of skills in these areas. For example, a senior boy in the auto-mechanic class changed the oil and oil filter in my car. A junior boy taught me the names and functions of over 10 different electric saws furnished in the wood shop.

In addition to these vocational courses, the school provided internal work places where students could gain working experiences as aides in the library, offices, and individual classrooms; and as peer tutors in resource rooms. The student aides took these working opportunities for a half credit a year (as opposed to other courses for one credit for a year). The courses assigned a variety of responsibilities, depending on the position. Media aides working in the library assisted in the process of checking books and media apparatus in and out; aides in the main office answered the phone, delivered courier mail, and made copies; attendance aides posted and delivered messages to students and teachers; classroom aides assisted teachers in preparing some instructional materials and grading; and peer tutors administered individual tests and assisted teachers with individual projects. Through these work experiences, students were expected to learn to take attendance, to be punctual, to finish jobs on time and as directed, and to get along with co-workers, whether staff or peers.

Arts--music and fine arts--was another area that emphasized
practical learning, although theoretical learning was not neglected in these classes. First, in the music program, practical learning—singing and playing—was indispensably integrated in choir and band courses. The school district provided percussion and wind instruments to students who did not have their own, and the school program offered free lessons to all participants so that they did not have to seek private lessons. Second, in fine arts, the photography course provided students with "hands-on" experiences of taking pictures, developing films, and enlarging or reducing photos. Some students had opportunities to apply these skills to "real" situations by participating in the yearbook and school newspaper production courses. In addition to the photography course, other fine art courses invited students to learn and practice a variety of art forms such as drawing, water color and oil painting, ceramics, crafts, printmaking, graphic designs, and calligraphy.

The combined academic and practical learning represented an important aspect of the Greenfield curriculum. I also believe that the combined academic and vocational curriculum accommodated the compulsory educational system up to the twelfth grades in the United States. Given that Americans had the legal right to be "schooled" through the twelfth grade, high schools faced dealing with diverse levels of intelligence and future aspirations on the part of the students. The student population ranged from those who regarded the high school as the last part of their schooling to those who viewed it as a major step toward college. As a result, high schools tried to satisfy everyone according to their needs and wants.
A Place for Discipline: Awards and Punishment

The disciplinary mode of Greenfield High School appeared to reflect the behavioristic philosophy of education, in which rewards and punishment were used to modify student behavior.

Awards and Honors

Awards and honors in the high school were modes of rewards, given on the basis of scholarship, athletic ability, and social skills. Scholarship-based awards included the honor roll, decided by a quarterly GPA above 3.00; Student of the Month, established and granted by individual teachers in some classes; and Student of the Year, chosen in all subject areas and awarded at the Annual Academic Award Banquet.

Athletic awards were given to students who were judged on the basis of length of participation, service to the team, spirit and attitude, and behavior both on and off the playing field/court in a particular sport that season. Despite the variation in different sports, the Letter Award was commonly given to varsity athletes in all sports. According to the Green Lake School District Athletic Policy, "an athlete who earns a varsity athletic award shall receive the chenille school letter and a certificate." Students who received the Letter Award sewed the letter on the left chest of a self-purchased "letterman's jacket." The lettered athletes, both girls and boys, wore the jackets, in particular on game days, to show their school spirit. Some boys lent their jackets to their girlfriends, announcing their boy/girlfriend relationship. In addition to the Letter Award, multiple awards were
given to athletes selected by coaches or voted by their peer athletes and announced during an athletic dessert for individual sports after each season. Some of the awards were entitled "Most Valuable Player," "Most Inspirational," and "Most Improved."

The third kind of award was called the "Chance Award," invented two years ago and directed by a teacher. The purpose of the award was to reward good behavior. The procedures were as follows: (1) staff members identified students who exhibited good academic or social behavior and gave them slips bearing their names and the reasons for the award; (2) students put the Chance Award slips into a box set up in the main office; and (3) the directing teacher picked as many slips from the box as the number of awards each week; and (4) he posted the list of recipients who came to his classroom to get their prizes, e.g., a McDonald's hamburger, a calculator, a candy bar, and a six-pack soft drink. Quoting from some students and staff, an article from the student newspaper assessed its function positively:

It has really helped the students here at Greenfield High School to become more polite and thoughtful. The Chance Awards system seems to boost the students' positive efforts which makes a difference at school.

In contrast, other students and staff did not evaluate the award positively due to what was considered its haphazard selection process.

Rules and Punishment

Greenfield High School was a rule-bound institution where students were expected to follow rules and to conduct themselves according to regulations. Students' rights were defined within the milieu of
learning, not for their own sake. The Student Handbook, distributed at
the beginning of every school year, delineated rules, regulations, and
guidelines regarding academic, social, and physical aspects of the
student life. The handbook stated that students' behaviors endangering
a safe learning environment would be punished by one of the following
"disciplinary tools" to be adopted according to the severity of their
violation:

(1) admonish students, (2) conference with students, (3) conference
with parent, (4) mail letters home, (5) telephone parents, (6)
place student on probation, (7) detain student after school hours,
[place students in the Saturday School] (8) suspend the student,
and (9) recommend the student for expulsion. [Student Handbook
1987-88:35]

Among disciplinary matters including truancies and "tardies,"
physical violence, vandalism, and misconducts in classrooms, my
interviews with vice principals uncovered that attendance problems
demanded most of their time. A faculty-appointed task force also
identified attendance as one of the focal areas to improve the quality
of education. The school philosophy of attendance was expressed as
follows:

The staff at Greenfield High School along with the Green Lake
School Board of Directors strongly endorse the philosophy that
attendance in school is essential for the educational process of
the student. While we strongly encourage regular attendance, we
feel parents should determine when their children have permission
and consent to miss school. [Student Handbook 1987-88:10]

Attendance-related offenses included tardiness and truancy.

Tardiness was defined as coming to a class more than five minutes late
after a bell rings. Truancy was defined as follows:

...the absence of a student from school or a class without the
prior consent or knowledge of the parents, guardian, or school
authorities and/or...with...reasons unacceptable to the school
It also included leaving a class with a pass slip for longer than the expected length of time.

Attendance problems may have been associated with the following structural characteristics of Greenfield High School: e.g., classroom changes for each period, four-minute breaks between periods, the use of hall passes, an open-campus policy for lunch, and accessibility to cars during school. These structural characteristics presented more freedom to students but, at the same time, more possibilities to "get out." The school administrators were forced to adopt a complicated tardy/truancy control system while allowing students a certain degree of freedom which democratic ideology prescribed to the system.

Another type of rule requiring disciplinary attention was related to safety regarding drug and substance abuse, possession of dangerous and nuisance items, and hazardous driving on campus. A few students pointed to substance abuse as a part of American high school culture, but insisted that Greenfield High School did not have the serious problems of "big city" schools. A counselor was assigned to deal with the problem, and an advisory committee of four faculty members worked with the counselor.

Compared to the school-wide rules, each classroom teacher also set rules for desirable student conduct in their classroom. The following example was posted on the wall of the art room:

* This room and supplies are for your use. Take responsibility in their care.
* Respect your fellow students' right to work; don't disrupt the class!
* Keep your hands off others' artwork!
* No horseplay!
* No obscene language.
* Clean up your work area completely.
* Don't sit on the tables.
* Don't write on any classroom furniture.
* Only photo students are allowed in the darkroom.
* The teacher's desk and files are off-limits.

As mentioned above, the school used rewards and punishment to control student behavior and to improve the school learning environment. In Greenfield, rewards were bestowed to academically, athletically, and socially successful students and punishment was imposed on those who violated attendance rules and endangered the safe school environment.

A Place for Extracurricular Activities

Students were given opportunities to participate in sports, arts activities, clubs and organizations, fund-raising projects, and social activities. Students' participation was strongly encouraged by school staff and students themselves.

Sports

The Greenfield High School supported 11 regular and two single-event sports in three seasons. Fall sports included football (men), volleyball (women), soccer (men/women), cross-country running (men/women), and powder puff tag football (women). Winter sports were basketball (men/women), wrestling (men), snow-skiing (men/women), and weight lifting (men). Spring sports involved baseball (men), softball (women), track and field (men/women), and golf (men/women). Among the sports, tag football and weight lifting were single-event sports.

Athletic participation was not considered a right of students but a
privilege, given only to physically and academically eligible students. Regarding physical eligibility, students had to present to school a medical record showing their physical fitness for a particular sport and proof of a health insurance policy. Academically, students should have passed at least five courses in the previous semester and be passing the same number of courses in the present semester.

While the official sports program was limited to qualified athletes, intramural sport activities were open to everyone. The intramural program was designed and coordinated by a counselor to give all students opportunities to get involved in something during lunch time. The program had drawn many non-athletes into a variety of sports such as football, volleyball, basketball, ping pong, badminton, and soccer. These sports were scheduled one at a time for a month.

Clubs and Organizations

In addition to the athletic program, most students participated in club or organization activities. Officially recognized school clubs and organizations were: language clubs (French, German, Russian, and Spanish), music clubs (choirs and bands), athletic clubs (weight lifting, ski, track, boys basketball, girls basketball, and baseball), cheering clubs (rally, pep club, and dance team), journalism clubs (Yearbook and student newspaper), Field Biology Club, Chess Club, FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America), National Honor Society, Girls' League, and Associated Student Body Government.

Some clubs were linked to academic classes such as language, music, journalism, and biology. Therefore, students who took those classes
became members of the clubs, although non-class students could have a membership and participated in special club activities. These clubs were separate from classes in terms of extra activities involved, in addition to their major classroom functions. For instance, language clubs had social events such as a Christmas party and field trips independent of classroom activities; the journalism club included newspaper staff as well as some photographers from yearbook staff, who spent extra time for reporting, photographing, and laying out articles. In addition, music clubs such as choir and band participated in off-campus competitions and concerts. The athletic clubs often referred to specific sports teams, as described earlier.

In contrast to clubs related to existing classes or sports teams, some clubs were independent organizations such as National Honor Society, Girls' League, Chess Club, FBLA, Dance Team, and Rally Squad. These groups had their own agenda for goals and activities.

Among club and organizations' activities, fund-raising projects were of crucial importance because they brought funds for further activities. Most of the club and organization activities were not funded by the school or school district. As a result, the groups had to raise money to carry out their activities or to buy necessary equipment for their group functions. Fund raising is discussed in details in Chapter VII.

So far, I have discussed school as a place where students became busy with activities through sports, clubs, and organizations. Some students participated vigorously in those activities; others had minimal participation. No matter to what degree they participated in those
activities, this function of school was viewed as highly important to students.

A Place for "Democratic" Practices

The school system attempted to incorporate the democratic ideology into its curriculum by allowing students to practice freedom of choice, freedom of expression, and self-government in limited settings. Students exercised their freedom of choice by voting and choosing elective courses; they expressed their opinions through the student newspaper; and they elected student leaders who would govern student activities.

Freedom of Choice

Students were given opportunities to exercise their freedom of choice by voting. One kind of voting concerned the election of Associated Student Body leaders (president, vice president, manager, secretary, and treasurer) and class officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer). Before every May election, student leaders of that year nominated candidates for each position and candidates then campaigned for election. The campaign process resembled elections in adult society in some ways. For example, some candidates organized a structured campaign crew. They recruited campaign managers and workers among their friends, who attempted to persuade voters, particularly lower class people such as freshmen and sophomores who could be readily influenced. The teams also put up campaign posters with captions which might be as simple as candidates' names and running positions. Other
captions presented slogans elaborated with pictures and puns.

Voting was also a common practice in determining homecoming, prom, and Valentine courts, and Girl of the Month. For the homecoming court, seven princesses were chosen, one each from freshman and sophomore classes, two from junior class, and three from senior class. Among the three senior princesses, a queen was elected. The prom was set up for juniors and seniors. Two junior princesses and three senior princesses were chosen first and then a queen was elected from the senior princesses. The Valentine court was not as formal as the other courts organized by the Associated Student Body. The Valentine court consisted of a prince and a princess from each class, from whom a king and a queen were determined. Students called these practices "popularity votes" because judgment was likely to be based on how popular individuals were among their peers. As long as their popularity was sustained, the same individuals could be selected for any court repeatedly.

The Girl of the Month award, sponsored by Girls' League, was administered by and for girls on the basis of different qualities specified each month. The qualities included citizenship (September), friendliness (October), cooperation (November), leadership (December), scholarship (January), sportsmanship (February), dependability (March), sense of humor (April), and school spirit (May). In order to give equal opportunities to every girl, those already chosen were omitted from the vote roster.

Students' freedom of choice was not limited to casting votes. Students also exercised freedom in choosing elective courses. This choice was not as free as voting because factors such as graduation
requirements and enrollment limitation for each class affected ones' decisions. However, students were given choices from a variety of courses within limits. This freedom allowed them to choose which periods they wanted to take specific classes and to take courses with their friends.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression was exercised in the form of school journalism. Students produced their own monthly newspaper. They planned the contents, chose editorial topics, collected information, wrote editorials and report articles, took pictures, sold advertisement space, laid out pages, edited pages, and distributed the papers. Except for printing, they did everything by themselves under an English teacher's supervision. In the process of planning and organizing, student journalists determined their stand on certain issues and decided how to present their opinions. The newspaper also provided channels through which other students expressed themselves.

According to the Student Handbook, student journalism was supposed to reflect the democratic ideology applied in school:

One of the basic purposes of schooling is to prepare students for responsible self-expression in a democratic society. Citizens in our democracy are permitted free expression under the First and Fourteen Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. [Student Handbook 1987-88:28]

However, the book added that freedom of expression should be understood in the context of learning; namely, students' right to express themselves could be controlled if it was assumed to disturb the instructional environment:
Since schooling is a learning experience, the matter of free expression must also be viewed as part of the learning process. School officials or their representatives...may find it necessary to review publications and speeches to be given by students and to advise on matters of libel, slander, journalistic ethics, and the probable effect...on the orderly operation of the school. [Student Handbook 1987-88:28]

An incident showed a tug-of-war between students' understanding of freedom of expression and the administrators' concern about education. The February issue carried a few letters to "Dear Jack" (an advisory column like "Dear Abby") pertaining to pregnancy. An example of the letters reads:

Dear Jack,
I'm pregnant and don't know who the father is. I have it narrowed down to five guys. I'd feel stupid telling one of them if it wasn't theirs. What should I do? I don't have enough money for an abortion.

Signed, Hopelessly pregnant

An administrator raised suspicion of the accuracy of the letter and expressed his concern about harming the image of the school in a memo to the journalism class. A reporter disagreed with the administrator's letter in the March issue, defending students' freedom of expression:

I feel that the recent letter sent to the journalism class from Mr. Smith about the "Dear Jack" column is rude and unnecessary. The Eagle Flashes is trying to provide a service to the students of Greenfield....I feel that the letters sent to us by Mr. Smith and petitioners are sincere in their effort to keep our school clean....Where is our freedom to print the letters we feel are important?

The Student Government

Greenfield High School formed the Associated Student Body, defined in the Student Handbook as follows:

The students of Greenfield High School are organized as the
Associated Student Body (A.S.B.) of Greenfield High School. Upon entering high school every student automatically becomes a member of the A.S.B. The administration has delegated certain privileges and responsibilities to the A.S.B. Students will be permitted to keep these and enlarge on them as they demonstrate ability to handle them. [Student Handbook 1987-88:3]

The A.S.B. elected their officers. Some students criticized this election as a popularity vote just like the homecoming and prom courts. But many others were convinced that students cast serious and thoughtful votes for student leaders. The A.S.B. officers made up the Student Leadership class along with four officers from each class, two representatives from the rally squad and the dance team, and two managers of the student store. The Student Leadership class was a working organization that met every day for one period to plan and prepare for student activities, e.g., homecoming, prom, school dances, assemblies, and fund-raising projects.

The Student Leadership class allowed students to make decisions about preferred student activities and procedures to carry them out. Student Leadership granted the leaders valuable experiences in self-government, decision-making, and working with others.

The following scene depicted the first fall term meeting of the Student Leadership class. The teacher began the class with a roll call. Since this was the first class of the year, he introduced the goals of the class to the students, i.e., student leaders. The teacher set out three general objectives: (1) to prepare for Homecoming Week for the first five weeks; (2) to benefit the school by promoting long-term projects or positive student attitudes; and (3) to efficiently manage steady income sources such as the student store and gate admission funds.
from some athletic events. Finally, the teacher reminded the students of their roles as both service people and leaders:

You folks are a service organization....You run the school....You don't get appreciation. We get to change people's attitudes--make them thank you. You're doing things for them....They take it for granted. [Fieldnotes 9-9-87:9]

A Place for Friendship and Courtship

In addition to the instructional functions, school was viewed as a social institution in which friendship and courtship grew. Students constantly interacted with their peers of the same and opposite sexes while being in school. Some students claimed that they came to school to socialize with friends. Several students mentioned that they "hated to be suspended" because their friends would have been in school while they were bored being at home alone.

Some students had carried through their friendships from lower level schools; others developed new friends in the high school. Greenfield High was not considered as "bad" in forming cliques as large high schools and even Green Lake Middle School. It was still difficult for newcomers to get into established groups unless they were outgoing. Social events such as school dances, sports games, and field trips, however, provided students with good opportunities to make friends of the same or opposite sex.

Once they developed friendship/courtship with their peers, the students nourished it in various ways: telephoning to their homes, writing notes to each other, and meeting each other during free time in school. Many teenagers said that they spent an average of one hour on
the phone every day talking with their friends. Some parents complained that their telephone was busy all the time because of their teenage children. Therefore, forfeiting the privilege of using the phone as a mean of "grounding" was considered a terrible punishment by the young people.

In respect to writing notes, it was common for students to send anything from a short memo to a long letter to friends in school. Many boys and girls sent love notes. In addition, students had extensive interactions with their friends by doing things together: e.g., taking classes together and sitting next to each other, spending morning break and lunch together, participating in the same sports or activities, and visiting each other's home. For example, three junior boys had taken most of their classes together throughout their high school years and, consequently, did both class-related and out-of-school activities together. Many boy/girlfriends were often seen taking the same classes.

While both friendship and courtship were important in adolescent life, they were different in two ways. First, friendship with the same people tended to last longer whereas courtship partners frequently changed. Groups of close friends seemed to remain consistent for years, even when summer vacations interfered with friendship. Many friends stayed in contact during vacations and were likely to get back together even after infrequent interactions during long breaks. Many students had kept special friendship with their best friends--often, if not always, of the same sex--for many years. In some cases, these went back to friendships formed in kindergarten.

Courtship was not as stable as friendship. Partners changed
frequently and the change was conspicuous. The length of courtship ranged from a few days to over a year. An over-a-year relationship was rather rare but appeared not to be immune to breaking up. A couple of girls exaggerated, "All girls will probably have gone out with every boy in Greenfield by the end of their senior year." Taking it with a grain of salt, this comment still indicated the short life-span of courtship and frequent partner-changing phenomenon.

The second difference between friendship and courtship is the degree of intensity. Friendship might not be as intense as courtship in terms of frequency of contacts and emotional attachment. When a boy and girl started going out, all of the sudden they were seen together frequently. This new relationship often resulted in redirecting their attention from their best friend of the same sex to their boy/girlfriend. This triangle relationship among two old friends and a new opposite-sex friend could break the old friendship and rearranged friendship. Friendship could affect courtship; courtship appeared to shake up friendship more than the opposite.

Once a girl and boy were engaged in courtship, their emotional attachment was strong. I observed that many students "doodled" about their love relationships on their notebooks. In journal writing, many students described their boy/girlfriends. Responding to a theme question, several students wrote that they would even go to a confinement camp in place of their boy/girlfriends for forty days, although they would not do the same thing for their close friends. The intensity of courtship appeared to extract a price: becoming "tired" of each other. Several students reported that they broke up with their
boy/girlfriends because they were getting bored with each other. They felt that they were entrapped in a routine of doing everything together and spending too much time together in and out of school.

Regardless of the differences between friendship and courtship, these two types of relationships were essential to adolescent culture. School was viewed as a place where teenagers met their peers, developed friendship and courtship, and socialized with their peers.

In this chapter, I have portrayed Greenfield High School in three aspects. First, I described the physical environment of this American high school. Second, I drew profiles of six students at various grade levels. The profiles included information on their family background, attitudes toward education, and present social and academic status in school. Lastly, I discussed five functions that the school was believed to focus on: i.e., academic and practical learning, discipline, extracurricular activities, practices of the democratic ideology, and social activities.
Notes

1 The school rule prohibited students who did not properly observe driving regulations from using the student parking lot. The rule also articulated that students were discouraged from loitering or being in cars parked on the school grounds.

2 Smoking on campus was banned from the fall of 1988. Some students initiated the campaign and received support from the student government and the School District Board.

3 Note that this was a new school year. Thus, each class had been promoted one grade up.

4 The Curriculum Guide 1987-88 issued by the school administration listed courses available in the academic areas: 18 courses in language arts (English); seven courses in foreign languages (two in German, three in Spanish, and two in Russian); nine courses in general social studies (five in social studies, two in citizenship/government, and two in personal finance); seven courses in science; and one health course.

5 The good behavior was judged rather subjectively, depending on staff. Participating in the Chance Award system also depended on staff. The examples of the good behaviors included getting a good score on an exam, delivering a message for a staff member, and helping in an office during busy time.

6 The "Saturday School" should be included as an intermediate step between after-school detention and suspension in the list. The Saturday School refers to an extended detention lasting from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays. During the session, students were required to do homework or to read under the supervision of a teacher, not being allowed to get up from their seats for the whole time except for a half-hour lunch break.

7 Attendance matters were handled by a full-time secretary and one to three student aides for each period. For each class, attendance was checked at two levels. First, teachers called the roll at the beginning of each period and recorded absentees' names on a slip to be placed in a paper pocket attached inside of their classroom door. Second, within the first 15 minutes of each period, an attendance office aide (a student) came and picked up the attendance slip. The slips were compiled at the attendance office to check if the absentees had legitimate reasons and, if not, to track the absences in individual students' records.

8 In the 1986-87 school year, all the rally members took part in the Student Leadership class, and dance team members were precluded. In the 1987-88, the rule changed to lift the mandatory participation of all the rally members; instead, representatives--one from each team--were
included in the class.
CHAPTER IV

A TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY

Before the School Bell Rings

Hectic Morning

Ann is awakened at 6:30 a.m. by her alarm clock as usual. But she finds it more difficult to get up today because she stayed up until one o'clock in the morning to finish her geometry homework. She is half awake, lingering in bed until 6:50 a.m.. She finally drags herself out of bed, telling herself that she will be late unless she gets up right away.

The curtained windows keep the still tranquil house dim. No one else seems to be awake. Ann walks into the shower, still trying to wake up. It takes her about a half an hour to take a shower every morning because she is slow. There is no doubt that the noise of water traverses the wall between the bathroom and her mother's room. She gets out of the shower and her wet hair makes her feel fresh. She walks into her mom's room to tell her what time it is.

Ann goes into her tiny room to dry her hair and to put on her make-up. She began using make-up in the eighth grade but has never liked it too much. A little eye shadow, mascara, eye liner, cheek blush, and lipstick are enough. What drives her to use make-up is her peers' remarks such as "Are you sick?" or "You look pale" when she does
not use it. Then she quickly makes her bed.

Her mother usually gets up by this time and wakes up Michelle, Ann's eleven year-old sister. Ann is trying to get her things together for school: track clothes and shoes, notebooks, pens and pencils, math homework and textbook, and her purse with a little emergency money. Her miscellaneous items find their places in her duffel bag. Most of the time her mom packs her lunch either the night before or in the morning. It usually sits on top of all the things in her bag. This morning, her mom did not make her lunch. Since Ann is running late again, she has no time to make a sandwich for herself.

Socializing on the School Bus

At 7:50 a.m., Ann takes her first bite of cereal, as the school bus approaches her house. Her mother, looking through the kitchen window, yells that the bus is coming. Ann brushes her teeth in a hurry and runs out the door. Little time to hug and kiss her mom! Her sister follows her. The driver knows both Ann and Michelle. The bus has been waiting for them for a few minutes. The driver is annoyed and reprimands them, "Tomorrow, be on time." Ann loves to dream about the day when she will have a driver's license so that she can sleep a little longer and drive to school on her own.

The bus stops in front of Michelle's elementary school at about 7:55 a.m. Within the next five minutes, Jane, Ann's best friend, gets on the bus. They try to bring each other up-to-date about what has taken place in their lives since they left each other yesterday: television programs that they watched last night, homework problems, and
a phone call from Jane's boyfriend. On board are several old-time friends of theirs since kindergarten. Ann and Jane greet their friends on the bus but, most of the time, they continue their conversation. A few students keep their eyes on homework that is due today. Most of the pupils from elementary, middle, and high school are engaged in socializing with their peers. When the noise level gets unbearably high by the driver's standards, she reminds them to quiet down. Her comments are sometimes ignored but are most often observed, at least temporarily.

The bus drives through the main gate of the high school and stops at the front stone steps at 8:05 a.m. (see Figure 3 to accompany Ann's movements in school from this moment). The high school is the last stop for the bus. A few busses have already unloaded and other busses are arriving. The student parking lot is about half filled with passenger cars, pick-up trucks, and a few motorcycles. It takes Ann 15 minutes every morning to get to school by bus.

Before "First Period"

Dragging her bag out of the bus, she says thanks to the driver. As usual, her heavy bag indicates the amount of homework assigned yesterday. Mr. Kay, today's supervising teacher, is standing at the top of the steps and is being greeted by students.

Ann and Jane go to the gym locker room to leave their track clothes and shoes. They put the rest of their things in the hall locker that they share. Students who are arriving by busses of other routes are also rushing into the hall. The sound of slamming locker doors fills the rather deserted corridor in the morning. Ann feels fortunate to
FIGURE 3. A sketch map of Ann's movements in school (not to scale).
have a locker in this hall because her friends said that another hall, called the "freshman hall," is "smelly, unclean, and full of rowdy, immature freshmen." Ann takes about 10 minutes to put her things away.

Ann and Jane head to the library. The library is the only well-lit and well-heated place in the chilly morning. Their other friends, whom they usually meet at the library in the morning, are already there. Ann tries to finish her English homework, occasionally raising her head to join their conversation. The morning noise level in the library is getting higher as more people come in. A librarian comes over to a few students sitting at a table next to Ann's and tells them to leave. The library is a place for studying, not for chatting, the librarian says. Since the consequence of their dismissal is known to be either sitting out in the chilly hall or walking around the empty campus, Ann and her friends try to keep their voices down. Some students are finishing up their homework, or reading library books often from the rack of paperback romantic novels. Some are copying another's assignment.

Morning Classes

First Period (8:35-9:19 a.m.): Biology

The preparatory bell rings at 8:30 a.m., five minutes before the first period. It takes no more than a few seconds for the library to empty. Now halls are filled with squeezing human bodies that are trying to get to their lockers as quickly as possible, calling names, shrieking, and bumping. This seeming "chaos" is abruptly replaced by quiet order when the first period bell rings.
Ann walks into the biology lab, the walls of which are brilliantly decorated with posters, visual instruction aids, and class rules. The counters around the three walls are covered with aquariums and collections of sea shells, stones, animal bones, and countless objects for different biology classes.

She sits at the assigned table near her three male lab partners. Michael usually sits with her, and Jon and Alan sit behind her. Ann generally gets along with them. She sometimes complains that the boys tell her "sick jokes" to embarrass her. The jokes annoy her, but she sometimes finds it fun when she can return one in kind.

While the class watches a video tape about life and ecology, Michael talks to Ann every once in a while. She responds to him, but mostly she pays attention to the television screen.

Break After First Period

As soon as the bell rings, Ann joins the crowd pouring out into the hall. No time can be wasted because only four minutes are allowed between periods. More hustling and bustling! Ann's locker is located on the other side of the hall from the biology lab. She makes her way to her locker against the flow of the on-coming crowd to their lockers. Jane is already there to leave her textbook and notebook from the first period and to pick up materials for her next class.

Ann decides to wait until Jane is finished because it is extremely difficult to squeeze in between her neighbors who stand in front of their narrow lockers adjacent to hers. In this situation, it is acceptable to touch or bump others inadvertently. The hall is one of
the few places in the high school where physical touching is not offensive to others.

Ann and Jane's locker door is moderately decorated with a few photos of their friends and a magnetic handbag-size mirror. The mirror and a "brush-in-residence" are their necessary items. Jane quickly brushes her hair and makes space for Ann. Brushing their hair while looking into a mirror is a ritual for many girls and boys between periods.

Ann finally puts her biology book and notebook on her shelf and takes out a Spanish workbook and a notebook. Barely hearing the bell over the noise around her, she bangs her locker door shut to lock it and runs with Jane to their Spanish class. Several students are running in the courtyard.

It is a routine for her to go back to the locker after each class to leave materials from her previous class and to pick up things for her next class. Such chaos in the hall between classes is sometimes bothersome, but Ann views lockers as indispensable: without lockers students would have to carry their stuff around or stay in one classroom "like seventh graders," which is not "cool."

Second Period (9:23-10:07 a.m.): Spanish

Ann is almost late for her second period, but she is never actually tardy for any class. She runs when she thinks she is getting late. This is her second year of Spanish. She likes the class and plans to take it again next year, especially since the advanced Spanish classes will take a trip to Mexico during spring break.
At the beginning of the class, the teacher tells the students to turn in their notebooks at the end of class. Students check their notebooks to see if everything is there. Then, the teacher asks students questions in Spanish from the workbook and they are told to answer in Spanish. Most of them try but speak softly and hesitantly in Spanish. The teacher also makes the students repeat some Spanish words after him. Some students giggle about some unusual pronunciations.

Spanish is one of the three classes that Ann and Jane are taking together this year. It was possible for them to choose all classes together at the fall registration but they decided not to because it might make them tired of each other if they saw each other all the time.

David, Ann's boyfriend of last year, and John sit behind Ann and Jane. During the free time, Ann begins a conversation with Jane, saying "Did you watch Family Ties last night?" They also talk about news on TV last night while writing down answers in a workbook exercise. Every few minutes, David interjects some jokes. According to Ann, David has a strange sense of humor, but he's fun to listen to. Ann and Jane listen to David's puns, and joke around with the boys for the rest of the free time.

"Morning Break" after Second Period

After the second period, a 10-minute break tends to slow down students in the hall. Ann does not have to hurry as much as in the first break. Ann and Jane stop on the way to their locker to chat with their friends. Members of Future Business Leaders of America are selling doughnuts from the cafeteria window to raise funds for their
club activities. About five people are standing in the line to buy one.

While walking to their locker, Ann and Jane encounter Jeff who is holding a partially eaten maple bar. He asks them, "Do you want a bite?" Ann answers, "Sure!," and rips off a piece, but Jane politely declines his offer.

Ann and Jane pick up materials and go off to their next classes. Ann usually goes to class early and gets her materials set out for English class. When Ann walks in, the teacher, who is working at her desk, raises her head and exchanges a friendly greeting with Ann.

Third Period (10:17-11:01 a.m.): Advanced English II

English is one of Ann's favorite subjects because she likes to read and write. She studies hard for other subjects but "extra hard" for this English class.

This is an Advanced English class for sophomores. She took Advanced English I the previous year, so it was an automatic transition for her to take Advanced English II this year. When she began high school, she was assigned to Advanced English I because she took English in the Talented and Gifted Program in her middle school. Ann does not like to be labeled as a talented and gifted student.

Today, the class is supposed to do the second session of library research. So the class moves to the library where students search for sources of information pertaining to their self-chosen topics. Ann chose to write a paper about the difference between American and Asian education. She has been inspired by a current news magazine article concerning Japanese education. For the three required sources among
newspapers, magazines, interviews, television programs, or references. Ann has already collected information from a newspaper and an encyclopedia. Today, she searches for related articles from magazines.

Fourth Period (11:05-11:49 a.m.): Physical Education

After her English class, Ann is not motivated to go to the physical education (PE) class. She likes PE, but she does not enjoy running around in circles in the gym at the beginning of the class. She enters the girls' locker room next to the gym. Her locker is located deep inside in the area designated for athletes. Her classmates who do not participate in sports have baskets in the area close to the door.

When Ann is "dressing down" (i.e., changing into sports clothes), Jane walks in. They are taking this class together this year. Ann did not have close friends in the PE class last year. It made her feel uncomfortable, especially during pair activities. She often ended up with a boy partner because most girls had their best friends in the class.

Ann changes her jeans to a pair of flower-printed shorts, and her pastel-color blue shirt to a baggy short-sleeved tee-shirt. She pulls the shirt down over the shorts. Ignoring overly fashion-conscious peers, she knows it is not a fad to tuck shirts in pants or skirts. Today she does not have to change her shoes because she is wearing athletic shoes with soft white soles.

By the time Ann and Jane finish changing and closing their lockers, the bell rings. They hastily run out to the gym to be on time in roll call line. The teacher knows most of students by sight and name; she
uses her own first name with students. She attributes her casualness with students to having been born in the community: she grew up here and attended this high school with some of her students' parents. Some students show up for the roll call but are not dressed for gym class. They will observe the class but are excused from participation in today's activity.

After roll call, the class runs around the gym in circles for about five minutes, which Ann thinks is boring. Chatting with Jane during running often reduces boredom. A boys PE class joins the girls for running. A few of her classmates are allowed to walk instead of run because of health problems. After running, students are paired up to play badminton, which this class has been doing for two weeks. The teacher is walking around to help students individually on their skills. Giggles are heard here and there; some pairs are seriously engaged in playing. Badminton will be replaced by volleyball in another two weeks.

The "shower bell" rings five minutes before the final bell. Ann and Jane soon stop playing and rush out to the locker room with other girls. Ann's classmates do not conspicuously show themselves in their undergarments but express no embarrassment at changing clothes in the presence of their peers. No one takes shower; Ann never takes a shower after the PE class but she washes her face when she perspires a lot. After dressing, Ann brushes her hair. Several girls are trying to peek into mirrors to check their appearances. Jane curls her hair and does her make-up again. A few girls bring their electric hair curlers to school; some keep theirs in the gym lockers. Some girls borrow a curler from their friends for a few touches. Ann and Jane stay in the locker
room for about the first five minutes of the lunch time, getting dressed.

**Lunch Time**

Lunch begins at 11:49 a.m. and lasts for 39 minutes. Yesterday, Ann and Jane got a ride from Duane to Sunrise Market, a small chain store, for lunch. Greenfield High School has an open campus policy: students with prior written parental permission are allowed to leave the school grounds during lunch period. Some students go to Dairy Queen, to Safeway, or to other local stores during lunch; some go home for lunch or drive around the area. Many go to Sunrise Market, which sells three hot dogs for a dollar, a hamburger for 50 cents, and various kinds of soft drinks. The store also has a few small tables where students may sit. Yesterday, while they were sitting around a table, about 30 Greenfielders came in and out.

Today Ann and Jane decide to stay at school because they have to prepare for a unit test in the Health class. If they go out, they know they would waste all the lunch time by driving out and back, "sitting around," and socializing with friends.

By the time Ann and Jane walk into the cafeteria, three long lines have formed for hot lunch, hamburgers, and snacks. Half of the lunch room tables are occupied. Principal Smith is standing against the main window and talking with students.

Today's hot lunch menu includes a choice of pizza or super submarine, carrot sticks or onion rings, chilled pears or fresh fruit, regular or chocolate milk, and cookies. From the hamburger line, one
can get a cheeseburger with pickles, ketchup, and mayonnaise; and whatever is available in the hot lunch line except for the main dish. Instead of the other options, one can also get a chef salad with assorted vegetables, cheese, and ham strips. These three options—a hot meal, a cheeseburger meal, and a chef salad—are purchased for one dollar and five cents on the regular price. The same meal is available at a reduced price or free to the students who have made an arrangement on the basis of their financial situation. Ann is not eligible for either benefit. From the snack line, students can also get plain cheeseburgers, deli sandwiches, chips, cookies, ice cream bars, fruit juice, milk, hot pretzels, or cakes with icing for various prices.

Most of the time, Ann brings her own lunch. When she does not, she rarely buys a hot lunch, because if she is late she has to take what is left. Ann and Jane stand at the tail of the snack line. From behind, a few girls and boys "cut" into line in front of Ann. "Cutting" into line is common and it does not bother her any more. Ann buys a hamburger for 65 cents with a chocolate milk for 25 cents; Jane purchases two chocolate chip cookies and a carton of regular milk.

Ann and Jane find seats at a table against a wall, where they usually sit. Most of people sit at the same area every day but seating is not restricted. If they find a vacant table which has a good view over a certain boy whom they are interested in, they would go to that table. Today, Eric, whom they know well but do not consider as their close friend, is sitting at the table where Ann and Jane usually sit. Since Ann gets along with many of her peers, she does not object to sitting with him. They are soon joined by two junior girls. Eric has
two large pieces of pizza on a disposable tray. One of the girl has a
plate of chef salad and the other has a piece of white cake. Eric calls
pizza a "dirty carpet" and the girl with the cake agrees with his
comment that the cafeteria food tastes like plastic. Complaining about
the school lunch is quite common in this school; a student-initiated
lunch committee has spoken out to improve the quality of school lunch.

As soon as they finish lunch, Ann and Jane leave the cafeteria,
which becomes almost vacant within the first 25 minutes. A few students
assisting a janitor are an indirect force to drive students out of the
cafeteria as they begin to clean, fold the lunch tables, and sweep the
floor before the next period begins.

Ann and Jane go to their locker and take out their Health textbook
and notebook to prepare for today's test. They sit against their locker
and spread their books on the worn carpeted hall floor. Their
friends—David, Duane, John, Mary, and Lynn—come and sit with them,
some studying and others bantering each other. A few peers passing by
stop and talk with some from this group; those who bend their heads over
books are usually left alone. Ann feels comfortable to study in the
hall, if she does not go to the library, during lunch time. Lunch
period is also a good time for her to catch up with some homework or
study for tests.

Afternoon Classes

Fifth Period (12:31-1:15 p.m.): Eagle® Tones

As soon as the preparatory bell rings, Ann leaves her health book
in the locker and heads the music room for the stage choir class. She looks forward to the class because they dance and sing most of the class hour. Recently, they have been practicing choreography for a Broadway-show-tune medley. It will be performed on the choir trip to Canada in the spring term as well as at the school spring concert.

Eagle Tones is the only one among three school choirs, that accepts students through an annual audition before the fall registration. Despite the music teacher's de-emphasis on the hierarchy among the choirs, Eagle Tones is recognized as a small group of "elite" singers. After having tried out at the end of her freshman year with her parents' encouragement, Ann was pleasantly surprised at being accepted in the Eagle Tones, given that the standards of the choir are known to be high. Among 12 members, including eight girls and four boys, half of the members are sophomores who auditioned at the same time as Ann.

Differing from other choirs, Eagle Tones adopts choreography for many songs. For performances, the choir members wear special outfits: girls wear a black skirt of knee-length, a white long-sleeved blouse with a black bow tie, a black vest with a front made of blue sparkling fabric, and a pair of black dressy shoes; boys wear a pair of black trousers, a white shirt, and the rest is the same as girls.

When Ann walks through a side door to the music room, several of her classmates are already there. Some have been in this room since the lunch hour, either practicing their musical instrument or singing. Ann exchanges greetings with them and joins their conversation. Choir members have close relationship because the class is small and they have practiced and performed together for a year or longer.
The teacher enters and looks at the students who are sitting at their chairs arranged on the carpeted amphitheater floor. That is his way of checking the roll because he knows everybody well. Class members move down and stand facing the piano on the bottom floor. Ann helps some boys with folding and moving away the chairs from the first elevated level to make more room for dancing. The choir has almost mastered the singing part. Today, the class is devoted to synchronizing choreographic movements. Students dance around on the floor to the music that the teacher plays on the piano. Sometimes, the teacher stops the students and corrects some moves. Some students freely interject their opinions on how some moves should be modified. Ann feels confident of what she is doing and enjoys herself. She likes most choices of the music in this class: e.g., Broadway show tunes, hits of the 50s and 60s, jazz, and movie theme songs.

Sixth Period (1:19-2:03 p.m.): Geometry

After the excitement in the choir, Ann has her least favorite class, Geometry. She finds mathematics generally difficult. From a door at the back of the classroom, she walks all the way up to a front seat to alleviate her "math anxiety." She sat in the middle in the first part of the year and the work was easier then. As the class began dealing with geometric constructions, she found it more difficult. The different teaching style of a student teacher made the lessons more difficult to follow. In addition, students who sat in the back of the class "goofed off" and, sometimes distracted her attention. She figured that it would be better for her to sit in the front to pay attention.
She is still struggling with the subject, but she feels that changing a
seat helps her concentration.

Today, the student teacher explains how geometrically to find a
center of a circle and demonstrates its procedures on an overhead
projector. She distributes compasses, rulers, and worksheets to have
students exercise the same procedures. During the seatwork, Ann
sometimes turns to her neighbor to ask questions, but mostly she
concentrates on the exercise. At the end of the class, Ann turns in her
completed worksheet; those who have not finished are allowed to complete
it at home and bring it back tomorrow. A few minutes before the bell
rings, the student teacher hands out assignments. Students complain
that she gives too much work. Ann tries to finish her seatwork in class
so that she does not have to take both seatwork and homework home.

Seventh Period (2:07-2:51 p.m.): Health

After changing class materials at her locker, Ann walks with Jane
to their Health class. This is the last period of the day and the third
one that they take together. They decided to take Health at the end of
a day because it was expected to be the easiest class of all, the one
with the least pressure. Ann and Jane also decided to take this class
together because they thought they might have some free time in class to
socialize with each other.

Since the teacher is easily approachable to students, the class
tends to have a relaxed atmosphere. Being the last class of the day
makes the situation more unruly. Ann likes the teacher but thinks that
the class sometimes gets out of control. Many students talk back to the
teacher, banter with him, tease him, or talk among themselves while the teacher is talking. Ann became resentful that students who usually sit in the back called those in the front "brown nosers," and they often disrupted the class. So when the teacher switched students from the back to the front and vice versa, Ann was pleased. She feels that her seventh period is still "crazy" but doing better since the seating has been rearranged.

For the previous few weeks, the class topic has been on sex education. A couple of Ann's classmates were excused from this unit because of their and their parents' religious conviction that conflicted with the philosophy of sex education. Ann feels comfortable with class discussion about sex and believes that most of her classmates do not feel embarrassed when discussing the subject in class. She assumes that some of her classmates have a "personal interest" in this unit.

Homeroom (2:55-3:15 p.m.)

Ann usually goes to her homeroom directly from her health class. Ann was assigned to Mrs. Anderson's homeroom in her freshman year and will stay with the same teacher until she graduates. Jane was assigned to another homeroom because classes were organized alphabetically on the basis of students' last names.

When Ann walks in the home economics room, Mrs. Anderson is writing something at her desk. As usual, some students have already congregated around a stove and the microwave oven in the back of the classroom, making popcorn or grilled cheese sandwiches. The teacher allows them to do it because they do nothing in the homeroom but sit around and chat.
Ann sits alone at a table most of the time. She does not have close friends in this homeroom. Others are often engaged in some activities with their own cliques. It is not really bearable to be solitary for 20 minutes. Ann has already looked through the pattern books furnished in the sewing section from cover to cover countless times. Sometimes, she reads a romance novel or does homework.

Ann does not see the value of the homeroom and many of her peers agree with her. Some teachers say that students have to use it for productive activities: e.g., catching up with studying, doing homework for next days, or reading. Yet, she is aware that other teachers would share with her the same skepticism about the homeroom. The skeptical crowd thinks that the homeroom only works to keep students in classrooms until school busses arrive.

After the School Bell Rings

Track Practice (3:30-5:00 p.m.)

After school, Ann has about 15 minutes before a track practice. She likes her sports: the 400m hurdle and the high jump. But she always feel lethargic and regrets not being able to go home to relax after such a long day. Ann and Jane try to take as much time as possible in packing their bags in the hall, moving the bags to the gym locker, and dressing in track clothes.

As Ann and Jane walk to the track field, some of her friends are waiting for their late busses. They are either standing in a circle talking, sitting on benches, or chasing friends for fun in the
courtyard. Ann and Jane briefly stop to greet them but soon run to the field because their track coach is strict about being tardy.

Some athletes are already jogging on the track, and others are stretching muscles before joining the running crowd. After briefly stretching out, Ann and Jane begin warming up on the track. All participants are supposed to run for four laps (one mile) before beginning practices in their areas. Once beginning to run, Ann says that she forgets about the lethargic feeling and enjoys the practice. Also, the continuous improvement in her record encourages her to keep working at it this year. The practice is over at 4:50 p.m. Ann lingers around the track, evaluating her practice with her coach and talking with her peers.

Ann and Jane walk to the gym slowly with other girls. Some girls go home directly after the practice; others take a shower in the girls' locker room, depending on how much they sweat. Today, they decide to go home without showering because Ann's mother will pick them up at 5:15 p.m. Their mothers take turns in picking up the girls after practices because both live in the same direction. They wait for their ride in front of the stone steps, their heavy bags filled with textbooks and notebooks for homework for tonight.

At Home in the Evening

The brown van comes slowly along the main driveway and stops in front of the steps. Ann's sister is riding next to her mother. Ann and Jane quickly slip into the middle seat. Ann's mother suggests stopping to shop at Safeway in Peaceland. Ann was extremely tired after the
practice but now feels a "second wind" as she gets off of the van, and she follows her mother. After buying a few items, they head home. Jane's house is on the way from the school to Ann's. The van is wide for Jane's long, narrow, and steep driveway. Her mother, a good friend of Ann's mother for many years, is preparing dinner. These mothers begin a conversation about each other's family and their neighbors. Ann feels like going home, taking a shower, and relaxing as soon as possible.

By the time they come home, it is already 6:30 p.m. Ann's appetite is soaring; she fills her stomach with a couple bowls of chili, salad, and bread. After the meal, she sits in front of the television. She does not feel like doing anything but just sitting like a "couch potato." The time passes quickly and, at 9:30 p.m., her mom's final reminder makes her go to her room to study. This time, Ann does not voice a protest against her mom's command-like suggestion. She knows that otherwise she will have to stay up late again tonight.

The first thing she does in her room is to turn on her portable radio; easy-listening music seems appropriate now. She sits at her desk and makes a list of what she should do tonight: a workbook exercise for Spanish, a short paper for English, and a Geometry worksheet. Starting the Spanish assignment, Ann works diligently on her homework. The Spanish assignment takes only half an hour. Ann has already prepared an outline for the English paper she needs to write. By the time she finishes her English paper, it is almost midnight. All of the sudden, she feels too tired to keep her eyes open and her eyelids become heavier and heavier. Since she slept for less than six hours last night, Ann
decides to do the geometry homework during lunch time tomorrow and to go to bed now. She realizes that she cannot help appearing to be a "nerd" against her will because she spends lunch time to do homework almost every day. However, what can she do? She takes her grades seriously and does not have enough time to do homework after school and sport practices.

By the time she is ready to sleep, the house has become quiet, just as in the morning when she gets up. Her mother and sister are already in bed.
Some students had insisted that no day was typical and others have no problem to describe their typical day. The story presented in this chapter does not represent a typical day of "all" adolescents, but a typical day of some adolescents. The purpose of this description is to provide an opportunity for readers to look into student life on a school day.

Ann's typical day is composed on the basis of a variety of materials such as interviews, observations, and journals, that describe days of several adolescents.

The principal and a counselor took turns supervising the lunch room. They stood around in the cafeteria, observing students or conversing with them.

The school policy did not allow students to take food from the hot lunch and the hamburger lines outside the cafeteria. It also discouraged students to take snacks into the hall because of littering problems, although several students did it "secretly." Ann and Jane sometimes took out their snacks but, in other times, stayed in the lunchroom to finish them.

The eagle (pseudonym) was the mascot of the high school. Many school organizations carried this name such as the student newspaper, the dance team, and the performing choir.

Homeroom was discontinued beginning fall, 1988. Under the new policy, the seventh period was the last class of the day on Monday through Thursday and the homeroom time on Friday was designated for school-wide activities such as assemblies or club meetings. Since the bus schedule had not been adjusted to the new policy, students who did not drive had about 20-30 minutes of free time before the school bus arrived.
CHAPTER V

ADOLESCENT LIFE OUTSIDE SCHOOL

What goes on in adolescents' lives when they are not at school? What do they do? Where do they go? With whom do they "hang out"? What do they think? I found these questions extremely intriguing but not easy to answer as an ethnographer, because I could not observe adolescents in all their incredibly varied settings.

Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) asked a selected group of adolescents to carry an electronic pager and a pad of self-report forms. The forms had three large categories--location, activities, and companions--and subcategories. Whenever the pager beeped, the adolescents were instructed to fill out the form, indicating where they were, doing what, and with whom. This innovative idea might have partially, if not completely, overcome the limitedness of researchers in space and time.

The frustrating limits were a part of my field research although I did not dream of observing and understanding the whole spectrum of a teenager's life. Just as Hermes, the god of messages in Greek mythology, "promised to tell no lies but did not promise to tell the whole truth" (Crapanzano 1986:76), my participant observations and interviews allowed me to tell the story of teenagers only on the basis of what I had experienced and heard.

Fortunately, personal accounts of adolescents added a dimension to
which I might have not had access otherwise. Their thoughts and personal lives were reflected in essays, journals, and responses to an open-ended survey. In this chapter, I let the young people talk about some aspects of their lives—what they did, what they thought, and what they valued—in their own voices.¹

**Weekends**

Most teenagers looked forward to weekends. The weekends broke the routine of weekdays: getting up early to get ready for school, taking the same seven classes every day, having lunch at basically the same place, practicing sports after school in many students' cases, doing household chores, eating dinner, watching television, doing homework, and going to bed.

Instead, many teenagers reported doing a variety of activities during weekends that they could not usually do during the week: e.g., family outings, working in jobs, sleeping in, visiting with friends, cruising the "gut" (motorcade in a section of a street in a nearby city where teenagers met regularly on weekend evenings), shopping, going to church, and pursuing hobbies. To some teenagers, weekends might not have been drastically different from weekdays except for not going to school; they spent weekends socializing with friends and family or catching up on schoolwork. Some adolescents described their activities on specific weekends in their classroom journals:

Saturday, I went trail riding with some friends of mine. I enjoy trail riding because I love to see God's wonderful creation. I love to see the different trees, hear the birds, and listen to the horses hooves as we gallop down the long trail. I rode a friend's horse. I don't really like riding other people's horses,
especially this one. Blue—which is the name of the horse—has a very stubborn attitude about things. She enjoys doing things her way, (don't we all) but her way is usually either dumping the rider or taking off running. She did, however, take off which scared me to death but I stayed on O.K.. The next time we started running, I pushed her instead of trying to hold her back. We had fun that day. I wish I could have had my own horse but I still had a lot of fun. One really neat thing I enjoy is getting together and praying for a safe trip when we go horseback riding. [a sophomore girl]

I just got back from hunting and told my mom where we went and how many deer we saw. That day my dad and I saw 24 deer in all and I was surprised because of it being so dry. This next weekend I am going again and I hope I get a buck. The buck must be a forked horn or above. [a sophomore boy]

My weekend was the greatest. I went out with a friend and we went to the gut. We met a bunch more of our friends and all cruised together. Melissa knows almost everybody down there so I met lots of new people. I got to know this guy Rob and now I'm going to meet him at Video Games Arcade this weekend. It's gonna be cool. Yeah! [a senior girl]

The following excerpts were taken from senior survey responses regarding typical weekend activities:

We [the family] usually go camping, boating, or fishing. Sometimes I like to stay home and be by myself or go out with friends. [a girl]

I usually sleep in until 11:00, laze (i.e., be lazy) around until 2:00 and then go to work with mom. [a girl]

Worked. Stayed with friends. [a girl]

We usually just stay at my boyfriend's house and watch T.V. after I get off work. We don't go out much. [a girl]

Went to the hot tubs with my girlfriend and made love. [a boy]

Fri--played Bingo, Sat--babysat, Sun--Went out to dinner and played Bingo. [a girl]

I went out with some friends to [visit] a friend in town, played some sports and went to the speedways--where I watched the car races. [a boy]

Usually I have some big activity planned, so I don't have a "typical" weekend, like [our] choir Canada trip, humanities field trip, prom, etc.. [a girl]
Twice went to church. [a girl]
I worked on my car and went fishing. [a boy]
I usually volunteer at the hospital. [a girl]

In addition to the activities mentioned above, some teenagers were engaged in each of the following weekend activities: studying; skateboarding; school-related activities, e.g., dances, fund-raising projects, and athletic and choir competitions; private parties that involved watching home video movies, drinking, and smoking; and community-related activities, e.g., helping at community and church functions.

**Holidays**

Most teenagers reported that they acted or thought differently on holidays than on other days because of the special meanings that holidays had attained in their lives. Their cultural and family traditions made holidays different.

**Thanksgiving**

Many adolescents celebrated Thanksgiving with their families, relatives, and friends, enjoying the traditional feast. Two girls described their Thanksgiving in classroom journals:

I am mostly anticipating going to my grandma's house and seeing my cousins and other relatives. My grandma usually makes an enormous dinner and cakes, pies and jello desserts. The younger kids usually sit at card tables or with TV trays. The TV is usually on and the male folk are watching some football game, telling everyone what that player could have or shouldn't have done, or how good so and so is. After dinner grandma tries to convince everyone to try a certain dessert or pie. She usually succeeds. Then everyone says that they shouldn't have eaten so much pie or cake. [a
Thanksgiving is strictly a family day; a time to share. It's the only holiday in which gifts are not exchanged (traditionally). You don't have to think about giving gifts or what you're going to get. It's probably the least expensive holiday of the year. [A freshman]

A sophomore girl ridiculed the excessive association of turkeys with Thanksgiving:

What was really kinda funny was that all day Wednesday I heard "Happy Turkey Day!" Not only is it extremely corny but we are not celebrating turkeys. If we were, why would we eat them?

The typical image of Thanksgiving may lead one to assume that all the adolescents celebrated it in the "typical" way. Some teenagers corrected the stereotype by depicting their unpleasant experience with the holiday:

I will have to truthfully say I don't anticipate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving to me is being stuck at home with my sister and my mom. We go somewhere different every year and have only been home twice in my life. We don't decorate or have tradition either. Especially since my step-grandma came, really I don't even know where I'm eating tomorrow. Turkey is not a basic in our meal and I've only eaten it a few times for Thanksgiving. One thing I do look forward to is that Daddy might go on an outing with me Friday if he doesn't work. So now that you know about my Thanksgiving, maybe you can figure out why I don't like it. I don't like it because nothing stays the same. [A sophomore girl]

My Thanksgiving wasn't all it was cut out to be. Larry [roommate] was having trouble with his girlfriend. I was still getting over the loss of my girlfriend and my parents weren't talking much. Right when I got off work I went home and didn't eat much. That whole weekend I only ate about one good hot meal. I felt as if my world had come to an end but I'm a survivor. When I got home I took one look at my parents and grabbed Larry and said that we were gonna get drunk. We did. The day after, my head felt like an overripe watermelon. Every word spoken to me made me feel like screaming....My Thanksgiving was actually a bummer. [A senior boy]

Thanksgiving did not present a pleasurable anticipation to these two teenagers. It meant neither a large family gathering nor a bounteous feast. Rather, they viewed Thanksgiving as another weekend with extra
free days.

Halloween

Many Greenfield adolescents considered Halloween as an exciting day. Along with a few occasions, e.g., Homecoming Spirit Week, Halloween allowed teenagers to look different without being ridiculed, transformed into somebody else or something different. There seemed no limit to what identity one could assume: from a witch to an angel, from a monster to Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, from an American Indian to a Russian, or from a Disney character to a pumpkin. Why did this superficial transformation bring excitement to teenagers? Did it assure them a temporary escape from boredom? Or did it beguile young people with the momentary realization of a dream?

Halloween was a day of "trick-or-treating" when children roamed neighborhood "demanding" treats at each household. The question arose each year as to when one is too old to join in that activity. A junior girl declared that she did not feel too old for trick-or-treating. She would do it even at the age of 16 if she did not have to drive a couple of miles to reach her neighbors. Many high school students wanted to sustain the same kind of spirit.

Many teenagers went in costumes to Halloween dance parties, some sponsored by parental groups and others sponsored by community groups, churches, or individual families. Two youngsters described their pleasant experiences on Halloween:

On Saturday morning I awoke to excitement. My sisters were giggling and screaming things like "Trick or treat," the phrase so well known to people in America. Although I wasn't spending
Halloween with my family, I knew they would have fun going to the party the school was having. I helped to get my sisters ready that evening after a relaxed day for my parents but intense for my little sisters for they wanted to get candy, candy, candy! Jinna's [best girlfriend] sisters...picked me up....When we got home [Jinna's house] I went upstairs and the whole thing had been transformed. There was Halloween doors and a witch piñata. (It will later only take a couple of taps with the baseball bat to break the fragile thing open.) I went downstairs and we ate dinner and ate some Halloween candy and carved pumpkins, then watched some movies. One of them was so dumb I had to leave the room to keep from crying. By that time we were all kinda sleepy, but we watched Saturday Night Live anyway. We all crawled up to bed and fell asleep at the witching hour--12:00. [a sophomore girl]

Last Friday I worked in "Scream in the Dark" [a ghost house built for Halloween in Riverville]. It was really fun. First I worked in the jungle room and we had a springy bridge in there and people kept falling down. One girl fell down and almost got trampled. Another little boy fell down and his dad just dragged him out. I then worked in the chain monster room where another guy and I were chained to the walls... [a sophomore boy]

Christmas

Christmas was also considered as a family gathering time of the year: visiting relatives, sharing a big dinner similar to Thanksgiving, and exchanging gifts. A sophomore girl wrote her pleasant anticipation of the holiday:

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. I got to see all my relatives that I haven't seen in months. Everyone (with the exception of a few) gives and enjoys the people's pleasure in what they give. All the food smells good and there is always lots of goodies to eat. I just love Christmas!

Compared to other holidays, gift exchange was regarded as one essence of this holiday. In the society of excessive commercialization as they described, the social expectation demanded teenagers to behave accordingly, which put pressure on them. Not meeting the expectations made them feel inadequate. In particular, the stress was more apparent.
for those who neither had substantial income to buy satisfactory gifts nor had the creativity to construct something by themselves. Several adolescents described the pressure of getting presents for the Christmas season:

My Christmas list for others would be something that is rather cheap and inexpensive. Something like a plain old Christmas card. With no money in it of course. But unfortunately I just can't do that. That would be terrible if I only got cards for Christmas. But we all have to remember that it's only the thought that counts. [a junior girl]

I've been thinking Christmas is coming up pretty soon and with $5 for allowance a week I'm not going to have enough money for my mom, dad, sister, and brother....Things are just too expensive nowadays with a weekly allowance of $5. [a sophomore girl]

Christmas just doesn't seem the same anymore. It's become too commercialized. What happened to the old fashioned Christmas that I used to enjoy... The pressure of buying gifts and getting the money to buy them is what I really hate. Our society is so materialistic. [a boy]

Memorial Day

Memorial Day weekend was slightly different from other weekends because it included a Monday holiday. Some teenagers took a trip with their families or friends. A few students prearranged an absence for Friday before the weekend to extend their family vacation. However, most teenagers spent this weekend similar to their other weekends. In the survey, seniors described activities that they participated in on that weekend:

Car shopped, painted the house and watched movies. [a girl]

I went up to a lake in the mountains with my parents and brother. And with a bunch of other people. We had a lot of fun. [a girl]

Friday night I went to a party with Julie, Becky, and Iris, etc. Then to XXX [a local hard-rock band] concert, then to another
party. Saturday night I stayed at Julie's and we babysat. Sunday night I went to the drive-in with Brian, Julie, and Dan. Then went to Dan's house with them. [a girl]

I worked Friday night. Saturday Sheryl and I went shopping in Riverville. Saturday night I worked. Sunday I did some of my homework and went to work that night. Monday I helped my parents around the house and got my graduation announcements ready to send. [a girl]

I left Thursday night. Went to a camp ground. Laid out in the sun Friday and got a sun burn. Met and talked to 3 guys. Saturday I went with 3 friends to the dunes and rode a quad racer all day. Then Sunday and Monday just talked to the 3 guys I met and went home Monday. [a girl]

I went to [the eastern part of the state] with my family and went hiking and fishing and visited relatives. [a girl]

Help my sister and brother-in-law paint their house. [a boy]

I tried out for the Riverville Pepsi Challenge Baseball team. [a boy]

Sat: I worked all day. Sun: I went to Loveland for a Bible talk and then went to a friend's house for lunch there. Mon: went out in service (witnessing), cleaned the house and went out to town that night with my friends. [a boy]

I went to Blue Lake and went water skiing all weekend. [a boy].

Went to the State track meet. [a senior boy]

First went to swimming at Echo, then went to the lake [Green] with a bunch of friends, cruised the gut, then back home around 2:00 a.m. [a boy]

The Fourth of July

Since my contact with Greenfielders was limited to a few teenagers and adults during the summer, I did not have many opportunities to observe how they spent the Fourth of July. Among the few, Marylinn wrote in her journal her feelings about the national, patriotic holiday:

Since Ridgeport has a big fireworks show on the 4th of July and we haven't seen my grandma in a while, we decided to go there for the
holiday. The fireworks show was a lot of fun to watch. We were down on Newbeach's bay front and we watched the fireworks explode above us. There were a lot of people who were there to watch. The show only lasted for about a half an hour. When the show ended, we went down to the beach and watched some people light off their own fireworks. Even though I did have fun, I wish that I felt more patriotic or something. I felt as if it was just another day, but there were fireworks. I didn't feel a sense of pride or independence at all and in a way that makes me feel guilty....When I was little, holidays seemed so special and exciting, but as I get older, they aren't such a big deal. I think that most of my friends in my age feel a lot the same way. [Personal Journal]

**Summer Vacation**

Summer vacation was the longest break from school in the year, beginning mid-June and lasting until Labor Day, the first Monday in September. Therefore, it gave ample opportunities for high school adolescents to do a variety of things: e.g., getting jobs, traveling, making up credits through summer school or independent studies, socializing, and pursuing extracurricular interests.

Working during summer was popular among teenagers. Even those youngsters who did not advocate working during the school year strongly supported the idea of working during summer. Seniors identified the benefits of summer jobs, e.g., good experience, making money, something to do, something to keep them out of trouble, and a feeling of usefulness. Among those benefits, money was the most important reason for their seeking summer employment. This money earned was saved either for a special purpose, such as purchasing a car or for personal expenses in a following school year.

The following excerpts taken from the senior survey represent the types of summer jobs and experience that they gained:
I babysat 5 days a week for my aunt in another town. I came home on the weekends and did what I wanted. While I babysat we went to the lake. The kids had swim lessons. [a girl]

I worked on my parents' farm, driving grain trucks and I did yard work also. [a girl]

I went to San Diego and worked at Desert Industries all summer. [a girl]

I sheared or trimmed Christmas trees for a local Christmas tree farm. [a boy]

I worked as a conservation fire fighter. I fight forest fires. [a boy]

I hayed for about 1 month. Then I worked rest of the summer. [a boy]

Some seniors described other kinds of activities they enjoyed in addition to their jobs:

Mostly worked at a pizza parlor probably about 5 to 6 days a week. I took a week vacation to California. Everyday went to swimming and water-skiing, rode my bike, worked on my car, etc. Hung around with my friends. [a boy]

Worked for Peaceland Parks and Recreation Association. Went to... Girls' State--300 girls from all around [the state] for a week at the university to form a mock state government. Went to Miss Teen of [the state] Scholarship and Recognition Pageant--got 4th runner-up based on school and community participation, personality, poise, general knowledge, etc. Went to week-long church girls' camp--helped run it. [a girl]

Last summer I went to a university track camp for a week. The track coach is really nice. I really enjoyed myself. I also had a job as a summer school tutor at Green Lake Middle School....Went camping for a week in the mountains on a family vacation, spent the night at my friend's house, went horseback riding on the beach with my friends for my birthday and much much more! [a girl]

A part of summer, if not a whole, was often used for traveling: visiting relatives or a divorced parent, sightseeing in the country, or participating in an international Teen Mission project in other countries:
Went on a vacation to Wisconsin to visit relatives. Also had a friend come from California to visit me. [a senior girl]

Visited my father in Montana. [a senior girl]

I went on a trip with my grandparents all over [the state] on fishing trips and went to Kansas with my mom. I worked a lot with my dad also. [a senior boy]

Went rafting down the Delaware [river] and archery hunting and went to Washington to get my girlfriend. [a senior boy]

Went to Argentina on a Teen Mission trip in July to help local churches, to spread Gospel, and to participate in community development activities. [a sophomore girl]

A few seniors reported that they spent the previous summer on academic activities: attending summer school to earn extra credits, doing independent studies to make up for credits, taking courses in programs offered at colleges and universities:

Independent study for graduation. [a girl]

Went to school and gained my certificate as an nurse's aide. [a girl]

Some seniors said that summer was also time for "goofing off," pursuing extracurricular activities, or improving athletic skills:

Partied with XXX almost every night. I was going out with the lead singer. We went to drive-ins, had lake parties, or parties at my boyfriend's (at the time) house. [a girl]

Lay out in the sun. Drove different cars....Spent a lot of time with Ed [boyfriend] when he was not at work. [a girl]

I rode my horse. I went to a few horse shows. [a girl]

Water-skied a lot at the lake. [a girl]

I played softball for a team. [a girl]

Played 85 baseball games for the Pepsi Challenge. [a boy]
16th Birthday

The 16th birthday seemed to be celebrated specially, probably more by girls than boys. Some guessed that teenagers liked to celebrate this birthday because movies had made it a big deal of being "sweet 16." Others actually thought of it as a special day. Many regulations disappeared beginning on this specific day. Adolescents were able to apply for a driver's license. Some girls were liberated from parental rules banning dates with boys prior to their 16th birthday. Adolescents over 16 were legally allowed to work after six o'clock in the evening, which increased their employment options. Many adolescents said that they could hardly wait until their 16th birthday.

Parents of many teenagers recognized the significance of this meaningful day and helped their children celebrate it in special ways. Here is an excerpt from Stephanie's seven-page journal entry about her 16th birthday:

There's so much to tell you about [my birthday]!...Yesterday, they [my family] all told me "Happy Birthday" and gave me hugs and kisses. There were presents sitting on the table from mom and brother, and dad had one in his truck for me. There was also one from my grandma....I loved all of my presents. Everything fit and the bag was needed!...The plan for the day was to go bowling [with four girl friends] and then go and have pizza afterward....My dad showed up and surprised me with a bouquet of 6 red roses. That was one of the neatest things! I sure love my dad!...

That night we all ate cake, ice cream, pop, chips, and other junk food. We watched the movie "Jaws III." When it got dark we went outside with our sleeping bags....We had fun talking about boys, people, problems and stuff like that. At 3:00 a.m. we started having running races in our sleeping bags....This morning...when we got inside, I asked mom and dad if it would be possible to go to the coast....Today we went to the sand dunes, the beach...and to old town Ridgeport. We ate at Taco Time in
Ridgeport and then drove home (very tired) tonight. I think that this has been the best birthday I've ever had! [Personal Journal]

Whereas Stephanie included her friends in celebrating her 16th birthday, Tricia, a sophomore, celebrated hers with her family and her grandparents. Being shy about sharing her journal on her birthday, Tricia told me about her special day:

Tricia's mother made her a two-piece long-sleeved dress out of mint-green silky material. She also received a hair dryer and a curling iron from her parents, and a flower-printed paper organizer from her grandparents, in which she found seven five-dollar bills folded in a shirt shape and a self-made round-neck collar made of white lace. Then, the whole family went out for dinner at a high-class restaurant in Riverville; she wore the dress that her mom made. After dinner, Tricia had a surprise. Her father took her to the Music Man, a musical performed by a high school drama club. After the play, the whole family went to the best hotel in the city and had cherry jubilees. She stayed out until 12:30 a.m.. It was the greatest birthday for her. [Field Journal]

Driving

Teenagers assigned a special meaning to getting a driver's license or getting a car. The following journal entries show their excitement about passing the driving test and getting a car:

I PASSED!!! I am now an official licensed driver! I was pretty nervous at first, but the instructor was very nice and made me feel very comfortable. I passed with a 95%! [a sophomore girl]

I was happy to finally own a car of my own and more freedom. A car can give you more freedom to go and see people that I was never able to before. [a sophomore boy]

As many as teenagers could drive, tales of car accidents were told off and on, ranging from fatal accidents to minor ones. An example of a minor accident was described in a classroom journal:

The biggest shock of my life was when I was in a car accident.... One of my friends drove me to his place to pick up some things. On the way, things got pretty wild. He did a three-sixty on a sharp
turn at 80 miles per hour and the car flipped over. We got out of
the car and put it right-side up. The car started on the first try
and went back home. The car had a "few" scratches here and there,
but it was quite a shock to me that it all happened. [a junior boy]

Dating with an Opposite-sex Friend

Friendship affected teenagers' lives to a great deal, in particular
relationships with the opposite-sex friends. When the relationship went
smoothly, it enhanced self-worth and satisfaction with their lives.
When it did not go well, many teenagers developed negative attitudes
toward school, family, or other friends. The following examples show
both cases:

It's October 26th and it's a special date. It marks an
anniversary--mine and Tina's. It has been four months now. Gee.
We've come along way from that first night we met--a hay ride. She
let me sit by her....On June 26 we decided to date....That night we
walked together under a starlit sky. A few words, a subtle kiss.
How were we to know it would last 4 months? Well it has--we're
hoping for another 40 years. [a sophomore boy]

We were first going out as a date to homecoming....Then, he asked
me, "Would you go with me?"...After that, we were together all the
time at lunch or did things together in school....[He was]
wishy-washy....I was kind of bored...tired of [being together all
the time]....We just kind of say good-bye before a three-day
weekend. On Tuesday when I got back, I said "Hi, John." He
ignored me....He didn't talk to me for the whole rest of the
year....It ruined my year....From December on, I didn't feel a part
of the high school...didn't go to school dances. [a junior girl]

This chapter has reported teenagers' stories of their own
activities and thoughts on weekends, in holidays, in the summer
vacation, and on special occasions. By quoting directly from what they
wrote or spoke, I intended for my readers to hear the voices of the
"authors."
Adolescent life was written or spoken in a first-person mode. This collage of their stories consists of excerpts from journals written in various English classes (classroom journals), journal-type personal letters from students to me (personal journals), transcribed interviews (interview transcript), and responses in an open-ended senior survey. Minimal editing was done; all the names were replaced by pseudonyms.

I administered a survey to all seniors in Greenfield High School after Memorial Day weekend. As a result, I obtained many responses with respect to their activities on that particular weekend.
PART II

ADOLESCENT ETHOS
CHAPTER VI

"GETTING ALONG WITH EVERYONE": ETHOS OF PEER INTERACTIONS

"Getting along with everyone" represents one of three aspects of Greenfield adolescent ethos that will be discussed here. Ethos is defined by Kroeber as something that "deals with qualities that pervade the whole culture" and "includes the direction in which a culture is oriented, the things it aims at, prizes and endorses, and more or less achieves" (Bock 1978:272). Following a similar line of thinking, Bock defines ethos as follows:

The term ethos refers to general patterns or orientations formulated by the anthropologist to describe the integration of a value system....It reduces complexities of a value system to a few basic patterns that influences all parts of the system and accounts for the coherence among, for example, economic, moral, and esthetic values. [p.271]

Many Greenfielders (i.e., adolescents who attend Greenfield High School) identified having good human relationship as a desirable attribute in their lives. This dimension of ethos was particularly emphasized in peer interactions. Many adolescents subscribed to this ethos and stated that their lives were oriented by this ethos. When adolescents claimed that they "get along with everyone," it could mean different things. Some literally meant that they had good relationships with a wide range of peers, regardless of their various levels of academic and socio-economic status, gender, or age difference. Others implied by the statement that they did not have apparent conflicts with
most of their peers.

Why did adolescents consider it important to get along with other human beings, particularly with peers? Why did they criticize those who did not conform to this ethos? Answers to these questions were sought in the context of American adolescent culture. Greenfield High School teenagers were under pressure to define their social status among their peers, particularly in school, because their everyday life was built upon such interactions. Whenever they were placed in situations that required social interaction, few decisions regarding associations were externally made for them. This freedom was welcomed on some occasions because young people could choose their own friends. At other times, they felt uncertain about their relationships with others. In those situations, a reputation as an easy-to-get-along person could help because they might be accepted readily with little effort to approach others.

In this chapter, I describe the close knit structure in Greenfield School and the social demands involved in interaction. The adolescents' concerns about their social image is discussed as a survival strategy within the adolescent social network. In conclusion, I point out that the adolescents' inclination toward seeking close friendship appears contradictory to the ethos of getting along with everyone, but I suggest that both of these stem from the similar desire for social security in their peer interactions.

A Close-Knit Society

Greenfield adolescents were well acquainted with each other. They
often stated, "Everyone knows everyone here," implying that these young people recognized many of their peers by name and almost all of them by sight. A student teacher who taught at Greenfield for a term confirmed that the students "never say 'Who's that?' to their peers." She attributed this phenomenon to the fact that most of them had seen or known each other from their earlier years. Most new students did not fail to notice this mutual familiarity among Greenfielders.

This "everyone-knows-everyone" situation in Greenfield could be traced to four factors: the small size of the school, the linear transition from one middle school to one high school in the district, a high proportion of siblings in the student population, and the flexible dynamics of friendship.

First, Greenfield adolescents got to know each other well because the high school had a small number of students and was physically confined to a limited space. In 1987, approximately 550 students were enrolled, averaging 140 at each class level. The students also got to know others by constantly passing each other in hallways where all the lockers were located. The school buildings surrounded two courtyards and were connected with breezeways. The courtyard-centered building structure (see Figure 2, Chapter III) increased the "traffic" among students passing through the central areas. Most students met fellow classmates through taking the same required classes. Greenfield's individualized course selection provided students with opportunities to meet their peers. Each class period, they met a different group of peers. In addition, extensive sports programs and other extracurricular activities drew participants from a relatively small student population.
and, in turn, created overlaps of participants.

Second, the Greenfielders' mutual familiarity might have been attributed to the fact that the school district had only one middle and one high school. Obviously, anyone who stayed in this district attended the same middle and high school with their peers. Some students had peers who attended the same elementary school, even kindergarten, with them. For instance, Lynn had followed the same course with 10 percent of her classmates since the first grade. She could find more people from other classes whom she had known since her elementary school days. Graduates of Peaceland and Greenfield elementary schools (larger schools) had gone through a comparable sequence with more peers.

Third, the large number of siblings in Greenfield helped adolescents extend their friendship across class levels. More than a quarter of the student population had one or more siblings in the high school.1 Some Greenfield adolescents identified their siblings as their best friends. They were often seen "hanging out" together both in and outside school. Siblings often became a means through which adolescents got to know peers from other classes.

Lastly, Greenfield adolescents got to know each other in the dynamics of breaking up and regrouping with new people in friendship and courtship. Friendship refers to a close relationship between same-sex and cross-sex peers. Courtship is usually defined as a romantic relationship between opposite-sex peers. Some friendships and courtships were long lasting among the same friends. Membership in other groups of friends was constantly reshuffled when new friends were introduced or conflicts occurred between old friends. New friends,
whether opposite-sex friends or not, affected the dynamics of present friendships either by becoming incorporated harmoniously or by facilitating changes in the old structure. Breaking up and making new friends were common practices among Greenfield adolescents.

Adolescents said that a friendship was liable to break up when friends drifted away to make new friends, perhaps as the result of repeated personality clashes. Courtship tended to be discontinued when partners "cheated on" their present relationship, became too possessive of their partners, or felt "tired of" the same relationship. Compared to friendship, courtship appeared to be more unstable because it demanded more intense involvement between partners and, in turn, soon became "boring." A junior girl recalled that her previous boyfriend expected the couple to spend most of their time together during and after school and it became "exhausting." Likewise, a parent pointed to a short life expectancy of her daughter's courtship, saying:

Sarah stays with a boy for two weeks. It's a record for her....The reason why she does not stay with a boy for a long time is that she has a girl friend. When she meets him every day and every period, she feels restricted. She cannot interact with her girl friend. Then she thinks, "I don't want him anymore." [Fieldnotes 2-24-87:3-4]

Several girls and boys agreed with this observation that resentment at being stuck with one partner led them to break up with their boy or girlfriend. Changes in courtship might have also been more noticeable than changes in friendship because they attracted more attention among teenagers.

When a friendship or courtship broke up, adolescents often sought new friends and relationships. The phenomenon of breaking up and
building new friendship thus helped teenagers get to know a wide range of peers in their school.

In many ways, then, Greenfielders became acquainted with each other and could claim that "everyone knew everyone" in the school. In this closely knit system, newcomers stood out distinguishably and were readily identified by old-timers. The former were often greeted with questions such as "Are you new?" and "What grade are you in?" Some inquirers had a genuine interest in the new people; others only allowed themselves to show temporary curiosity. The newcomers regarded the old-timers' initial interest as a sign of Greenfielders' friendliness and openness. A sophomore girl from another state did not have difficulty in adjusting to the new school because "people were very friendly." Many other new students shared the same impression of Greenfielders.

Old-timers admitted that they knew most of their peers at the school. This mutual familiarity sometimes meant lack of privacy and of a fresh atmosphere. A senior girl said, "Everyone knows your name and practically everything about you," indicating that her recent breakup with her boyfriend quickly became public knowledge among her peers. Greenfielders also implied that no freshness was expected in school because they knew everyone in the school. Thus, newcomers offered a fresh diversion until their novelty wore out.

In this close-knit society, words spoken about others traveled fast. Since the adolescents knew their peers well, comments about their acquaintances meant more than words spoken about strangers. They heard about their peers' anti-social behaviors or ill treatment of others, and
most Greenfield adolescents were aware of the negative consequences of these behaviors. Thus, they made conscious efforts to get along with others and not to give an unfavorable impression of themselves in this everyone-knows-everyone situation.

**Peer Interaction As a Social Necessity**

In order to understand the adolescent ethos of "Getting along with everyone," one must probe the nature of social interactions among adolescents. The young people encountered multiple situations requiring informal and unexpected interaction with their peers. Such situations were often created by an educational structure, perhaps unique to American education, that allowed individual freedom and nourished social activities among adolescents. In this socially-oriented institution, young people were given many opportunities to make choices regarding preferred peers for social interaction.

For instance, a majority of students commuted to school via school busses. Once boarded, teenagers had the freedom to choose where to sit and with whom to converse. If their close friends were aboard, they could easily move next to them. If not, they had to make a choice between sitting alone, if seats were available, or interacting with others. In order to avoid the reputation of being a loner, they might feel compelled to interact with their peers.

Upon arriving at school, opportunities for informal interactions increased because students were only required to be in their classrooms during class periods. Outside the structured hours, they were free to choose where to go and with whom to interact before first period, during
breaks, during lunch hour, and after school. Few teachers assigned permanent seats in classrooms, at the library, or during assemblies.

When students went on a field trip, even more free time was granted for informal interactions and, in turn, more individual choices could be made to determine where to sit on the bus and with whom to spend time. In addition, many students participated in sports events and social activities such as dances and parties. If they wanted to participate to any degree in these informal occasions, adolescents had to make decisions about whom to interact with and how. Making these decisions was not optional in many cases because most adolescents did not want to be social loners. Peer interactions thus became a social necessity in a society in which social activities played such an important part in adolescent life.

Gaining Popularity

Most Greenfield adolescents seemed to be concerned with having the reputation of one who got along well with everyone. Their frequently used statement, "I get along with everyone," reflected Greenfielders' view of socially favorable attitudes toward equal treatment of peers regardless of their background. A senior girl criticized her peers for clinging to their own group of friends and ignoring others. She insisted, however, "I get along with basically everyone," denying that she had this partisan tendency.

Like Greenfield adolescents, newcomers soon noticed the positive value of getting along with everyone. Many of them expressed their wish to gain a good image. For example, Danielle, a junior girl who
transferred from a local Christian school noted:

At the beginning, I didn't know many people. I'm naturally shy. But I decided to break out from my shell of shyness and to be nice to people. Friendly and open to others. I want to get a reputation of being nice to everyone. [Fieldnotes 4-6-87:2]

Most new students made obvious efforts to appear friendly to everyone. They initiated greeting their peers and approached even newer people sooner than students who had been in the school for a longer time. Their endeavor was sometimes rewarded by gaining a positive reputation among their peers.

Danielle is an example of a newcomer's success story in gaining a good reputation. When I met Danielle at the beginning of my research, she had been in Greenfield only a few months. I found her approaching me often and smiling readily at me, and she appeared to treat others in the same way. Her efforts to get along with others were explicitly recognized when seniors voted her as one of the six junior arch bearers in their graduation ceremony. This recognition was considered a great honor to those who were selected, and it reflected their high degree of social acceptance among peers.

Gaining a good reputation as a result of ones' efforts might have been easier for newcomers than old-timers because newcomers were free from their peers' preconceived notions about them. Since their past reputations were not known to their new peers, newcomers could enjoy the thrill of establishing new images among their peers, if they wished. It was not possible to determine how many newcomers would actually change their preference in terms of types of friends in order to gain popularity in their new environment. I observed that many transfer
students gained recognition for being highly personable, and several were voted into office as student leaders, a sign of acceptance. Many of them confessed that it was slightly difficult at the beginning to establish their status under new circumstances, but that they tried "extra hard" to get along with others.

By contrast, the everyone-knows-everyone situation seemed to present an obstacle for old-timers trying to change their image. Their peers had known them from younger ages and had developed fixed images about them. Several adolescents mentioned, "If you were popular in middle school, you will be popular in high school. If you were unpopular in middle school, you will be unpopular in high school." Greenfield adolescents sensed status quo through the years of their public schooling in terms of reputation. Despite this difficulty, old-timers seemed to be convinced that the reputation of getting along with others could pave the way toward popularity.

In a senior survey administered in 1987, getting along with others was mentioned as one of the traits that made a person popular. This type of popularity acknowledged people for being not only "well known" but "well liked" by their peers. Popular people were viewed as those who "are liked by others," "have lots of friends," or someone who "everyone wants to be like." Among various attributes identified in the survey responses, the following were related to the personality of those who had good relationships with others: outgoing, fun, caring, honest, friendly, nice, warm, mature, smiling, easy to get along with, not self-conscious, talking to other people, always saying "Hi" to others, willing to listen, supportive, and having an understanding character.
Why did adolescents strive for a good reputation and "popularity"?

Gaining a good reputation among peers was a survival strategy of Greenfield adolescents in a society where young people achieved social status mainly through peer interactions. The American high school provided adolescents with ample opportunities to interact informally and socially with their peers. The types of and partners in the social interactions were not automatically tailored by the system but depended rather on individual choices.

For example, high school adolescents interacted constantly with their peers in situations such as on the school bus, in hallways and classrooms, on field trips, during extracurricular activities, and at private social events. Unless they did not mind being viewed as people who did not get along with others and, in turn, were shunned by others, the young people felt pressured to put on a mask of sociability by behaving in a friendly and open manner to others.

Social acceptance was highly valued by adolescents because it gave them a sense of security in peer relationships—an unavoidable and active feature in adolescent culture. Status as a socially acceptable person seemed to preclude many worries of the young people, e.g., wondering whether particular peers would include them at parties, ask them for dates, seek them out for friendship, or be willing to sit next to them. A positive reputation helped them be readily accepted by their peers and eased the act of approaching others with the confidence that they would not be rejected by their peers.

In sum, a personal reputation influenced an individual's social status more than did objective parameters. Adolescents criticized the
fact that some people were not even acquainted with others whom they accused of being "stuck-up" (to be discussed in the next section). According to them, many teenagers perceived others on the basis of reputation, and not who they "really" were. In this social structure, then, adolescents might have good reason to believe in the value of gaining a good reputation in order to survive and protect themselves in the web of peer interactions.

Losing a Reputation

While Greenfield adolescents expressed their desire to gain a positive reputation as a person who got along well with others, they were equally afraid of "losing a reputation." The adolescents' expression, "losing a reputation," referred to acquiring a negative reputation for being stuck-up or a jerk, being identified as a "smoker," or belonging to a clique. Those who were associated with these classifications were viewed as self-indulgent, partisan, and unsociable.

First of all, both males and females could be considered being stuck-up, when they "brag about themselves," "think they are the best," "only care about themselves," "are rude to everyone else," or "do not associate with others." A group of five boys expressed the adolescent disrespect of stuck-up peers in a rap (a musical style of fast and rhythmic speaking), "Don't Be Stuck-up," written for and performed in the school talent show. The song depicted a girl who always bragged about her clothes, grades, and family. Their performance purportedly entertained the high school audience, but tacitly underscored a lesson: if you stop being stuck-up, people will like you. The performance of
the song received thundering applause.

Well-known adolescents such as cheerleaders or athletes tended more often to be classified as stuck-up. Their reputation of being stuck-up was both subjective and objective. Subjectively, they appeared snobbish and anti-social when they did not pay attention to peers who knew them because of their public recognition. This unrecognized crowd, in turn, might feel unaccepted and ignored by these "popular" peers, and come to the conclusion that the "popular" students did not get along with others. Several adolescents told me that some of the well-known adolescents actually displayed selfish and mean behaviors. Regardless of whether perceptions of being stuck-up were made subjectively or objectively, the "stuck-up," well-known people were not liked by their peers, especially by non-intimate ones. Nevertheless, they received a rather grudging admiration based on their social status in the system.

Another unfavorable classification for individuals was that of a "jerk." Jerks were defined as those who did not get along with others, were mean or rude to others, "cheated" on friendships, or had a personality clash with others. Similar to stuck-up people, jerks were regarded as socially undesirable. However, there are a few differences between these two classifications. While "stuck-up" was a relatively fixed classification for specific individuals on the basis of their character, "jerk" was a more general, albeit sometimes temporary, label given on the basis of behavior. The other difference is that "stuck-up" was often used for well-known students and "jerk" was indiscriminately used for all kinds of adolescents. Teenagers were not shy of stating, "John is a jerk because he took my friend away." However, when John
changed his behavior, he was not considered to be a jerk anymore. The
flexibility of the definition of jerk also helped people escape from the
label if they wanted to do so. A senior boy mentioned, "I was
classified as a jerk last year because I behaved like a jerk. But this
year I get along with people." He was no longer referred to as a jerk
by his peers and had more friends.

The third unfavorable category of individuals is "smoker."
"Smoker" was a value-laden social label in Greenfield, equated with "low
class people" including cigarette smokers, tobacco chewers, "scums"
(untidy people) and "stonies" (drug users). Smokers were referred to as
students who allegedly "hung out" regularly in the smokers' shed and the
nearby senior courtyard. This boundary-dependent definition sometimes
led to an inaccurate representation of non-smokers and non-drug users;
the label missed those who smoked, chewed tobacco, and took drugs in
private.

In contrast to the individuality of stuck-up people and jerks,
smokers were regarded as a group of people with a shared interest. They
were seen as a self-contained group that disassociated from others. On
some occasions, this perception proved correct. Several smokers told me
that they had a sense of unity because they had a defined territory and
were open with each other. One girl felt accepted immediately when she
walked into the shed on the first day of school and said "Hi" to other
smokers. Although several of them said that their association with each
other was limited to school hours, the smokers organized their own
activities in school. For example, they went to the prom together in a
rented limousine. Smokers selected their own prom court princesses and
princes, and announced it in the school newspaper. The rationale was that students classified as "popular" were always elected to the school prom court and smokers were excluded from being a part of it.

Smoking was viewed as "stupid" and smokers were considered as "untouchables" among most teenagers. Several students declared that they would never go to the shed, even to talk to people out there. It became a "public secret" that a senior prom and homecoming princess smoked in her car or in a restroom against school regulations because she did not want to be identified with smokers. The rejection of smokers was represented by the comment that Marylinn and Linda received after they played hackeysack with "smokers" (see Chapter I). A senior girl who used to smoke described some jocks' unfavorable treatment of "smokers":

Yesterday someone put honey on the bench in the smokers' shed. I don't know who did it, but I guess football players. Many yellow jackets buzzed around. I was scared. Two years ago on Superbowl Sunday, some football players took a jeep and literally knocked down the shed. Sports people gang up together against smokers. Smokers didn't do anything to them. [Fieldnotes 9-22-87:2]

Some Greenfielders did not belittle smokers; most believed that being classified as a smoker was one way of losing a reputation. Once one was labeled as a smoker, quitting smoking did not necessarily redeem them from their previous status.

I have explained three unfavorable labels given based upon self-indulgent and anti-social characteristics: stuck-up, jerk, and smoker. Teenagers also tried to avoid being identified with a particular clique. The young people defined a clique as "a small group of people, maybe two to four at most, who spend a lot of time
exclusively with each other." A clique might include both males and females, but it typically referred to a group of same-sex friends. Sometimes the term "clique" was used without value judgment to refer to a pair of best friends who "hung out" together all the time, but more often this label carried a negative connotation. People in cliques were viewed as violating the principle of getting along with "everyone." They got along only with their circle of friends and tended to reject others.

Adolescents' concern about losing their reputation was reflected clearly on a self-versus-other dichotomous rhetoric: "There are cliques in this school, but I'm not in any of the cliques" or "Angela is in a clique, but I get along with others." This self/other opposition indicated that the young people tried to avoid appearing divisive and to project an image of cooperation. It represented their attempt to establish a positive reputation as being a socially open and approachable person among their peers.

**Between General Friendliness and Close Friendship**

On the one hand, most Greenfielders desired to gain the reputation of getting along with everyone, and consequently dissociated themselves from socially unfavorable labels such as "stuck-up," "jerk," "smoker," or "clique" member. On the other hand, the adolescents were often observed "hanging out" with the same few friends. They readily identified one or two friends as "best friends" and accepted as a fact that they spent most of their time with these friends, both in and outside school. This latter phenomenon might have appeared to conflict
with the "getting-along-with-everyone" ethos. However, the ethos of getting along with everyone and the practice of clinging to best friends commonly appeared to reflect the young people's longing for a sense of security derived from the social acceptance of peers.

Most adolescents acknowledged that they had best friends while also affirming that they got along with everyone. They hesitated to identify themselves with certain cliques; rather, they called their circles of close friends "best friends." Charles made a distinction between a clique and a best friend:

Charles: A clique means a group of people who always hang out with each other. It's not good.
I: Don't you have one person whom you like most and want to be with most?
Charles: It's a best friend. [Fieldnotes 2-27-87:2-3]

While this conceptual distinction did not clearly separate a group of best friends from a clique, the term "best friends" as used here carried a positive, at least neutral, connotation compared to the term "clique."

Marylinn's case (Chapter I) shows the coexistence of rather seemingly contradictory values. She verbalized her belief in the ethos of "getting along with everyone." She made efforts to be sociable with a wide range of people and was actually known as a friendly person. At the same time, she spent a substantial amount of time with a circle of close friends, especially her best friend Amanda, both in and outside school. They rode the same school bus daily; shared a locker; took classes together; spent lunch time together; participated on sports teams together; telephoned each other at home; and shared some activities together after school, on weekends, and during vacations. Although Marylinn did not always share the same values and interests
with her best friend, they mutually acknowledged their close friendship. Their stable closeness gave them a sense of security because they knew they had somebody to trust. She said this mutual trust and loyalty had tied them together since the beginning of their friendship. Many teenagers easily identified their best friends for me, and did not hesitate to affirm their best friendship in front of each other.

Most adolescents underscored the value of close friends in their lives. A best friend was viewed as someone whom one could trust, talk to, depend on, and feel comfortable around, and who listened to one's problems and concerns. Some teenagers identified their boy/girlfriends as their best friends. Many teenagers did not hesitate to state that they could not "survive" for a day without talking to their friends.

By devoting themselves to a close friendship, young people seemed to gain a sense of security in a society in which they needed constantly to engage in informal interactions with their peers. They realized that best friends would be readily available for many casual situations, reducing teenagers' concerns about associations. For instance, best friends who took the same classes became partners in cooperative activities. They readily agreed to accompany each other to go shopping, attend school dances, or watch sports events. When life got "boring," adolescents often telephoned their best friends. A junior girl mentioned that her studies suffered because of the amount of time she spent on the telephone.

**Summary**

"Getting along with everyone" was part of the pervading ethos of
Greenfield adolescents. This aspect of the ethos was embedded in a
culture where peer interactions became more important than any other
human relationships. Especially in a small, well-acquainted society
such as Greenfield, individual impression-management was considered as
an important, all-consuming task. The young people subscribed to the
ethos in varying degrees, whether or not they wished to conform. Those
who chose to comply with the ethos tried to avoid getting a reputation
as a stuck-up person, jerk, or member of a clique and to gain a positive
reputation as a sociable person.

This concern about managing a good impression indicates the
interactive characteristic of Greenfield adolescent culture.
Greenfielders often found themselves in situations where they needed to
interact with peers. In those situations, they were aware of a risk of
being isolated or alienated from their peers if they chose not to
interact with them. In order to be accepted as social beings,
adolescents were compelled to choose interaction over solitude. The
positive reputation was likely to help them gain a sense of security in
the web of interactions. Hence, they tried to project the image of a
person who got along well with others and to stay within the conceptual
boundaries for mainstream—as opposed to deviant—teenagers.

Although most young people I talked to—including mainstream as
well as "unpopular" individuals—tried to put forth the image of a
person who could get along with everyone, they in fact clung to a few
friends most of the time. The ethos of getting along with everyone
might appear to conflict with establishing intimate friendship with a
limited number of good friends. However, both the ethos and the
inclination toward intimate friendships fell under the general theme of adolescents' longing for social acceptance. The adolescents sought the security of guaranteed friendship in a society which placed them in interaction with their peers in formal and informal settings. Although some sacrificed one ideal for the other, many felt that they could not dispense with either because they were living in a society with a complicated web of peer interactions. In order to survive in the social arena of human relationships, adolescents tried to combine these two paradoxical ideas: "getting along with everyone" and forming close associations with a group of selected friends. I discuss the way that Greenfielders handled the duality in these ideas in Chapter IX.
The number of siblings, defined here as students with the same last name and home phone number, accounted for 67 sets, involving 133 students in 1987. The total would have increased if those meeting only one of the above criteria were counted.

The concept "popularity" was defined in two ways. First, it referred to the degree to which someone's name and appearance were known by others, actually meaning someone's "publicity" (public familiarity). Second, popularity referred to a degree of someone's likeableness based on his/her attractive personality. The first and second definitions are conceptually independent of each other. Many adolescents used the term "popularity" to mean both familiarity and likeableness. Several of them acknowledged that their indiscriminate use of the term sometimes was confusing.

The use of "untouchable" may be too strong in this case. However, its connotation may well represent Greenfielders' perception of smokers.
Independence represents another aspect of Greenfield adolescent ethos, expressed verbally as well as symbolically. Greenfield young people viewed independence as a cornerstone of adulthood. They thought that adults were treated by other adults with more seriousness, and the adults enjoyed more freedom and social privileges. To the contrary, many Greenfielders complained that adults treated teenagers unfairly. This perception led them to prefer the adult stage to that of teenagers or children; they wanted to taste the experiences of "grown-ups" as early as possible. Greenfield youth attempted to gain and exhibit independence in two ways: either by acquiring symbolic markers of independence or by defying external authorities. These two different strategies share the incentive of being treated like adults.

Some adolescents expressed their independence by actively obtaining symbolic markers of adulthood and, in turn, implicitly competing with adults by displaying them. In American society, adult status is not automatically conferred at a specific age like many preliterate societies where an initiation rite marks the transition point from childhood to adulthood (see the initiation of Mende in West Africa, Little, 1970:211). American youth are left alone to strive for financial, physical, psychological, and cognitive independence as early as they are able to do so within social boundaries.
By contrast, adolescents using the authority-defying strategy refused to follow the adult pattern of independence; rather, they showed their independence by challenging adult authorities or breaking away from them. This strategy, often viewed as "rebellion," includes verbal confrontations with authority figures--e.g., arguing or defying--and avoidance of the adults through moving away from home or dropping out of school. By defying adult authorities, adolescents intended to proclaim their independence from external control.

Superficially speaking, pursuing an adult-like life style appears the opposite of deflecting adult authorities. The pursuit of an adult life style was regarded as part of the normal process of growing up; the defiance of adult authorities often connoted destructive rebellion. Both were, however, deeply rooted in the adolescent wish to be treated as an autonomous individual like other adults. Teenagers of the former strategy chose to claim equality with adults within adults' parameters. Those of the latter strategy tried to do the same thing by refusing to participate in the dominant-subordinate relationship.

Finally, adolescents associated autonomy and freedom with independence; many of them, however, tended to de-emphasize the increased responsibility that accompanies adulthood. Their acceptance of responsibility often did not equal their claim to freedom.

In the first section of this chapter, I discuss the adolescent perception of independence: that is (1) achieved rather than automatically given; that (2) entails being treated as an adult; and that (3) accompanies autonomy. The second section deals with five symbolic markers of independence: getting a job, raising funds for
activities, being allowed to drive an automobile, moving away from home, and relying more on peer interactions. In the last section, I argue that the adolescent perception of independence is one-sided, focusing on freedom but neglecting responsibility.

The Adolescent Perception of Independence

Greenfield adolescents viewed independence as a privileged state enjoying less adult supervision, greater freedom of choice, and more respect from adults. Their striving for independence might not be unique to adolescents in this society. By rights, however, high school adolescents expressed their longing for independence more explicitly than younger children. This legal status for youth over 16, secured by the driving and employment laws, brought certain privileges, seen as those of adults, within their reach. In turn, a certain degree of financial and physical independence from parents became more feasible.

Not Given, but Earned

Independence was perceived as something that adolescents could earn by acquiring the markers of independence, and that was not automatically given at a certain age. The spirit of "go-and-get-it" was prevalent in gaining independence. A 15-year old girl showed her concern about getting behind the schedule to take steps to earn independence:

I don't think I'm ever going to get my permit in this life time. I've been 15 for 3 1/2 months now. If I don't read that book [Driver's Manual] now, I'll end up like my sister. It took her 8 months to get her permit after she had her 15th birthday and now she has to take the test a second time because it has already been
a year. [Classroom Journal]

She indicated that she would not get a driving permit or a driver's license unless she worked on it. In her view, her sister had not gotten the privilege of driving—a symbol of independence—because she had not actively pursued it.

Age 16 was a significant year for many Greenfield adolescents because it enabled them to do many things (I will discuss later). Therefore, it may appear that the age of 16 is equivalent to the age for a rite of passage in Greenfield. This argument is acceptable in the sense that some privileges extended to older people became available to adolescents at 16. However, I feel compelled to distinguish the Greenfielder's 16th year from a specific age in some societies in which an initiation ceremony was officially administered by the adults of the societies to move youth into adult status. In those societies, completion of the initiation led a person to the status of adults and, in turn, introduced him/her to the full privileges and responsibilities of adulthood.

In contrast, age 16 in the American community only opened possibilities to taste the world of adults and did not fully transform teenagers from children into adults. In other words, the age factor only activated the transition process into adulthood. Differing from the traditional societies, Greenfield adolescents did not go through a society-wide initiation, a focal moment, that would proclaim someone's newly given social status in public. Becoming 16 neither made a public statement in itself nor did it automatically guarantee adulthood, as an initiation ceremony did.
In this social situation, American adolescents—including Greenfielders—needed to struggle for independence because it was not automatically given. Once reaching a certain age—in this case, 16—young people began to strive for the symbols of independence and to prove their independence. This attitude reflects the conquering spirit of the American society: nothing is given but everything is to be earned and efforts will be rewarded. Independence was granted to those who were actively involved in making money, driving, and moving out.

In addition, independence was augmented by personal initiative. For example, teenagers could apply for a driver's license after they turned 16 years old; actual qualification as a legal driver, however, came only when they passed a behind-the-wheel test. The further freedom that accompanied "driving around" came when they got access to a car. Gaining independence by moving away from home operated on the same principle of personal initiative. If they completed proper legal procedures (a school counselor can help), teenagers could become legally emancipated as early as the age of 16. This allowed them to live independently. Only those who actually took the initiative to become emancipated and to move out of their parents homes could demonstrate this type of independence during their high school days.

Being Treated Like an Adult

Another meaning of independence to Greenfield teenagers was being treated like adults, not like children. They viewed children as incomplete beings who needed to obey adults' commands, who lacked the freedom of making decisions, and who were supervised all the time by
adults. By contrast, adults represented beings of freedom, "the final word," power, and independence. Thus, adolescents preferred adult status to that of the child.

The following journal entry of Martha, a senior, indicates her preference for adulthood:

If I could be any age and stay there, it would be 21 because then I'm still somewhat of a teenager (young) but then again I'm old enough to be a legal adult. Have more control of my life as far as doing what I want without having to ask for permission from my mother. [Classroom Journal]

To Martha, being an adult was equal to taking control of her life, independent of her mother's authority. Being treated like an adult was equated with being respected as a person who was able to take charge of one's own life. This sense of independence allowed adolescents to contemplate breaking away from a hierarchical relationship with adults and replacing it with an anticipated human relationship of equality. Jane expressed her satisfaction with her mother's respect of her judgment:

When my mom asks my opinion, I feel very important. Whether it's a new shirt or just how to rearrange the living room furniture, I know my opinion matters. [Student Essay]

Whether or not an adult treated them like adults seemed to affect their like or dislike of the adult. When adults treated the teenagers fairly, equally, and with respect, they were appreciated. Otherwise, the adults were viewed as unfavorable authorities. Tim, a sophomore, told me that in one class he preferred the teacher to the student teacher because "The teacher treats us like adults. The student teacher treats us like little kids." The boy indicated that student teachers gave too much homework and explained mathematical problems in class as
if she were teaching elementary school children.

Becky compared a difference between her father and her mother in the way they treated her: "Daddy was like every other adult. He cheated me as I really was a child [he broke promises to do something for her] but mom had a way of making me feel grown up." By contrast, Patricia felt comfortable around her father because he allowed her to enjoy freedom within limits, if she responsibly observed the latter. She did not enjoy being around her mother who did not trust Patricia's judgments. She described the situation as follows:

This past weekend I went to a gun show with my dad. I had a feeling of freedom. As long as I stayed with the basic rules and asked permission when I wanted out, I could rule my own life. I could eat, sleep, and wander as I wished when my duties were done. This is what it's like with my father....Now, my mother--I am very subdued around my mother. She yells a lot and everything is my fault. [Classroom Journal]

When adolescents did not feel respected as independent beings, they experienced mental conflicts. Many arguments with adults stemmed from this resentment of childlike treatment by adults. A sophomore girl wrote about her unhappiness as follows:

My mother and I were fighting. When we fight, all that really happens is she yells and I go into my room and cry. An important thing to bring up about my mother is that she's very judgmental. What I mean is whenever I say or do something she always has the last word....She makes me feel like a nothing. She puts herself first. [Classroom Journal]

This girl had trouble accepting that her mother always acted as the final authority who determined who was right. In addition, she did not feel that her opinion was respected.

As much as they liked to become independent, teenagers recognized that the process of gaining independence was highly influenced by
adults' responsiveness. Ron, a junior, observed that adolescents became independent to the degree that adults expected them to:

Mother treats me like an adult. She trusts me and my responsibility. If I say, "Mom, I don't feel like going to school today," she lets me stay at home and calls school for my sick absence....Angel's parents are much more strict. They won't do it. So they [Angel and her siblings] are more rebellious. They tell them a lie. But if I'm honest about things, my parents trust me. If parents treat their kids like kids, they behave like kids. If they treat their kids like adults, they behave like adults. I get along with my parents. [Classroom Journal]

Many teenagers mentioned that they liked to be independent from authority figures by being treated as equally as adults. Thus, their challenging of authority can be interpreted in conjunction with their longing to be independent, responsible beings.

More Autonomy

Greenfield adolescents associated independence with gaining more autonomy in their lives. Autonomy meant being able to do certain things without adults' permission or supervision. Youth demonstrated autonomy by actively making decisions on their own or by defying external forces that hampered independence.

Adolescents expressed their independence by making decisions regarding their social lives. They preferred to decide on their own where to go, what to do, whom to meet, and how to spend money in order to find "fun." Although many of them might still ask their parents for permission, many others exercised autonomy in making decisions in these matters. Dick did not usually tell his parents what he did after school nor where he went with his friends on weekends. He was convinced that his parents trusted his judgments. More than that, he might have felt
that telling his parents about his social life in detail did not seem to be "cool." He felt that one of his female friends was over-protected because she kept reporting her whereabouts when going out with friends.

While Dick's parents did not seem to mind his autonomy, the father of a junior girl, named Kris, complained of his daughter's "modified autonomy." According to him, his daughter usually volunteered to decorate the school cafeteria for dances before asking him for permission to go to them. In this way, she knew that her father, who had taught her to keep her word, would not disallow her to participate in the dances. Her father once said that he felt manipulated because he had no choice but to permit her to go to the dances.

Many young people felt that their claim for autonomy was legitimate because they literally "paid" for it with their own money. When they went out with friends, they drove their own cars. When they went to movies or shopping, they spent money that they earned. By securing these resources by themselves, teenagers felt legitimate about voicing their right to autonomy in decision-making.

Another expression of adolescent autonomy took the form of challenging authority figures, existing systems, norms, and rules. Lauri, a senior girl, expressed her independence by adopting a form of "punk" culture. She identified herself as a "wavo" whom she defined as "a prior step to a punk." She criticized school for being "real conformist." According to her, students were forced to take required classes that were not relevant to their career aspirations, to take exams, and to depend on grades for their future. She added that school perpetuated the status quo: youth classified as "popular" held on to
their status, and "low class" people did not get a fair share. She expressed her individuality by wearing a black, oversized male jacket, black trousers or skirt, black oversized male leather shoes, black-dyed hairdo, and bright make-up. After receiving unfavorable comments from school staff regarding her "unique" appearance, she said with resentment, "They want me to be like them." She challenged school authorities through her newspaper articles for their censoring attempts.

At home, Lauri objected to her parents' rules: e.g. going to church once a month, cleaning her room, and dressing in a more "acceptable" way. She often argued with them because of their different views, and she contemplated moving out of her parents' home. Her "non-conformist" mind finally led her to drop out of high school and move to Riverville, with one semester left in her senior year.

Lauri's outspoken challenge to authorities might have been an initial signal for her later action of dropping out of the "conforming" system. Defying the conventional authorities was her expression of not only breaking away from them but struggling for autonomy. Her striving from autonomy was represented by her advocacy of the punk philosophy: the punk culture endorses "chaos," referring to "self-government" in which everyone is encouraged to rule themselves, instead of being governed by higher authorities. Perhaps Lauri presented a strong case of adolescent longing for autonomy. Many other teenagers commonly expressed their claim for autonomy in various forms of "rebellion."

The three teenagers mentioned above--Dick, Kris, and Lauri--had adopted different ways of obtaining autonomy. All of them, however, consistently believed that being independent meant gaining more autonomy.
regarding what they could do in their everyday lives.

Symbolic Markers of Independence

Adolescent understanding of independence was reified by symbolic markers such as employment, fund raising, driving, moving away from the home, and dependence on peers. These markers were interrelated, representing financial, cognitive, physical, and psychological dimensions of independence. Most adolescents exercised these different aspects of independence in the course of their transformation into socially complete beings.

Employment

The result of a survey administered by a faculty task force showed that slightly over one-third of the student population was employed during the school year of 1987-88, working from two to forty hours a week. According to my senior survey, three quarters of the seniors earned outside income during the same school year.

What kinds of jobs did teenagers have? Teenagers were engaged in a variety of indoor and outdoor jobs including service work, physical labor, babysitting, and animal caretaking. While the female workforce concentrated on babysitting, clerical work, and food service, male jobs had more variety, including food service, agricultural work, and gas station service. The survey results showed that females and males worked in different jobs except for food service, cleaning, and yard work. The most distinctive difference was that only females babysat and only males reported working in lumber mills or gas stations. The pay
scale was different, depending on the job. For instance, babysitting one child usually paid one to one-and-a-half dollars per an hour; hard physical labor such as moving irrigation pipes or working in a mill usually paid more than the minimum wage (three dollars and thirty-five cents per an hour). Consequently, the average income for boys was generally higher than girls.

What did teenagers think of working during the school year or summer? A majority of high school students approved of the idea of working. More preferred working during the summer to during the school year, because jobs could take too much time away from school work or extracurricular activities. Many said that academic work should have a priority over employment despite the temptation of extra spending money. If they could keep up with their school work, many young people would like to be employed even during the school year.

Adolescents identified several advantages associated with employment: (1) earning money, (2) learning responsibility, (3) gaining work experience, and (4) being occupied. Among these advantages, the most openly mentioned incentive was earning money. Their employment provided them with up to a few hundred dollars a month, which most parents could not afford to give to their teenage children. Self-earned money was a mean of "buying" their own independence, particularly in their social lives, because they could participate in activities that they could not have pursued without money. If they made their own money, many adolescents did not have to depend on their parents' wishes, or to "beg" them for extra money for outings with friends. Several working adolescents said that they no longer received allowance from
their parents. Even though many parents liked to play an advisory role to their children about how to spend self-earned money, their offspring made the primary decisions on what to do with their money. Their money was used to buy personal items, food, and gifts, and to pay for social activities and entertainment. Even though their financial freedom might have been incomplete in most cases, adolescents found this newly found independence enjoyable.

In addition, the adolescents said that they learned responsibility from their employment. Some felt that these benefits would help them in their future. Punctuality and responsibility of getting tasks done were important lessons to be learned in order to maintain employment. Melanie, a senior, described two incidents at her work place that reminded her of the importance of responsibility. She said that her co-worker was fired after failing to show up for her scheduled hours. According to her, such an immediate firing happened only once during her employment at a pizza parlor, but it shook her up badly. On another occasion, a boy who was not making pizza fast enough was demoted from a pizza maker to a weekend dishwasher. This demotion meant a substantial pay cut. These harsh working situations appeared to provide young people with a lesson to manage their time responsibly.

Several teenagers indicated that on the job they gained experience with the real world. They learned to deal with human relations smoothly, which they found critical in continuing employment. They also said that they gained practical knowledge, i.e., hands-on skills, from their jobs. Most adolescents were aware that employers preferred job applicants with experiences. Therefore, they thought that work
experience during their high school days would help them in later employment. The final advantage of adolescent employment, identified as occupying their time, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Fund Raising

Fund raising represents an important, if not unique, aspect of the adolescent culture. Fund raising refers to activities designed to raise money to support certain functions. Some adolescents raised funds for individual causes. Robin, a sophomore who was invited to compete in an international track meet in China, wrote about her efforts to raise traveling money as follows:

I had a car wash on Saturday to help pay for my trip to China. [Three friends and her sister showed up to help.] After six hours of washing all different kinds, shapes, and colors of cars, I had made $74.01. I was very pleased. So far I have made $474.01 for my trip out of $1,700. Another money raiser I am planning to is sell raffle tickets on 25-inch Ann and Andy dolls. I am going to make the dolls and hopefully sell tickets at the football games that are left. [Classroom Journal]

Most fund-raising projects were administered for group activities of the school or specific organizations. Whether for individual or group projects, young people underwent similar steps of collecting ideas for possible projects, planning agendas, and executing the plans. These steps created a set of new activities.

I will discuss adolescent fund-raising projects in terms of four categories: collection of free donations, and sale of labor, merchandise, and entertainment. The first category was rarely done for group activities. I observed it only when individual teenagers asked for monetary gifts for good causes. Robin and Holly wrote letters to
potential sponsors in the community and gave presentations about their purpose in local organizations in order to raise funds to attend an international track meet in China. Earl and Tracy also collected monetary donations for their summer Teen Mission trips to the Dominican Republic and England, respectively.

With a few exceptions, most adolescent fund-raising projects had something to do with sales. The second type of fund raising involved the sale of labor. In this case, service-users and teenagers directly exchanged labor and cash. For example, the car wash was quite popular among Greenfielders, i.e., students who attend Greenfield High School, as a fund-raising activity. Young people set up cleaning equipment with a "Car Wash" sign in the parking lot of businesses (they usually needed to secure permission from the stores) and waited for customers. Drivers of washed cars paid for the young people's labor. In the direct exchange, both parties--sellers of labor and buyers of the service--gained benefits.

Labor was also sold in a pledge system where labor-provider, service-user, profit-maker, and donors were separate. For example, in a free car wash, teenagers collected pledges from donors and made a profit by washing others' cars (often not of donors) with no charge. The Dance-A-Thon presents another example. The Greenfield rally squad organized a dance marathon to raise fund for their new uniforms. Dance participants (not cheerleaders) collected pledges and danced continuously for eight hours and then the rally squad gathered the pledged money. In both cases, adolescents were labor-providers and profit-makers, but donors were not necessarily service-users.
The third type of fund raising is selling merchandise; I found that students sold various items in school, ranging from food to flowers to coupon books. Teenagers profited in two ways: either by selling merchandise purchased at wholesale prices, or by collecting commissions on their sales. In the former case, juniors sold doughnuts during morning breaks for a term. They paid for the doughnuts delivered every Tuesday and Thursday mornings and earned the margin as they sold them. In addition, snacks at the student store, Valentine flowers, balloons, and food at dances were sold in this way. By contrast, coupon books were sold under contract with a company which printed discount coupons for businesses in the Green Lake community and Riverville. Coupon books that members of the Honor Society and senior class sold independently yielded two dollars per book sold for six dollars.

The fourth type of fund raising represents sales for entertainment events in the form of admission tickets. Among Greenfield High School activities, admission fees were collected for school dances and certain sports events. School dances usually cost two-and-a-half dollars for a single admission and four dollars for a couple. For football, basketball, or volleyball games, non-community members were charged one to two dollars for each event. Admission fees to dances went to organizing groups of the particular dances; those to sports events went to the student government. The fees made up a substantial amount of funds for student activities.

Fund raising reflects the adolescent ethos of independence. By raising funds to finance their activities, young people felt self-sufficient and autonomous. Teachers particularly allowed students
to exercise more freedom by planning self-supported activities. Fund raising also helped adolescents to be independent of their parents' financial support.

If funds had not been available for certain activities, their cost would have been charged to participants. Young people who did not have their own financial resources either would have had to ask their parents for money or not participate in such activities. This lack of self-generated income and consequent dependence on parents' financial resources might thus determine the degree of students' involvement. For example, Christina, who lived with her mother and did not have a job, could not join the choir trip to Canada, which cost 100 dollars. Even though she made 50 dollars by participating in some fund-raising activities, neither she nor her mother could make up the balance.

Except for this expensive type of event, the cost of most student activities was covered by funds that its group raised together. Therefore, fund raising allowed teenagers to feel financially independent because they supported their activities themselves and did not have to depend on their parents' support.

Driving

Beginning to drive thrilled most teenagers because they considered it an important step toward freedom. According to the survey done by a staff task team, 40.6 percent of the student body said that they owned a car. The team commented, "Generally, freshmen and sophomores are not old enough to drive". My senior survey revealed that 79 percent of seniors had a driver's license; 62 percent had a car of their own; and
54 percent regularly drove a car to school. Because of their concern about driving, the themes of driving and cars frequently surfaced in conversations and classroom journals, ranging from getting a driver's license, to the purchase of a car, to car accidents, to car upkeep. Most adolescents discussed these topics with a certain degree of excitement and pride, even including car accidents.

Once teenagers obtained a driver's license, many of them got access to cars, either of their families or of their own. If they used the family car, many adolescents paid for their own gas or maintenance. If they purchased their own cars, parents' support with car expenses varied: Marylinn's parents paid for everything but gas; Paul took on his own his truck payment, insurance, and gas.

Adolescents viewed driving and owning a car as a critical means of independence. Once they started driving a car, they immediately noticed increased freedom for several reasons. First, they did not have to depend on rides from their parents or guardians. This meant that they could participate in more activities after school, visit friends at their homes, or "just go out."

The second reason for the change is that they could go to places featuring attractions for teenagers without adult company. Cruising "the gut" (the main street of the nearby city) was a major attraction for some adolescents when they could drive a car. Third, they could get away from stifling confinement when they wished; e.g., leaving campus at lunch gave young people a sense of freedom, although not everyone with cars went off campus to buy lunch. Many brought lunch from home and ate in their cars while driving around. Even when they did not have enough
money to buy lunch, many Greenfielders drove off campus just for the sake of going out. In addition, some teenagers "drove away" from conflicts at home. In this case, a car not only increased mobility but created private space. Finally, driving increased employment options: neither distance nor working hours mattered as much in considering possible jobs.

Obtaining the driver's licenses changed not only teenagers' life styles but patterns of family life. Many parents noticed that their teenagers spent more time outside, getting involved in activities, working on jobs, or socializing with friends. The parents also were freed from a fixed schedule of giving their children transportation to and from activities. Some welcomed being free of this responsibility but others felt saddened to see their children becoming more independent.

The newly discovered independence sometimes led adolescents into conflict with their parents. Unless they had their own car, young people were dependent on their parents whenever they asked for use of family cars. In order to secure their independence without having to ask for parental permission, many teenagers were thus willing to sacrifice many things to own a car. They got jobs at the expense of grades and social life, and saved money in order to purchase a car. Some teenagers reported that they spent as much as a few hundred dollars a month to cover their car payment, gas, insurance, and car accessories. Cynthia saved all her weekly allowance of four dollars for gas and spent most of her birthday gift money to buy car seat-covers and a car stereo. The adolescent obsession with driving cars reflects the value that
Americans place upon mobility as a symbol of independence.

Moving Away From Home

Moving away from the home may be a dramatic way of asserting adolescents' independence. It was atypical at the high school level but, surprisingly, several teenagers at Greenfield chose this way. Moving away from home was not the same as running away from home; those who moved out often did so in order to avoid family conflict, while continuing their schooling. In contrast to the aforementioned symbols of independence, most adolescents did not consider their physical relocation as luxurious experimentation with independence. They took the action seriously, perhaps realizing that it might have meant more than a temporary release from a suppressive family situation. Despite the serious consequences, several adolescents at Greenfield chose this way of resolving family conflicts and, in turn, found the "painful" cost of independence.

Most adolescents who moved away from home turned to relatives, friends, or landlords to find an alternative living situation. The first two options were preferred to the last one because they were more accessible and the move generally entailed less financial hardship. David, a senior, moved from California to live with his grandparents because he did not get along with his divorced father. David's parents compensated his grandparents for his expenses. Michelle, a freshman who experienced physical and emotional abuse from her stepfather, ran away from her family to her best friend's house after a violent argument. Under the temporary guardianship of her friend's parents, she was
supported for a few months by funds from her natural father before moving to live with him. Some teenagers temporarily stayed with friends until their problems were resolved and they could return home. Other temporary move-outs made long-term arrangements with their friends' parents or acquaintances when they found financial resources such as jobs or welfare funds.

Living alone in an apartment was rare for Greenfielders for three reasons: (1) not many apartments were available in the community; (2) landlords avoided renting to minors; (3) renting a room or an apartment from a landlord was too expensive for most adolescents. Young people least favored this final option. Beth, a junior, moved out of her father's house in her sophomore year because she did not get along with him; she said he did not know how to "father" a girl. She stayed with her boyfriend and his parents for a month before arguments with him drove her from there. In the meantime, she gained a legal adult status at the age of 16. After failing to find a landlord in Peaceland who was willing to rent an apartment to her, Beth settled on an arrangement with a middle-aged couple, in which she paid $290 a month for room and board. In her senior year, she finally rented an apartment with her new boyfriend in Riverville and began to lead a totally independent life.

Adolescents who lived away from their parents experienced considerable independence--freedom of action and choice. A senior boy explained, "When you do leave home, you gain independence by being able to do whatever you want with not so many pressures to do anything." In addition, they gained a more realistic perspective on independence that freedom is accompanied by responsibility. Beth's experience of "life in
the alone zone" was reported in the student newspaper:

"Along with her new-found freedom comes a lot of responsibilities. I have to rely upon myself to get up and go to school. I have to pay the rent and stuff." [Student Newspaper]

Living-out adolescents also tasted the bitter costs of independence: the loss of an intimate relationship with family members and a sense of security. Several teenagers who decided to move out confessed that they missed some family members they left behind. A senior boy said that he missed his little sister whom he saw only about twice a month. A sophomore girl mentioned that she not only missed her little brother but also advice from her mother. A junior girl elaborated on her mixed feelings about moving out: "I was free from my stepmom's possession. But I had left my home where I've lived for 16 years and I left my dad and 2 little sisters. I miss them very much but I couldn't take the pressure any more." A senior boy who moved out for the second time pointed to the lack of security and adult guidance when living alone: "You may lose security and a sense of family unity and emotional support. Further, you could have a lack of guidelines for making decisions."

Many living-out teenagers realized that responsibility came with independence and learned to look at their family situations more objectively. This more realistic and objective perspective might have helped them improve their relationships with authority figures with whom they had problems. The senior boy who came to understand his parents better said, "Once you are out on your own...you begin to understand what your parents go through." Kim agreed with him regarding her improved relationship with her mother: "I think my mom and I both
recognize that we've built on our relationship since I moved out....In a lot of ways, things are better between us."

Thus, while moving away from home might be the most striking means of acquiring independence available to high school adolescents, such freedom came with a high price. That high price seemed to help them alter their romantic ideas about unlimited independence.

Dependence on Peers

Teenagers increased interactions as they spent more time in school and on extracurricular activities than they did in lower grades. As they began driving, the young people sought more face-to-face interactions with their peers after school or on weekends. In addition, many Greenfielders spent a substantial amount of time talking on the phone with friends.

Many adolescents said that they preferred interactions with peers to those with adults because they felt more comfortable with people of their own age. Teenagers reported that they modified their speech and behavior in front of adults although many adults still complained that young people were unruly and did not respect their superiors. The adolescents' intentional adjustments to the presence of adults made them feel restricted and unnatural. A freshman girl indicated that she felt more comfortable with her friends than with her family:

When I am out with my friends, I am happier and more enjoyable to be around than when I am with my family. I'm not saying I don't care for my family's company, but it is easier to talk to my friends. [Classroom Journal]

Varenne explained that this peer inclination derived from
Americans' upbringing of children:

Very young children would be left at home with a babysitter instead of being taken to the activity the parents were attending. When they were older, children would be left at home, sometimes alone, more often with their own friends. Very soon, they discovered that they were not "wanted," that they were special and different from their parents, that they might, and even had to, have their own activities. By the time they reached their teens, they generally had come to prefer their own company to that of adults. [1977:45]

Varenne's account of adolescent peer-centeredness suggests that young people are driven into more peer interactions because they are not "wanted" by adults.

At this stage of their lives, interacting with peers became an increasingly primary, freely-chosen option. Teenagers viewed peer interactions as horizontal relationships that involved a great deal of equality. In contrast, relationships with adults symbolized inequality represented in a hierarchical relationship. In horizontal relationships, young people could relate to each other as equal beings who had a similar level of privileges and autonomy. No one "bossed" them around in the horizontal relationship. Young people felt less powerful when they dealt with authority figures such as parents, teachers and other adults. Although they often related to adults fairly easily, adolescents' dependence on adults for finances, emotional support, and grades undermined their sense of autonomy. Therefore, adolescents sought the best opportunities for independence through peer interactions. They avoided making contact with adults in informal settings because it was "no fun" and created a restrictive atmosphere.

Mike, who said he got along with his parents, preferred going out for activities with friends--even "just driving around"--to "sitting
around at home” with his parents. Many young people sought more independent environments with a minimum of adult supervision, although they did not necessarily experiment with apparently prohibited activities. For example, Mindy’s house was the preferred place for her friends to gather for parties because her single parent was seldom home throughout the week. Kelly’s house was the second choice of the same group of friends for a similar reason. Mike said that they just gathered to watch home video movies with popcorn or to talk, and did nothing illegal. They might have had nothing to worry about even under adult supervision, but they still chose to have peer interaction out of adults’ sight because the peer interactions in the absence of adults symbolized an escape from hierarchical relationships.

Between Adulthood and Childhood

As I have discussed in the previous sections, most Greenfield adolescents strived to obtain the markers of independence and demonstrated their independent status, often equated with adulthood. Some of them moderately experimented with independence by making their own money or driving a car. Others took “dramatic” ways such as leaving home, or trying out “grown-up” experiences such as drinking, intimate courtship, and drugs.

While adolescents tried to achieve this grown-up status, they expressed their ambivalence about moving from childhood into adulthood. A junior girl’s journal entry expressed her longing for a carefree child status that did not require full responsibilities:

If I could be any age and stay there, it would be five
because...you can play all day and not have many responsibilities. Life then is carefree and fun....You don't have to pay for anything or go to school. You don't have to abide by social rules. [Classroom Journal]

A freshman who experienced an intimate relationship with her ex-boyfriend reported mixed emotions about losing her childhood security and innocence. She felt that her "daring" grown-up experiences had trapped her in premature adulthood. Caught between adult independence and childhood security, she confessed her feelings about the limbo status in two journal entries:

I feel older than I am because...I've experienced a lot of very "grown-up" feelings. Sometimes I get scared and lonely and I hate being so far ahead of other people, but sometimes I use it to my advantage.

I realized that every guy I ever try to have a relationship with I'm going to (in the end) expect from him what I got from Don, and that scares me. Why did I let myself experience such a serious intimate relationship so young? [Classroom Journal]

Many seniors also were apprehensive about graduating because it meant more independence but less security. They looked forward to graduation because they would enter into independent lives in new environments; simultaneously, they were afraid of this change because they would miss their long-term friends and security from home.

Greenfield adolescents seemed to emphasize the privileges, freedom, and autonomy that accompany independence only as long as they did not have to be totally independent. Some parents pointed out that adolescents played a game of switching their association between adulthood (independence) and childhood (security) at their convenience. For example, many adolescents who claimed to be independent financially--making money and spending it on what they want--expected...
their parents to assist them with a large expenses such as prom costs or class pictures. A school counselor summed up their attitude as follows: "Eighteen-year-olds want independence but don't want to pay, want to make up their minds but don't want to take responsibility."

Some parents complained that the social system perpetuated the adolescents' game. For instance, in the name of medical confidentiality, the parents said that teenagers can take a drug or pregnancy test at the expense of their parents, who are not entitled to know the results: "Parents just have to pay the bill." The school counselor, however, did not view adolescents as totally responsible for their mixed feelings about independence. She said that this attitude was partly contributed to adults' inconsistency: "Parents have mixed messages. We say, 'Be responsible but, by the way, I'll be in charge of it.'"

Some teenagers seemed to be concerned only about the pleasant aspect of independence by concentrating their immediate interests such as employment, ownership of a car, and social life with peers. These more present-oriented concerns seemed to suppress adolescents' interest in their future. Many adolescents put a priority on buying a car over saving money for further education. Many were more interested in social activities with their peers than school assignments. Teenagers' concern about grades appeared to stem from the following reasons. They wanted to get good grades to please their parents, to feel good about themselves, and to keep up with their good academic standing. Many said that grades were important because they were "planning to go to college." A majority, however, neither knew what to study nor what to
do with their further education. During adolescence, young people could obtain financial, physical, and social independence as privileges associated with adulthood. I suspect that some young people were not interested in their future as much because they could enjoy adult-like privileges while not being expected to fulfill the responsibility of adulthood.

**Summary**

Greenfield adolescents acquired independence to the degree that they earned it. They viewed that independence brought rewards such as being treated like adults and being more autonomous in their lives. Independence was also viewed as something that adolescents must acquire with their own efforts rather than something given at a certain socially prescribed age. The adolescents tried to enjoy its "sweet" taste before standing alone completely, which usually comes when they move away from home after high school graduation. Demonstrating their independence either by obtaining the markers of a modified independence or defying adult authorities became, to some degree, a preoccupation for almost all adolescents.

The symbolic markers that Greenfielders were concerned about included getting a driver's license and owning a car, getting a job, earning spending money, relying on peers' opinions and social life, and leading a physically and emotionally independent life. In pursuing independence, young people tended to emphasize its pleasant aspect such as having less adult supervision and making more free choices. When they acquired a more realistic understanding of independence,
adolescents longed for the carefree status of childhood that did not require so much responsibility. Those who did not—or did not want to—realize the harsh reality of independence concentrated on enjoying the status which was still allowed to a certain extent during their adolescence. This present-orientatedness is likely to explain most Greenfielders' lack of serious interest in their future.
Notes

1This excerpt is from an essay submitted for an essay competition, "Why My Mom Should Be Mother of the Year," sponsored by Girls' League.

2The leadership teams of eight teachers and administrators participated in a state-wide program, Onward to Excellence, to improve the quality of education in Greenfield High School. The tasks that they were to accomplish were (1) to attend state-wide workshops to gain information on the program; (2) to organize local staff meetings to identify problems in the areas of academic achievement, social behavior, and student attitudes; (3) to conduct a survey and document research on specific matters; (4) to design and implement a program to improve situations; (5) to evaluate the program; and (6) to adjust the program to gain better outcomes. As a part of the process, the task force administered a survey to all high school students in the Spring of 1987.
CHAPTER VIII

"GETTING INVOLVED": ETHOS OF ACTIVENESS

Greenfield adolescents appeared to be continuously involved in physical and mental activities in and outside school. Before school began in the morning, they gathered in the library or halls to do homework or converse with their peers. Most class activities--group projects, individual seat work, and lectures--demanded physical and mental energy. Following each class, students moved from one classroom to another. During lunch, many drove away from the school grounds, assembled to socialize, or did homework. They were rarely seen sitting alone and contemplating, at least in public. After school, many participated in sports at school or pursued other activities outside school. Many teenagers said that they got bored if they "do nothing"; some classes were considered boring because they required minimal involvement other than lecture note-taking or individual seat work. By contrast, "fun" classes often referred to those that offered a variety of activities--often deviating from routines and ranging from simulation activities to field trips.

Representing an aspect of adolescent ethos, activeness refers to getting involved in a variety of activities or staying busy with the multiple involvements. Activeness was advocated by school staff, parents, and adolescents, as it was reflected in the widely mentioned expression, "Get involved." This expression carried somewhat different
meanings for adults and adolescents. When adults suggested that
teenagers get involved, they were usually referring to "structured
experiences," such as school sports, clubs, or organizations. While
adolescents accepted the adult concept of activeness, they also extended
its meaning to engagement in informal activities with peers, i.e.,
getting involved with each other.

One may argue that the idea of "active involvement" is not unique
to Greenfield adolescents. In the young people's lives, activeness
carried a social value. The degree of activeness was used as a
parameter of the social maturity of adolescents and of their future
social success. Greenfield adolescents might have been motivated to get
involved from the following incentives: i.e., having something to do,
having fun, developing friendships, becoming well known, and building a
good record for the future.

In this chapter, I portray something of the life of a remarkably
active girl, and then discuss the types of adolescent activities. After
describing the various incentives for social involvement, I discuss the
social meanings of activeness. In conclusion, I analyze the way that
adolescents cope with the action-oriented ideal and the stress that can
result from multiple involvements.

An Active Adolescent

Shirley represents a distinctive example of an active adolescent.
She was known as "a junior version of superwoman" among her teachers,
peers, and community members. The label "superwoman" was due to her
involvement in numerous activities at school and in the community. She
had a full schedule from 6 a.m. until midnight. Every school day morning, she attended a religion class beginning at 6:30 at her church. Then, she went to Stage Band at 7:30 before the first class period began. This class was called an "early bird class." After a heavy concentration of four classes in the morning, she used her lunch time to execute her responsibilities as president of Girls' League and Honor Society, and vice president of the Track Club. Her tasks included organizing activities, writing memos, and making the phone calls regarding the club and organization business. Sometimes she did homework during lunch time; only rarely did she eat lunch at the regular time. After three afternoon classes finished, she participated in sports from 3:30 in the afternoon (cross-country in the fall and track in the spring). She trained with Judy, her best friend, who had similar academic and athletic credentials. After having dinner around 6:00 p.m., she had school, church, or community activities to attend almost every night. She began her homework at about 9:30 p.m. and usually went to bed at midnight.

Shirley's weekend schedule was not any less frantic than that of the school days. She said, "I usually have somewhere to go. I can't remember the last time I slept in." For example, on Memorial Day Weekend, she took part in a state track meet of intermediate-sized high schools on Friday and Saturday; on Sunday, she went to church, attended the church choir practice, and did some easy reading; on Monday, she put up and took down American flags for 75 businesses in the community before she joined her family for a picnic.

Shirley's lengthy activity sheet\(^1\) recorded her extensive
involvement in sports, leadership, music, and volunteer work since the
ninth grade. Her senior year activities demonstrated her musical and
athletic ability, leadership in clubs and organizations, and volunteer
work at school and throughout the community. As a musician, she played
flute for the school band and accompanied the school choirs, Stage Band,
and the church choir as a pianist. As an athlete, she competed as a
member of the track and cross country teams, and played girls' tag
football. As a leader, she represented Girls' League and Honor Society
as president, track club as vice president, and church youth group as
music chairperson and Sunday school class president. Besides all the
activities at school and church, she volunteered to help multiple
community projects. This busy schedule, however, had not interfered
with her academic work; she had maintained a 4.0 GPA (i.e., a straight
"A" grade point average) throughout her high school years.

Shirley's activity record and grades had earned her multiple awards
in and outside school. She received a Future First Citizen Award from
her community. At the Achievement Awards Banquet in her senior year,
she won ten awards, making her the student with the most recognition.
These ranged from Presidential Academic Fitness Award to Outstanding
English Student Award. She received a total of 48 honors and awards
during her high school years. At the graduation ceremony at which she
gave a valedictorian speech along with other two students, she received
multiple scholarships, amounting to about $3,000, plus half-tuition to
the private university she planned to attend. A local newspaper article
listed a few examples of her active involvement as evidence of her
valedictorianship.
Shirley exemplified the image of the "successful" adolescent who was active, busy, non-exhaustable, and well-rounded. She was involved in a variety of school activities ranging from academics to sports; as a volunteer as well as a leader; and in the community as well as in school. As if agreeing with the judges who selected her as the recipient of her honors and awards, her senior classmates also voted her "Most Likely to Succeed" and "Most Talented."

**Types of Activities**

Shirley was not the only teenager who became active and achieved so much during his/her high school years. While she made an extremely strong case, many other adolescents in Greenfield promoted activeness in various ways. Some became involved in multiple activities; others concentrated on a few areas and excelled in those. Some were more active in school activities; others became more active outside school. Some were involved in formal and organized actions such as sports or leadership; others were more interested in informal activities such as family activities and teenagers' private parties. All of these activities kept the young people busy. However, those who were simultaneously involved in several formal school activities seemed to receive more recognition from school staff and peers because this kind of activity had high visibility and wide support. Many other adolescents seemed to be less concerned with recognition than with engaging in enough activities to alleviate boredom.

Adolescents became active in four different types of activities in school and the community. First, school activities such as sports,
clubs, or organizations were the common means of getting involved. Second, some adolescents extended their involvement in community functions by volunteering their services as individuals or members of a group. The third way of staying busy was through part-time or full-time jobs. Many working adolescents had to make a choice between a job and other activities because their working schedules did not allow much time. Last but not least, informal peer and family activities ranging from chatting to taking long-distance trips were popular among many adolescents.

School Activities

School activities such as sports, clubs, organizations, and classes were commonly available to Greenfield adolescents. The Green Lake community, located in a semi-rural area, offered rather limited options for social activities for young people (see Chapter II). As a result, after-school extracurricular activities attracted many Greenfielders who either could not afford expensive out-of-school activities or did not want to bother driving so far.

Sports were popular and relatively inclusive because opportunities were plentiful. Thirteen different sports were offered throughout the school year, including ten for men and nine for women (see Chapter III). An administrator and some students observed that the qualification for prospective athletes was not too strict: basically, applicants were required to have a GPA of 2.0 or more (i.e., above a "C" average) and be willing to follow the conduct rules, including no substance abuse.

As the athletic director noted, a large majority of Greenfield
students participated in the athletic program. Students were restricted to only one sport per season with the exception of single-event, intramural sports such as the "powder puff" (i.e., a tag football) and a weight lifting competition. Since athletes were recruited from the small student population, individuals in Greenfield had a better chance to participate in sports than did students at large schools. Athletic participation could be extended throughout the year because no restriction applied to seasons. For instance, a successful and "popular" male athlete, Jeff, played football in the fall, joined wrestling in the winter, and participated in track and field in the spring. Sandy, chosen Girl of the Month for her sportsmanship, played volleyball, basketball, and softball in the respective seasons. This full cycle of the sports program kept many adolescents busy and involved.

In addition to sports, Greenfield adolescents were involved in school clubs and organizations. Some clubs or organizations were more active than others. The rally squad and dance team were two of the most active organizations. They led the cheering at football and basketball games, practiced routines to prepare for off-campus competitions, and participated in fund-raising projects throughout the year. In some organizations and clubs such as Girls' League and language clubs, officers were active, planning activities and carrying them out. In the above cases, getting active was tantamount to becoming an officer; membership alone did not offer much action.

Some classes functioned as clubs because they demanded so much time for out-of-class activities. These included choir, band, journalism,
and yearbook. Choir and band members not only had instruction about musical skills in class but performed in concerts and off-campus competitions. In addition to the busy local performance schedule, choir and band took turns every other May traveling to Canada for performances.

The journalism and yearbook class produced the student newspaper and the annual, respectively. In the production process, members of these classes took photos of school functions and sports events, collected information (through interviews), wrote and edited articles or captions, and laid out pages. The young people often stayed after school when their production process came close to a deadline. Another class which functioned as a club was Field Biology. The class included in its curriculum several one-day field trips and a major four-day trip.

Through these classes, even those who might not be involved in other clubs and organizations experienced a high degree of activeness. One sophomore girl kept her schedule busy in the spring term with the field trips for her classes: the four-day choir trip to Canada, a four-day Field Biology trip, and two one-day field trips for Spanish class. A senior girl, who kept a low profile in school and appeared inactive in areas other than journalism, summarized her perception of activeness as follows: "Everyone [in the school] is active. I'm active on the newspaper staff." Her statement suggested that although not everyone was involved in "popular" activities such as sports, they regarded themselves as active in other areas.
Activities in the Community

Young people got involved in community activities through churches, local clubs, and school organizations. Churches offered some options for teenage activities. The Green Lake community had 15 Christian churches, including 10 in Peaceland with its 2,500 residents. While the number of church-goers was not known, community members noted that the number of churches seemed remarkably high. Several churches provided independent or joint youth programs regularly. Peter, a sophomore, went to a joint youth meeting every Monday evening, where about 10 to 15 high schoolers from three local churches gathered to have their spiritual lives nourished through games, discussions, and video movies.

Campus Life was another Christian youth group that attracted high schoolers; however, it did not impose the Christian faith on its participants, so many non-believers felt free to attend weekly meetings regularly. Like many other youth programs, Campus Life heavily incorporated "fun" games (see the section "Incentives for Activeness" in this chapter) into their weekly meetings.

The 4-H Club represented another community organization oriented toward adolescent activities. The 4-H was somewhat popular in a rural area such as the Green Lake community. Helen, who appeared quiet in school and lived in a remote wooded area, was an active member of the 4-H Club. The club activities included sewing, cooking, making crafts, and taking care of animals. Club members pursued their own projects and entered them into yearly competitions at a county fair. Helen won a ribbon for her fruit jam in the junior canning division. A freshman
girl also said that she learned to take care of sheep through the 4-H involvement. She raised sheep and sold some of them at the fair one summer for 300 dollars.

Adolescent school activities extended into the community when school organizations volunteered their services for community functions. This type of involvement was common in Green Lake because its high school had close public relations with the community. High school dance and rally squads were frequently summoned to help with Booster Club (see Chapter II) fund-raising projects; choirs and bands were frequent entertainers at community ceremonies and fund-raising functions. Over a hundred volunteers from the high school participated in a city clean-up campaign picking up litter along streets, and the Wood Shop repainted picnic tables in the city park in order to prepare for the Peaceland city celebration.

Some adolescents volunteered individually to assist at community functions. Many high school students helped to serve food and to clean up at the annual community Thanksgiving turkey dinner, serving over 700 people. Several teenagers also volunteered as guides or aides at a community health fair. A few high schoolers were involved in middle and elementary school functions as sport officiators, chaperons at dances, or camp counselors. This type of individual, short-term volunteerism often resulted from encouragement by parents or friends who were involved themselves.

Some young people made a relatively long-term commitment as volunteers. Every Saturday, Linda volunteered as a nurse's aide at the general hospital in Riverville. After four days of training for two
hours each day, she was assigned to tasks such as changing bedpans, giving patients a bath with a washcloth, or taking temperatures. She was originally introduced to this work by her high school friend who had volunteered at the same hospital.

The community activities mentioned above occupied adolescents' evenings or weekends of adolescents, and kept them quite busy. They offered young people something to do as well as opportunities to interact with other teenagers and adults.

Jobs

A job is a significant factor that occupied many teenagers' time out of school. Working hours per week ranged from two to 45 hours. Debbie, a sophomore, babysat a few hours a week; Adam, a senior, worked both full time (40 hours) and overtime (about five hours per week on average) as a dishwasher and prep-cook. He worked from 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. until midnight (sometimes after midnight when he cleaned up pots and pans) on school days and in a morning shift on weekends. Since he began the job, Adam quit participating in the track team, which was his main activity in school. He usually left school at 3:30 p.m. and went home to get ready for work. Since he worked five days, he had two free evenings from work each week. He admitted that sometimes he got too busy. He liked the job, however, because it gave him not only financial rewards but a reason to avoid an older brother at home with whom he did not get along.

Thus, jobs often replaced rather than supplemented other activities, because employers did not want to excuse adolescents for
other activities during their working hours. A cheerleader who continued her summer employment through the following term was eventually forced to make a choice between her rally practices and the job, because both demanded her full commitment after school. A junior boy expressed resentment about not being able to attend his friend's graduation ceremony because he could not be excused from his job. Many adolescents said that getting a job could cost them grades, social life, or extracurricular activities. Many seniors noted the effects of jobs on their lives: "It usually (not always) destroys your social life," "It gives you no free time," "It makes things hectic," "You fall behind in school work and you're tired at school," and "It takes away from the activities that a person would like to do." Jobs kept adolescents busy; ironically, however, those same jobs kept them from more active participation in the school or community.

Informal and Unofficial Activities

As mentioned above, when phrases like "get involved" or "get active" were used, it usually meant getting involved in formally organized activities. These types of activities were counted—literally—when adolescents were to be nominated for awards or scholarships. The major criteria, so-called objective parameters, were concerned with activities that they were involved in, with leadership experiences, and with grades. Leadership of cliques or membership in a skateboard (informal) group did not count. Any constructive activity in which the young people were involved with their families was likewise not considered. Nevertheless, informal and unofficial activities with
family and peers occupied a good deal of teenagers' time and interest.

Activities with the family ranged from house chores to several-day family trips. Many adolescents were expected to do housework when they went home after school. Household chores included cooking, doing dishes, vacuuming, doing laundry, feeding animals, working in gardens, mowing the lawn, chopping firewood, and more. Some adolescents were expected to do a lot of housework, whereas others were required to do the minimal chores or nothing. For example, Dorothy's major household chore was unloading the dishwasher at home. Richard was expected to do all the "male stuff," such as chopping wood and making repairs around the house, to help his single mother who suffered from a back problem. These activities filled slots in the adolescent's daily schedule. Some teenagers avoided doing chores in favor of other activities, but in many families children were scolded or "grounded" (i.e., certain privileges were taken away temporarily) if the chores were not completed. Several adolescents complained that they were short of time due to the combined work load of school activities, homework, and house chores.

Some families spent time together "sitting and talking." However, other families were involved in more action-oriented activities: e.g., going for walks, driving around town, or taking family trips. In some cases, family activities took priority over school activities. A senior girl from a well-to-do family took a few weeks out of her spring term to travel with her family. A junior boy joined his family's trip to Mexico for two weeks during a fall term. Andy, a sophomore, took a week off from a fall term to go to a ski resort with his family. Andy also invited his male friend to join the family trip, and Andy's parents paid
the friend's expenses.

Peer-oriented activities seemed disproportionately significant in adolescent life, because young people spent a lot of time interacting with their peers. The peer interactions often symbolized independence from adults. Adolescents spent seven to ten hours a day with their peers in school, depending on whether or not they were involved in after-school activities. After school, many visited each other, were engaged in mutual activities, or easily spent an hour a day on the telephone, talking with friends. On weekends, many adolescents made plans to get together and "do something." Especially after school or on weekends, socializing became the typical routine for many Greenfield adolescents as they gained greater mobility through driving. Charlie, a junior, visited Randy's house after school a few times a week and then went to Mark's house with Randy to talk, ride skateboard, play frisbee, or watch television. Randy, a junior who owned a car, drove to Riverville a few times a week after school, going window-shopping or just driving around downtown. He seized every chance to join activities with his friends. One day, he overheard that his friends Carol and Mindy were going to town to buy a birthday present for Carol's father. He asked if he would go with them, and happily joined their trip to the Grand Shopping Center in Riverville.

The following vignette is an example of informal interactions among peers. On a chilly but sunny afternoon in February, about eight boys gathered with skateboards in a church parking lot that had a natural down-hill slope. The boys set up two wooden ramps about three yards apart facing each other and rode their skateboards between these ramps.
A couple of boys came to watch their friends riding skateboards, and then left after 20 minutes. The skateboarders were varied in their skill levels: some turned around gracefully on the top of the ramps, while others tried to keep balance on their skateboard. They repeated jumps off the ramps, 180-degree turns, and slides on sidewalks. They sometimes stopped to talk about jumps that one just finished or to exchange puns with each other. I sensed a feeling of unity among them based on the fact that everyone had gathered there for one purpose (skateboarding) and was pursuing it together. Charlie, the boy who invited me to this meeting (he called it a "skate jam" or "skate session") told me that most of the boys who came there were "regulars" and that they had sessions whenever the weather and their schedules allowed.

Another kind of peer activity took place in a student home. After participating in a community parade on Saturday, Kathy invited Joan to her home, and invited me as well. Joan had been in Kathy's home before and knew that she could take advantage of her swimming pool, so she brought her swimming suit with her. Soon after they walked into the house, they went to the living room to play pool. Kathy's younger sister (a freshman at the high school) and I helped her mother prepare lunch. Two sets of Kathy's grandparents were visiting the family and the big crowd (four grandparents, parents, five children, Joan, and I) had lunch at poolside. Kathy, Joan, and I sat next to each other, separate from the other family members, and they talked about their teammates in the rally squad.

After finishing lunch, we went into the house to change into
swimming suits. I borrowed a swimming suit from Kathy. Joined by Kathy's other sister, we went swimming. Kathy suggested that we take turns jumping off the diving board in any original style. All of us followed her suggestion, and a lot of laughs and splashes followed. After about an hour of such a "creative" recreation, we moved to a trampoline to continue our exciting physical activity. Kathy again suggested that one of us begin to create a move, the next person picking it up and adding a new move, and so on. We were engaged in this activity for about half an hour. Then, we went to Kathy's room and looked at her class pictures taken as a studio representative to the high school. Kathy and Joan soon started a conversation exchanging opinions about boys and marriage.

These two vignettes have in common that the teenagers were engaged in physical activity that they considered to be "fun." Along with the actions, many were engaged in conversations with each other.

Incentives for Active Involvement

So far, I have discussed Greenfield adolescents' inclination toward getting involved and the types of their activities. Why did adolescents want to get involved and stay active? What drove them into the stage of constant activeness? By getting involved in activities, adolescents sought something to do, opportunities to make friends, fun, popularity, and credentials for their future.

"Having Something to Do"

"Having nothing to do," synonymous with boredom, is a devastating
situation for many adolescents in Greenfield. "Having nothing to do" can be interpreted in two ways: a lack of action, or the seemingly endless repetition of everyday routines. A junior boy who participated in football for the fall season said he felt "dull" after the season was over. To my question, "What do you do in your spare time?" he responded unenthusiastically, "I do nothing. Sometimes, I get bored. I'm looking forward to playing again." To him, "having nothing to do" did not mean that his life was totally boring, because he was engaged in a budding courtship with his girlfriend, which kept him busy in a way. His tedium derived from not being able to be engaged in action-oriented activities. In comparison, Paula, a senior, described her life at home as having "nothing to do." She could watch TV or do homework, but she did not anticipate any excitement from any unusual event occurring at home.

To avoid the "have-nothing-to-do" situations, many adolescents put themselves in various active situations in school, community, or jobs. Many athletes participated in sports, season after season. They said that they were so accustomed to such activities that they could not imagine living without them. Wanda, a year-round athlete, mentioned that she felt guilty when she even considered the option of taking off a season when pressure built up. She had been involved in sports every season since the sixth grade. Neither long driving (20 miles one way from home to school) nor inconvenience in arranging transportation kept her from participating in the activities. Even after their divorce, her parents made a "relay" arrangement in transporting her to after-school sports functions. Wanda's mother, with whom she lived, drove her many
miles to bring her to a mid-point between the school and their home. Wanda's father, who lived close to the school, picked her up at the mid-point and took her to athletic events. After the activities, she was picked up by her father and the reversed relay was done. In spite of the inconvenience, she said that if she did not participate in sports, she would miss being in action.

Likewise, Adam was content with his job. He stated, "Work keeps me busy and gives me something to do." Getting involved in activities allowed them to be occupied and stay active, which was much more favorable than a relaxing schedule with much spare time.

"Making Friends"

Getting involved in activities was considered an excellent way of getting to know people and making friends. By getting involved in activities, many freshmen and newcomers found themselves breaking into established circles of friends and getting socially adjusted to new circumstances. Stacy, a freshman, got involved in the girls' basketball squad and soccer team, where she made friends with many upper class people. Unlike class periods, most sports teams, organizations, and informal circles of friends had cross-class members. Those who did not get involved in the cross-class activities tended to be locked with their own class friends. Holly, who transferred to Greenfield High School in her junior year, also made many friends through activities. Her age gap2 with her peers could have been an obstacle in making friends, but she became involved in track and field, ran for an office in Girls' League, joined the newspaper staff, and initiated contacts
with a variety of her peers. As a new student in a small school where "everyone knew everyone," her outgoing activeness was quite obvious, and her efforts were eventually paid off with multiple friendships by the end of her junior year.

Many adolescents had discovered that getting involved in activities not only helped them make new friends but also nurtured already established friendships. Shirley and Jennifer were often seen together. They had maintained a 4.0 GPA, shared leadership as president and vice-president in clubs, ran competitively in cross-country and track, and were co-valedictorians at graduation. Shirley said that she cherished a deep friendship with Jennifer, which she gained through their mutual participation in activities.

Needless to say, informal peer activities provided ample opportunities to make new friends and develop friendship. Brenda met her boyfriend while "cruising the gut" in Riverville and kept her courtship with him going for a year. The gut was a popular place for some Greenfielders to meet new people of different ages and from various high schools through the region. The young people drove up and down in a designated section of a street at an extremely low speed. Several people were often packed in one car, playing rock-n-roll to the full volume on a car stereo and hailing teenage passengers in other cars, sometimes stopping to meet them.

Birthday parties were another occasion to meet people. Grace said that when she was invited to Dayna's birthday party, she met people whom she was not associated with at school. Even though she had participated in many activities with Dayna before, she did not share the same circle
of friends. Therefore, she would not have gotten to know some of Dayna's friends without the occasion of Dayna's birthday party. This type of chain reaction was quite common in making new friends through informal activities.

"Having Fun"

The phrases such as "It's fun" or "I had fun" were commonly used in adolescent language. By such statements, some teenagers may mean that something was not too bad. In general, however, activities that they identified as "fun" are characterized by some or all of the following attributes: (1) action was involved; (2) it was non-routine; (3) peer interactions took place; (4) cross-sex interactions occurred; (5) adult supervision was minimal; and (6) it gave a sense of accomplishment.

A scene from a Campus Life regular meeting illustrates an occasion most attendees thought of as "fun." Forty to 50 students from Greenfield sat on the carpeted floor of a former restaurant, now converted into a meeting hall. The room was so packed that most attendees had little room to stretch their legs. Some of them leaned against walls or their same-sex or opposite-sex friends. The Campus Life director for the Greenfield High School chapter, a Greenfield High graduate, opened the meeting with a game. The students were divided into two groups, and pens were distributed to individuals of one group. Members of the other group were told to take off their socks and go around to get autographs from members of the other group. The rule of the game was that the one who collected most signatures became the winner. Some were at first hesitant to take off their socks but soon
drifted into the "chaotic" mood, running around with bare feet for scribbles.

After the first activity, another game awaited. Three volunteers were called and went into another room. Each was separately called with a blindfold on and asked to identify by touch objects covered with a cloth on two tables. The objects included a tennis racket, a football, clothes, and the head of the fourth volunteer, Jim, squatting between two tables. The first and second volunteers successfully guessed all the objects but the head. While they were touching the head, respectively, Jim jumped up to surprise the blindfolded volunteers. For the third volunteer, the director altered the plan: not to Jim’s knowledge, the director instructed the blindfolded volunteer to smash a dishful of whipped cream on Jim’s face when he popped out. His peers laughed hard about the double cross. This surprise game was followed by another make-a-fool-of-yourself type of activity, and the telling of a "horror" story on the theme of Halloween. The almost two-hour long meeting concluded with a group discussion about fear.

This meeting was full of action, surprise, and peer interaction within and between the sexes. The double cross broke the routine of the game. The adult staff were not perceived as adults but friends (the staff members regularly visited the school during lunch hour and made close contacts with students). In these casual and relaxed circumstances, the young people said they had fun. The adult as well as the student staff told me that many of the attendees probably were not interested in religious messages, but came to the meeting to have fun.

While the Campus Life case represents a light and exciting way of
having fun, some teenagers said that they found enjoyment through more "heavy-duty" or serious types of activities. Jill, a sophomore, thought of doing homework as fun, which could be certainly a headache and "no fun at all" to many other adolescents. The pleasure that she found in doing homework derived from a sense of accomplishment as she went through the process of creating ideas, organizing her thoughts, and finally finishing projects.

As discussed above, having fun can motivate adolescents to take action. Since "fun" was sometimes sought outside life's regular routines, it could lead young people to pursue pleasure from unusual, present-oriented (temporary) activities. It could be very costly when it was embedded in present-oriented hedonism. Some teenagers said that they drank or experimented with drugs "just for fun." Others drove fast and made sharp turns at high speed "just for fun." For prom night, many adolescents were willing to spend several hundred dollars to have fun. Gwen and her date spent over 200 dollars for their attire ($120 for her dress, matching shoes, and new undergarments; $70 for his tuxedo; and $30 for a corsage), close to 100 dollars for an exquisite meal for two at a first-class restaurant, and about 30 dollars for bowling and snacks after the prom. Gwen's single mother helped with the expenses but Gwen had saved up money from her job to pay for that event. Probably, the adolescent value of "fun for now" would explain the willingness to risk lives by speeding, to take illegal substances, and to spend as much as a whole month's pay on one night's fun.
"Getting Popular"

Many adolescents believed that those who were involved in structured activities such as sports or organizations tended to become popular among peers. They often equated "becoming well known" with "getting popular," not necessarily synonymous with "becoming well liked." Many adolescents believed that popularity—or, more accurately, name familiarity--played an important role in winning votes in election and awards.

Barbara was convinced that the athletic popularity of her campaign opponent, James, was responsible for his success in winning the election for Student Body President. According to her, people knew John's name because he played sports. Those who did not know about the ability of candidates (especially freshmen) tended to vote for familiar names.

Judith, who transferred to Greenfield at the beginning of her junior year, took advantage (maybe, unconsciously) of this athletic route to gain popularity. In her first term in Greenfield she played volleyball, and in her second term she played basketball. Her reputation as a fine athlete and an active student, in addition to her nice appearance helped her win the crown of prom princess in the spring.

Lisa, who was voted Girl of the Month for leadership, admitted, "Being vice president for the senior class and being in student government could have had some effect on why I was chosen" (Student Newspaper). These three adolescents experienced that active involvement rewarded them with considerable popularity.
"Getting Ready for the Future"

Some adolescents got involved in activities in order to build credentials for their future. When they applied for colleges and scholarships, they realized that their good activity records played a critical role in their admission. Even when they applied for jobs, their high school activity level was used as a predictor for their ability and responsibility on the job. Some teenagers believed that their job experiences or volunteer work during high school would prepare them for their future career. Actually, Cindy, who had volunteered her services in a nursing home, entered a nursing program at a community college after she graduated.

A counselor advised students to gain a wide range of experience in sports, leadership, volunteer work, music, art, newspaper, and yearbook. Her advice basically meant that adolescents should get actively involved in various types of activities and, in turn, prepared to be well-rounded. Her advice was taken more seriously by seniors who began to see the potential effect of their activeness on their future.

Activity As a Social Virtue

Getting involved in activities was encouraged by the school staff. During a one-day orientation for incoming freshman, an administrator gave a lengthy speech of what they should and should not do in school. His list of "dont's" was much longer than "do's." Among a few "do's," he emphasized, "[Do] participate and get involved." He added, "Those who get involved have a better life." The "get involved" rhetoric was
well-expressed by a memo sent by the high school administrators to parents. The memo quoted from a U.S. Education Department study, "'The more activities students were involved in, the higher they ranked' in terms of grades and test scores." Even though the memo carefully warned parents, "Participation in extracurricular activities does not guarantee improved performance as a student," the act of sending the memo probably represented the school administrator's position on students' active involvement.

Many parents agreed with the school's position on adolescent involvement. Sue's parents encouraged her to be actively involved in sports, leadership, school clubs, and the church. They also showed their support by attending parent meetings and making commitments to assist with programs beneficial to adolescents. Since they believed that their children should spend more time involved in school and community activities, Sue's parents disapproved of her getting a job during school years. They presumed that employment would cut off a substantial amount of time from Sue's schedule.

Newspapers often carried approving articles about active adolescents. A Riverville newspaper featured an article about a Greenfield High school student praising her academic and social excellence despite her unusual living circumstances (she was living independently without an adult guardian in most cases). According to this article, "By rights," she "should be cutting classes, haunting the streets and doing drugs." By contrast, she stayed in school faithfully; moreover, she excelled as an honor student, student body president, and athlete. She also held a part-time job. The article went on as
She's been captain and most outstanding player of the girls' soccer team. She coaches and referees youth teams. She volunteers for community food drives. She's a regular blood donor. She's won academic awards from the American Chemical Society and from the National Science League. [Riverville Newspaper]

The article portrayed Kim as a successful teenager. Like the newspaper article about Shirley (see the section "An Active Adolescent in this chapter), this journalistic rhetoric suggested that her active involvement be evidence for this recognition. This tacit way of encouraging adolescent involvement by the local newspaper was equally used in the high school newspaper whenever any honor recipient was reported. For example, a student newspaper article highlighted Sarah, who was voted Girl of the Month for "Sense of Humor": "Sarah is a member of the Honor Society, keeps stats for the J.V. softball teams and is ending her sixth year in choir."

Not only school administrators, parents, and media advocated the rhetoric of "Go and get involved," but many adolescents themselves acted out their beliefs about being active in varying degrees. Some of them might focus their involvement in the area of organized school and community activities. Others might choose to be active with their peers or families, and get a similar degree of satisfaction. Whatever activities they selected to do, most of them agreed that activeness was better than "doing nothing." The role of a performer or an actor is more likely to be respected than that of a listener or being in the audience.
Between Activeness and Stress

Many Greenfield adolescents acted out the ethos of activeness in their lives either due to exterior forces or by their own choice. In school, they were driven into a tight schedule of classes with four to five minute breaks between them and the lunch hour when many actions took place. After school, sports, rally meetings, dance practices, the yearbook, the newspaper, or informal meetings with friends filled some students' time. The school staff and parents also encouraged adolescents to get involved particularly in organized activities, not only of one kind but several types—the more, the better. Society rewarded those who got involved in many activities and displayed their activeness. Their peers not only acknowledged those who got involved but also often compounded their involvement by voting them for prestigious titles, such as homecoming and prom courts, leaders, and Girl/Boy of the Month. Many Greenfield teenagers felt pressure to get involved and to demonstrate their activeness in public in order to establish a socially desirable status. In addition, "Be Active" and "Get Involved" messages had been so engrained in their minds since childhood that their self-worth seemed to depend upon such actions.

The pressure of being both "actor" (one who actively gets involved in organized functions) and "performer" (one who displays one's activeness in public) affected adolescent life in two ways. On the one hand, the young people said they learned to manage time efficiently because they had so many tasks to do within a limited time. To get everything accomplished, they had to plan their time wisely in advance,
and not to waste it on secondary interests. On the other hand, many
adolescents experienced stress from the overwhelming number of tasks.
Many of those who managed their time efficiently were not immune to
stress. Those who experienced stress seemed often to be the
time-conscious adolescents concerned about living up to the ethos of
activeness.

Managers of Time

Many adolescents stated that they efficiently managed their time.
It was astounding to me to see how many activities they were involved in
within a limited time. To my question, "How did you manage to get
things done during your years of high school?" seniors gave me a variety
of answers. Some confessed that they failed to manage time efficiently.
However, many others said that they did manage it in several ways. I
categorized the ways into four types of time management: (1) "keeping
on top of things" (pace keeper); (2) "organizing myself and setting
priorities" (list maker); (3) "not getting much sleep" and "sacrificing
weekends" (overstretcher); and (4) "cramming at the last minute"
(crammer). Many young people seemed to combine some of these ways in
completing their tasks.

Jean, a pace maker, made conscious efforts not to fall behind her
schedule. In order not to fall behind, she tried to finish tasks in
advance instead of waiting until the last minute. She resolved to
complete each important task—for instance, homework—right away before
she became engaged in other activities, such as meetings or watching TV.
One afternoon when she accompanied the cross-country team to a
competition as a statistics keeper, she spent her spare time between
events doing her writing assignments. Even though her peers sometimes
called her a "book worm," she managed to stay on top of her schedule.
This style of time management had rewarded her with excellent grades and
activity records.

Lynn was a remarkable organizer according to her mother: "She is a
list maker. She does organize." Lynn might not always stay on top of
her schedule, and sometimes she procrastinated about her tasks as long
as she wished. She then made a priority list and finished tasks one by
one according to her list. Lynn agreed with her mother's perception:

[I make lists] all the time. At the beginning of a year, probably
for the first three months of the school, I'd sit every night and
make a list out and put it on my desk.... [Interview Transcript
3-25-87:7]

She sometimes "let everything fly"; however, her inclination toward
organization kept her excellent academic standing and involvement in
multiple activities intact.

Marie was an overstretcher type. She was so involved in activities
as a rally member, an officer of the French Club and Future Business
Leaders of America, a member of the Honor Society, and finally with her
boyfriend. She did not feel that she had enough time to complete
everything. Hence, she tried to squeeze as much as possible into her 24
hours a day and seven days a week. She often stayed up late at night
and appeared tense and busy all the time.

Tom finished tasks by cramming at the last minute. He gave peer
interaction priority over homework and other tasks, but he was concerned
about his grades. He often found himself cramming the night before an
exam, or finishing homework only moments before a class. His grades were good and he did not feel that he learned any less because of cramming. He also tended to take care of his club activities at the last minutes. He felt that he was rushing all the time to get his immediate needs completed; indeed, he rarely appeared relaxed in school.

Tom was so accustomed to this "last minute" style of getting things done that he did not try to plan in advance nor did he accomplish tasks well in time.

These adolescents experienced stress resulting from their various activities within a limited time and energy available in their everyday lives. Whatever style of time management that they chose, they coped with the pressure and seemed to succeed in surviving as task-achievers in the action-oriented world.

**Victims of Stress**

Even though many adolescents seemed to manage their time efficiently, they were also overwhelmed by the number of activities in which they were involved. Some experienced stress or "burn out." A boy expressed his frustration as follows:

> My life right now is very confusing. I have to spend time for school, football, family, friends, and my girlfriend. And all of that just doesn't fit in one day's work. [Classroom Journal]

Despite the stress, this boy did not resolve the situation by giving up any activities. He went on with the same life style--trying to be busy with many activities, and to do all of them well. As he saw it, he did not have the option to give up any of his activities, high grades, or his good relationship with family, peers, and girlfriend. He felt they
were all necessities in the life of an allegedly successful male adolescent.

More seniors than lower class people articulated their stressful situations. The increasing stress level may symbolize the adolescent transition into adulthood, regarded as the stage of more tasks and stress. In addition to all the "musts" of adolescent life, seniors identified more matters to take care of, as compared to lower class people. For instance, the seniors contemplated their future, although not all seniors knew what they were going to do after graduation. To many seniors who planned to continue their education, selecting the institutions to apply to and determining how to finance their college education were major issues. Two senior girls explained their stress as follows:

I have so many things going on in my life right now. I don't even know where to start. First, there's school--high school and the prospect of college. In high school, I am taking Political Process, Accounting II, College English, Chemistry, and I'm also the Senior Class Vice President. I have so many pressures and so much responsibility to deal with. I just want to scream sometimes. Then I have to make decisions about college. I have all these adult decisions to make and then there's my third confusing thing--home! [Classroom Journal]

I have stayed after school every day for the last two weeks. I finished the newspaper (school). I made a tape for the All-State band two weeks ago. I tried to make my scholarship tape last night and I sounded terrible. That was depressing because I spent so much time and energy on that tape and I know I could have done it if I had the time. I've been overloaded with homework and I still have to cook dinner when I get home after a long day of school. [Classroom Journal]

Parents' mixed messages sometimes added stress to students. They encouraged their children to get involved only to realize that as a consequence they spent less time with their families. Several parents
then complained that their teenage children were involved too much. The parents noticed that once they started driving themselves and were able to participate in off-campus activities, their children were gone even more.

Some parents' complaints were chiefly concerned with their children's increased involvement in informal and unofficial activities with peers. Some parents reprimanded their adolescent children for being away so often; others put restrictions on how often they could be gone. An extreme case was "grounding" them against going out at all after school. Sue's parents took the first option. According to Sue, "My parents do not want me to be involved in more things. They said, 'Sue, you're gone too much--gone, gone.'" Sue expressed her confusion: "They're contradicting themselves. They told me to go out and become involved. Now they say I'm involved too much." On top of stress stemming from all the responsibilities that Sue had, her parents' mixed messages put additional pressure on her life.

The social value of getting involved put pressure on many adolescents. They were expected to keep up an active front, although some of them were naturally shy. They were also encouraged to get involved in activities after school, although they might prefer to go home to rest. The young people realized that the more they were involved, the more recognition they were likely to get. At the same time, they became aware that they were limited in time and stamina. In straddling expectations and reality, some adolescents learned to manage to use their time efficiently enough to live up to their ethos of activeness. Yet, many young people experienced stress resulting from
overwhelming social expectations and parents' mixed messages about their activities.

Summary

Shirley's case represented an active adolescent who was recognized as a successful teenager by both adults and her peers. The active involvement that she exemplified was advocated by the school staff and parents, who believed that activeness would promise "success" in the school years and in future. Adults encouraged teenagers to participate in "structured experiences" such as sports, clubs, and organizations in school and community activities. Teenagers got involved in these structured experiences, and they also became active with jobs or informal activities with their peers.

Adolescents were aware of the social value of activeness, noticing that their active peers were winning awards, honors, and scholarships. As they speculated about options for their future lives, they were advised to become engaged in various activities in and outside school. In addition to this future-oriented motivation, adolescents got involved in activities in order to avoid boredom, to make friends and ease into the social network, to have fun, and to gain "name familiarity" among peers. At the same time, those adolescents most caught up in multiple involvements sometimes found themselves trapped between the ethos and reality. They realized that they could not do everything in their limited time and with their limited energy. Some said that they failed to complete their tasks within the limits. Others--often "successful" adolescents--learned to manage their time efficiently, maintaining a
good academic standing as well as getting involved in multiple activities to enhance their social credentials. It appeared that the social expectation of activeness imposed stress on both groups of adolescents.
The activity sheet contained individual students' information on their leadership experiences, honors and awards, and activity participation since their freshman year. All students were encouraged to update this sheet every year and to utilize it upon their application for colleges, scholarships, or jobs. While most students could fit the information on the two sides of the printed form, Shirley typed her information on four pages, because she could not possibly include everything on the form.

She was more than a year older than most of her peers in the junior class. She dropped out of school in her freshman year to take care of her ill mother and went back to school the following year. Then she missed a part of her sophomore year due to her own health problem.
CHAPTER IX

DUALITY OF ADOLESCENT IDEALS

The important dimensions of adolescent ethos identified in the previous chapters—"getting along with everyone," "being independent," and "getting involved"—appear to be rooted in American ideals of egalitarianism, inner-directedness, and competition. In their everyday lives, adolescents display behaviors reflecting these ideals. Yet their actual behavior seems at times to be the very antithesis of these ideals. That is, they also reflect behaviors that can be described by a complementary set of terms—elitism, other-directedness, and cooperation.

In this chapter, I describe adolescent behaviors exhibiting these seemingly contradictory ideals. I argue that instead of adhering to certain ideals consistently, adolescents changed their positions in the continua of dual ideals—egalitarianism/elitism, inner-directedness/other-directedness, and competition/cooperation—depending on the situation. I note that social sanctions from peers kept adolescents from exhibiting behavior representing in extreme forms of the ideals. I portray most Greenfielders as pragmatic negotiators within the duality of the ideals.

Egalitarianism and Elitism

The adolescent ethos of "getting along with everyone" reflects the
ideal of egalitarianism in the sense that adolescents believed in equal
treatment of their peers, regardless of their socio-economic background,
age, and gender. Many adolescents subscribed to this ideal and tried to
live up to it in their lives. This egalitarian ideal was advocated not
only by adolescents but also by the school staff and some community
members. At the same time, adolescent behavior sometimes appeared to
display quite the opposite. They were selective in choosing their close
friends and sometimes explicitly refused to associate with peers of
different circles. The conflicting ideals of egalitarianism and elitism
seemed to interplay without much conflict, as adolescents led everyday
lives.

Egalitarianism

Many Greenfielders made an effort to show general friendliness to
their peers. In relating to peers, many said that they did not
discriminate against peers because of differences in social status, age,
and gender. They also believed that these criteria should not determine
their view of peers.

In the adolescent society, social statuses were often determined by
external factors such as clique affiliation, types and degrees of
involvement in activities, appearance, and academic performance. When
they were asked to identify informal groups in school, many adolescents
used the terms "popular"/"unpopular" and "high"/"middle"/"low" class.
Several acknowledged difficulty in defining "popularity" because it
could mean the extent to which someone is "liked" by his/her peers but
could also mean simply how well a person is "known." The difficulty
increased when they tried to identify popular or unpopular students in the school. They agreed that popular cliques—i.e., well-known groups such as athletes, "brains," "pretty faces" (good-looking and well-dressed females), and "good bodies" (muscular males)—tended to be classified as "high" class. Those classified as "unpopular"—e.g., "smokers" (cigarette smokers, tobacco chewers, and drug users), "scums" (untidy people), and special education students—were regarded as "low" class people. The "middle" class people appeared non-characteristic, including those who were classified as neither high nor low class.

Families' economic background did not always seem to determine adolescents' social statuses. Those from working class families could also be classified favorably with self-earned money, involvement, and academic achievement. How they behaved and appeared seemed to matter more than their family background.

Many adolescents observed that they did not cling to one particular clique or abide strictly by social criteria in judging their peers. They often dismissed the distinctions between "popular" and "unpopular" people or among "low, middle, and high" classes. The egalitarians indicated that these labels were "just concepts" and did not accurately represent the quality of people in each category. They added that popular people might be liked in their own circles of friends but were not equally popular in other groups. Likewise, those who appeared to be unpopular might be very well accepted within their own group of friends. These adolescents, who recognized the relativity of socio-economic status, made a conscious effort to transcend an unequal system by trying to interact with peers from different social classifications.
Marcie, a senior who did not smoke and was academically successful, indicated that she had friends from the smokers' shed and special education classes. She discovered that these friends tended to be more honest and personable than so-called "popular" people. A senior girl who was academically and athletically successful went steady with a boy who "hung out" with smokers and were not interested in school activities. He failed to graduate with his classmates, due to his substandard grades, but their courtship continued after graduation. These girls obviously did not feel restrained by the adolescent social stratification.

Many adolescents indicated that age did not pose problems when they related to their peers. It was not uncommon for students from different classes to "hang out" together. A junior boy who seemed always to be seen with his sophomore friend said that they shared many social activities in and outside school. For three years, a senior girl had cherished a best friend, a girl one year her junior, in spite of the difference in age and class schedules. In her senior year, when she had classes only until fifth period, she waited for two more periods to give her friend a ride home every day. Those students who had older or younger siblings at school were inclined to make friends easily from other classes. Most extracurricular activities also enhanced chances to interact with peers of different ages. In most cases, adolescents neither discriminated against their peers because of age difference nor excluded them from friendship.

Many adolescents expressed the ideal of egalitarianism regarding gender. They opposed treating their peers, or being treated, according
to traditional sex roles. Both boys and girls participated in activities with close circles of friends that often included both sexes. At school dances, they did not seem to mind dancing in a group of mixed-sex friends or with same-sex friends. Sometimes, I observed that mixed group of boys and girls danced together in groups. Two boys came together to the prom dance; girls came with their female friends. These adolescents viewed that going to dance with same-sex friends was an acceptable option and possibly just as fun as accompanying cross-sex dates or even more fun. In dating, adolescents did not necessarily restrict themselves to the traditional social convention that boys invite girls and pay for all expenses. Several girls who invited their dates to homecoming or prom dances told me that either they paid for everything or the couple split the cost.

The young people seemed to take it for granted that boys took "home economics" classes, traditionally known as "girls' classes," and that girls participated in a wood workshop that used to be open to boys. Girls were voted into office as President of the Student Body, of different classes, and of clubs, roles traditionally considered as belonging to males. The principal argued that girls were no longer disadvantaged in elections for leadership positions, that of Student Body President, in particular, which "might have been the case ten years ago."

Athletic ability among girls was respected as much as that of boys. All but a few sports were available to both genders in single-sex teams, e.g., boys' and girls' basketball teams. Two junior girls challenged the district policy that prohibited girls from participating in
wrestling. They appealed to the school board after their request was
denied by school administrators. Even after the final appeal was denied
by the school board, several girls expressed unhappiness with the
"discriminatory" decision. A lively discussion between an administrator
(A) and a few girls (G) took place in a class:

A: The school district promotes equal opportunities for girls and
boys but does not approve co-ed teams for wrestling and football.
G: Why can't girls play with boys?
A: Because of the mixture of body contacts....It is embarrassing to
look at [a girl wrestler pinning a boy down].
G: If there's a team for guys, why not one for girls?
A: There is no place to compete. There are no state wrestling
teams for girls in other schools.
A few girls yelled at him repeatedly, "Discrimination!" [Fieldnotes
1-23-87:1-2]

Several boys agreed that girls should be allowed to participate in
wrestling teams. Two wrestlers mentioned that having girls in their
team would not affect them.

Elitism

While many adolescents advocated the ideal of egalitarianism, their
elitism manifested itself both explicitly and implicitly in other
situations in which personal interest seemed to be at stake. With
respect to social status, several adolescents looked down upon smokers
and often refused to "go out to the shed even to talk with them." They
thought that association with them would affect their social reputation
(see Chapter VI). They also argued that smokers ruined the school image
and the smokers' shed should be eradicated. Smokers formed their own
circle and had a sense of unity. They acknowledged other people's low
opinion of them. Some of them expressed their resentment about "jocks'
unfair treatment" of smokers (see Chapter VI). Several criticized the inequality of the social system and the superficiality of so-called popular people. They were proud of being concerned about world peace and broad social issues, compared to peers who seemed concerned only with grades and reputation. This elitism on both sides sometimes overshadowed egalitarianism among Greenfielders.

When they dealt with freshmen as a group, adolescents were not always egalitarian. Upperclass students viewed freshmen as immature, unruly, dependent, and imprudent. The "freshman hall," where some lockers were located, was considered messy and "lousy" (i.e., full of unfavorable people); upperclass people tried to avoid having their locker assignment in that hall. Despite the principal's preventive warnings at the beginning of one school year, several junior and senior boys executed an "initiation" ritual by dumping some freshmen boys into garbage cans against their will. On a band field trip, a senior girl publicly expressed her elite view against freshmen. Indicating that freshmen in her bus were too loud, she asked passengers on the other bus, "Would you like to trade some freshmen in our bus for your upperclass people? We have too many freshmen."

This stereotype sometimes prevented freshmen from being treated on a fair basis. Some freshmen complained that they were put down with a remark, "What do you know? You're just a freshman." Seniors agreed that such discriminatory treatment took place; freshmen were not taken seriously and were kept out of participating in multiple activities with upperclass peers. Some teenagers mentioned that the social isolation of freshmen could be a consequence of having neither a driver's license nor
car. A senior described the freshmen's limited social life: "Out of school, they (frosh) don't have a car so that they can't really 'go out' or 'cruise.'" It meant that freshmen needed either to depend on upperclass peers who had cars or did not get involved in these types of activities.

In some circumstances, many adolescents behaved as if the gender difference did not matter in peer interaction. When their interest seemed to be influenced by the ideal of egalitarianism, young people switched their position from egalitarian to elite. A few male students complained that some teachers gave favorable treatment, e.g., grades, to female students. I also observed adolescent preferences toward same-sex friends as their best friends. Apparently, gender seemed to matter in forming close friendships. Teenagers who called their cross-sex friends "best friends" often referred to their romantic relationships. It was usual for many adolescents to cluster with a group of same-sex peers in the lunchroom, in classrooms, and for assemblies. Grant and Sleeter (1986) suggested that they found the same phenomenon of grouping by sex in a junior high school: "The students segregated by sex in school whenever given the opportunity to decide where to sit or with whom to work" (p.48).

Despite their efforts to transcend the traditional sex roles, many adolescents' way of thinking was still influenced by the traditional sex symbols: the pretty, slender, blonde, well-dressed "cheerleader" type for popular girls; the handsome, muscular, athletic, "real stud" image for popular boys. Many adolescents judged their cross-sex peers on the basis of these criteria. The female sex symbols seemed to be exhibited
to a certain extent in the homecoming and prom courts, both regarded as "beauty contests" for females. Girls' League (an organization that included all female students as members and held mainly social functions exclusively for them) was also a symbolic patronage of females, whereas no equivalent organization existed for male adolescents.

Both male and female students seemed to take for granted the socially established male "superiority" in employment and mobility patterns. Males were generally employed for better paying and more physical jobs than females (see Chapter VII). According to the results of the senior survey, 15 percent more boys had a driver's license than girls; 23 percent more boys had a car of their own; and 24 percent more boys drove a car to school. To the extent that the privilege of driving and the amount of spending money symbolized power (i.e., mobility and independence), male adolescents were able to exhibit more power than their female counterparts. Many male adolescents drove their girlfriends home or to activities and paid expenses for both, which made the girls dependent on their boyfriends. Some girls seemed to favor boyfriends' dominance represented by an automobile and a "thick" wallet.

Parents' double standards also perpetuated male elitism. They often imposed a "curfew" on their daughters but rarely on their sons, and they generally regulated girls' social life outside home more than boys. This unequal treatment differentiated between boys and girls in terms of the independence that adolescents coveted.

**Inner-Directedness and Other-Directedness**

The adolescent ethos of "being independent" was reflected in the
ideal of inner-directedness. The "inner-directed" character belongs to people "who listen to their own 'inner voice' for guidance" (Riesman, quoted in Bock 1980:122). Those with an inner-directed character resist dependence upon external authority. The concept of adolescents' independence implied that they preferred taking charge of their own lives, becoming independent of adult authority figures, and relying on their own judgments. Adolescents did not seem always to be listening to the "inner voice" of self, however. Sometimes they found themselves following "others' voices" (i.e., conforming to group norms) in certain circumstances. According to Riesman, an other-directed character can be found in people "whose tastes and decisions are determined by what they think others value" (p.122). These groups norms might be established by a group consensus or by a limited group of authorities.

Inner-Directedness

Self-reliance was emphasized by parents and the school staff. They advised teenagers to stand firmly by their individual conscience instead of being swayed by peer pressure, especially when the teenagers were in situations in which "wrong" behaviors were occurring. A few parents in the Green Lake community had been "fighting" against teenage "problems," e.g., drug and alcohol abuse, and teen pregnancy. They focused on the issues of self-assurance, independence, and self-esteem. They thought that the act of listening to their "inner voice" would help teenagers make "right choices."

Greenfield adolescents advocated the ideal of inner-directedness in their own way. Many of them expressed an interest in gaining
independence from adult authorities and running their lives by themselves, instead of listening to what other people told them to do. They believed that individual freedom came when they could make decisions on the basis of their own thoughts. When their individual freedom seemed to be restricted, they felt resentful and they argued with adults.

Deanna, a freshman, told me that she became bitter toward her mother and her mother's live-in boyfriend because she was frequently "grounded." She said she was constantly told "what to do and what not to do" around the house. When she violated their imposition of rules, she could not go out after school or use the telephone, and household chores might be doubled. She acted on what seemed to be the only way to regain her individual freedom by moving out of the house. When she left, she felt that she made decisions on the basis of what she believed to be right for her and not on what others decided for her.

Some adolescents expressed inner-directedness by resisting group norms of acceptable dress, hairdos, or mannerisms. Lauri dressed all in black and had dyed her hair black. She said, "I'm different. I don't want to be conformist....I try to change the attitude here, to think it's OK to be different." To her, being an individual was equivalent to doing things that most of her peers did not typically do. Ginny, a junior who held a student leadership position, pierced her nose and wore a diamond in her nose, which shocked many school staff as well as her peers. Craig had his long hair dyed black and wore a cowboy scarf on his head; he also dressed in a "sloppy" baggy shirt, a pair of pants, and a pair of high-topped checked shoes. Brian received thunderous
applause when he gave a rather "unusual" campaign speech for a position in the student government, mimicking President Reagan's voice. For Lauri, Jinny, Craig, and Brian, their non-conforming appearances and behaviors were a form of self-expression and an indication of listening to "inner voices." Some of their peers approved of their individuality, saying that they liked their "different" and "unique" appearance and behavior.

At the junior/senior prom, I also observed the adolescent expression of inner-directedness. Almost all the boys were dressed in tuxedos; girls wore formal floor-length or knee-length dresses, color-coordinated pumps, and corsages. Within the first hour, several boys took off their jackets, hung loosened bow ties around their necks, and loosened their cummerbunds. Two of them changed their long trousers into shorts with the formal jackets. Many girls took off their pumps and corsages. Some adults wondered why the young people paid so much money to rent tuxedos and to color-coordinate their clothing and yet not to take advantage of its full function, i.e., to dress formally. Adolescents rationalized their acts, saying that the formals were uncomfortable and the hall got warm. Obviously, they did not care what other people thought about them. They were more interested in comfort and convenience than in the acceptable norm of why and how to wear the formal attire. It did not raise the eyebrows of their peers. Such behavior was apparently accepted by adolescents as their expression of individuality. A certain degree of inner-directedness was also respected as a sign of self-confidence.
Other-Directedness

In general, adolescents preferred more inner-directedness as relating to adults. Interacting with their peers, however, they followed group norms and sought an approval from peers. This other-directedness drove many adolescents into being subject to peer pressure, whether or not they wanted to or they acknowledged it.

Peer pressure sometimes enhanced collective interest in a sense of unity. For example, school spirit (pride in the school) seemed to be strengthened by social pressure imposed by zealous students and a few student leaders. They asked their peers to wear school colors on game days. Cheerleaders coaxed their peers actively to root for their teams during athletic events. Adolescents thought that school spirit could also be proven by their active participation in school activities. During homecoming week, referred to as "Spirit Week," students were encouraged to dress up for each day's theme to "show their school spirit." It was not mandatory to wear costumes, however, students who did not seem to join the homecoming mood were subtly pressed with the question, "Where is your spirit?"

Adolescents found themselves joining—perhaps, unconsciously—a crowd complaining about school lunch and school dance music. Some may argue that this sort of complaining is typically American: as Bock has noted, "Since respect and awe are highly painful emotions for most Americans, debunking leaders and institutions is a favorite pastime" (1980:120). I suggest that adolescents' complaining about school lunch and dance music is more than a favorite pastime. It seems to me an
expression of their other-directed inclination. I observed a few times that they did not really mean to express their dislike; rather, they could not speak out their "real" opinions against "what they think others value."

One day, I sat with three freshmen in the lunchroom. Pam selected a taco salad, Angela a hamburger and french fries, and Karen a piece of cake. The following conversation took place at the lunch table:

   Angela: (to Pam) How can you eat the taco salad?
Pam: No choice. It's yucky.
Karen: I hate school lunch.
Angela: What's tomorrow's lunch?
Pam: Spaghetti.
Angela: Spaghetti is basically ketchup with water, lots of water.
Pam: I guess I have to pack lunch tomorrow. [Fieldnotes 9-8-87:6]

Pam did not actually mean that her taco salad was "yucky" (I personally thought the salad was good); she finished the large salad. She also did not pack her own lunch the next day but bought spaghetti at the school cafeteria. In the situation in which her friends Angela and Karen put down the food, Pam could not say that she liked it; it was considered "stupid" to talk positively about the school lunch.

I heard many teenagers whine about the quality of the food: "This pizza is a dirty carpet," and "This hamburger tastes like plastic."

Ironically, pizza and hamburger were the best sold items, and many adolescents who would not otherwise eat school lunch bought pizza. Finishing food on a tray was atypical among adolescents and much food was wasted. They did not have to take what they did not want. Yet, many adolescents did not even finish what they chose and threw away what was unfinished. Complaining and throwing away the school lunch seemed
to be a fad created by peer pressure.

In the similar way, I heard many teenagers complain about music at school dances. When I asked students why they were not dancing, they often responded that the music was not good. Some students who were leaving early gave me the same answer. As I often observed, however, the real answer had little to do with the quality of music. They did not dance because their friends did not dance. The adolescents left the dance early because their friends left. Some who departed earlier said they would have liked to stay at the dance longer. In both situations in which they criticized school lunch and dance music, adolescents did not seem to recognize that their behavior was controlled by peer pressure. I suspected that perhaps they did not want to acknowledge their other-directedness because it would hurt their pride in being independent. By criticizing others, they might have felt they were making judgments on their own.

Many Greenfielders conformed to the collective standards of acceptable fashion among adolescents. Greenfielders' fashion styles seemed to depend on the regional trends rather than the high fashion of leading magazines. Those who exceeded these local norms in favor of high fashion were criticized for being too radical. By contrast, those whose attire was substandard received comments like, "She looks stupid" or "He looks like a scum."

In a choir class, some girls expressed their unifying opinion about the proper way of being dressed in girls' choir class. The choir had entered an off-campus competition, and everyone was to wear any kind of white blouse with a colored bow tie and a black skirt for the event. In
the next class after the competition, the music teacher read some of the comments made by participants from other high schools. Several comments suggested that girls should have tucked their blouses into their skirts, which would "look tidier." Girls immediately gave a sharp retort, "It's stupid to tuck in a shirt." Actually, most girls and boys in Greenfield did not tuck their shirts under skirts or pants.

In order to conform to group norms, many adolescents spent a considerable amount of money to buy the "right" kind of clothes, jewelry, car accessories, and music records. Peer pressure also forced adolescents into a certain pattern of social life. When a circle of friends drank alcohol at a party, individuals were expected to drink or, at least, not to spoil the mood for those who were drinking. If someone speaks out against minor drinking, s/he is most likely to be ostracized. Karen was no longer invited to her friends' private parties where drinking alcohol usually took place, because her friends knew of her disapproval of drinking.

Competition and Cooperation

The ethos of "getting involved" often provoked competition among adolescents. Some activities were, by nature, competitive. Limited opportunities of certain activities also forced adolescents into a competitive mood. In areas such as sports, elections, grades, and contests, competitive spirit was legitimately endorsed. Adolescents also competed with each other in friendship and courtship, which was not regarded as desirable. While they were competing in a group, adolescents cooperated with each other within the group. Adolescents
adopted the contrary ideals, i.e., competition and cooperation, in
dealing with their human relationships, depending upon situations.

"A Jungle of Competition"

Many adolescents perceived that competition was far more pervasive
in their world than cooperation. A junior girl described her world in
this way:

Our school is a "jungle of competition." There are people who
compete in sports like football, volleyball, basketball, track,
etc. Those people compete for what team they're going to be on,
freshman, J.V., or Varsity. Those people also compete who's going
to be the best on the team. Then there's competing about who gets
better grades than so-n-so. There's also competing in who gets the
guy or girl to ask them out first and that usually means fighting
between friends. [Classroom Journal]

She indicated two types of competition. One type was legitimately
accepted and explicitly encouraged by peers and adults, including both
individual and group competition, e.g., intramural athletic games,
on-campus group contests, elections, grades, and award nominations. The
other type generally involved competition between friends and was not
considered undesirable.

In sports, Greenfielders competed with other schools for the better
school record, with teammates for playing time or better positions, and
with themselves for better personal performance. In these cases, it was
perfectly acceptable to show explicit concern about scores or records.
Coaches, peers, community members, and media paid close attention to the
results. The sense of rivalry with other schools was also accepted, and
even encouraged. The stronger they expressed "hatred" toward their
rivals, the more school spirit they appeared to have.
In addition to sports, many clubs and organizations participated in off-campus competitions. The rally squad usually entered up to five competitions and the dance team competed a few times each school year. Members of the Future Business Leaders of America competed in various categories of business skills at a community college annual competition. Vocational classes such as auto-mechanics, metal-working, wood-working, and home economics participated in annual skill competitions in respective areas. Some faculty advisors said that the purpose of these frequent competitions was to give adolescents motivation to perform their best in these areas. When students finished the competitions with good records, the participants as well as the student body said they felt proud of their school.

In school, group competition was incorporated into school activities in either an organized or spontaneous format. For instance, during the spirit week of homecoming, classes competed with each other to prove their class spirit and, in turn, school spirit. Members of each class encouraged their classmates to dress up for each day's theme; competed with other classes in the events of the Spirit Olympics (e.g., a tug-of-war, a pie eating contest, an apple passing contest); and designed a class float.

The spirit of competition was also stimulated in classrooms. Mr. Lewis divided his class into five groups and gave each group a worksheet every day; students solved the problems on the sheet together. The group that accumulated the most points for a week was treated to pizza by the teacher. This type of group competition for a prize was widely utilized in school to improve performance. When a teacher-parent
conference was approaching, the school administrators announced that the homeroom that brought the most parents to the conference would win pizzas. Before the Christmas break, the media center (library) staff held a Christmas tree decoration contest among student aides. The aides from each period (two to three people) decorated a cardboard tree, and the best entry won ice cream sundaes as a prize. These competitions put groups in a situation of comparing their performance with others, and possibly trying to upgrade their results.

In addition to group competition, the ethos of getting involved created competition among individuals. The ideal of activeness pushed adolescents to get involved in more activities and to perform better in their activities. They were driven to participate in activities, to win leadership positions, and to receive awards. This recognition did not come automatically; rather, it was considered to be the result of hard work and competition. Students were encouraged to enter essay contests and award competitions and their successful outcome was usually mentioned in the school and local newspapers. The following announcement was carried in the school Daily Bulletin issued by the office:

**VETERANS DAY ESSAY CONTEST:** Write an one-page essay on what Veterans' Day means to you. All papers must be in to Mr. Carmen by November 5th. The 1st place winner will receive a $6.00 certificate for the Student Store. Second will receive a $4.00 gift certificate and third place a $2.00 certificate. In addition, all winners will read their papers to the student body during the November 10th assembly. [Daily Bulletin 10-29-88]

The result of the contest was reported in the school newspaper as follows:

Elizabeth Johnson, a senior, was honored during the Veteran's Day
assembly with a certificate for winning the essay competition. She read her essay "What Veteran's Day Means to Me" during the assembly. [School Newspaper]

This contest was not particularly effective in creating a major spirit of competition at Greenfield High School.²

Some adolescents, however, said that they lost sleep over other competitions for awards. Maria wrote in her journal entries about her fretful waiting to hear about the final decision on the recipient of a service/leadership award. Her family asked her every day if the decision was made yet at school and reminded her of their high anticipation. She also thought that she was better qualified for the award than the other nominee, who happened to be her good friend. Her competitive zeal led to a let-down when the decision was made in favor of her "opponent."

Karrie seriously hoped to be nominated for a major scholarship for her college education. Her well-to-do parents advised her to try her best to get scholarship monies before they would help her financially. The school staff nominated Kim instead, a senior girl who lived alone and needed any kind of financial assistance for her college education. Karrie bitterly remarked that they nominated Kim "just because she is Student Body President."

The election of student leaders is another example of organized individual competition. In May, Greenfielders elected student officers of the Associated Student Body and of each class. The election process began when students were nominated for the position by the student government or by a certain number of signatures from students. Then, the nominees appointed campaign crews to help with campaigning and
putting up posters. The campaign activities were usually straightforward presentations of candidates. Some candidates overtly expressed their spirit of competition. A poster carried a belittling slogan that described an opponent who dressed in high fashion as a queen bee: "If you want a worker instead of a queen bee, cast your ballot and vote for Kim, ASB President."

In addition to the elections, choir audition and the tryouts for the rally squad and the dance team also posed fierce competition among the Greenfielders, because these activities were favored and opportunities were limited. For instance, the rally tryout for the coming year's squad took place on a May day after school. Seven returning cheerleaders and 11 new auditioners tried out together for a new squad of eight members. To prepare for the tryout, the advisor strongly suggested that old members form groups and practice with the newcomers. However, the old members protested this was unfair treatment, since the uneven skill levels could hamper their performance and give an unfavorable impression to judges. They wanted to keep their positions secure; thus, most of them stuck together in their own groups. In the tryout, in which two out of three judges did not have previous knowledge about the present cheerleaders, all seven old members were chosen, with one new member.

While all the group and individual competitions mentioned above were explicitly encouraged by the staff and adolescents themselves, some forms of competition were discouraged but subtly manifested in adolescent everyday life. A subtle competition with a tint of jealousy was created between friends, even between good friends. The competition
was usually over friendship, courtship, and other public recognition. Competing for same-sex or cross-sex friends is quite common among adolescents. The sense of competition enters, when a new member is introduced into the established relationships. As described in Chapter I, Marylinn had a circle of close friends. When she introduced her boyfriend, Brandt, to this group, he comfortably fit in. Soon Linda, her good friend, became interested in him. Marylinn felt competition with Linda over Brandt. When Marylinn broke up with him within a month, she found herself in the position of competing with Brandt to gain her original friends back.

Peter liked Yvonne for a year but Yvonne did not respond to his interest. She began going out with Jim, Peter's best friend, which upset Peter a great deal. Peter sometimes was included in the couple's activities but felt that he was "tagging along" with them. Whenever problems arose between them, Jim came to Peter for advice. When their courtship broke up, Yvonne and her female friends who were aware of Peter's feelings suspected that he "spoke ill of" her out of jealousy and was partly responsible for the breakup.

Ruth was scheduled to sing a solo with the choir in an intramural competition. However, before the competition, she lost her voice and was replaced by Sarah. Her substitute performed well and was assigned to continue the role on other occasions. Ruth used to sing with Sarah in a trio; this change, however, turned the cooperative mood between them into a competitive one. She did not overtly express her resentment about being replaced by Sarah, but found herself dissociating from her.

Marylinn, Peter, and Ruth felt that they became either voluntarily
or forcibly involved in competition with their friends. They were aware that competition between friends was not condoned. In most cases where competition was not condoned, teenagers did not openly express their feelings against their "opponents."

"An Ocean of Cooperation"

Even though competition prevailed in many aspects of adolescent lives, many young people believed that cooperation should be more strongly emphasized. The following journal entry shows yearning for cooperation but pessimism regarding its realization:

A jungle of competition seems to fit our world the best....I think that the world should be an "ocean of cooperation" but it's not. I don't think that it ever will be either. [Classroom Journal]

Despite many teenagers' complaints of extreme competitiveness in their lives, cooperation also took place in their everyday lives. Ironically, cooperation often resulted from competition, i.e., group competition. In this case, cooperation refers to unifying efforts within a group. Most competition between groups mentioned above turned into cooperative situations for group members. When adolescents competed against other schools, groups, or classes, they worked together with their teammates and built camaraderie.

The cheerleaders supported the idea of building up relationships through competition. Together with their advisor, they admitted that they argued a lot with each other about cheer routines. Since they choreographed themselves, members suggested certain movements and there was always someone who disagreed with the suggestions at every practice. Some said that the non-cooperation came from competition among members:
"Everyone thinks she is the best and knows the most" and thus they did not give in to others' ideas.

However, they witnessed that the dynamics among the members generally improved during off-campus competitions. Then, they said that they talked over problems and tried to solve them together. When I visited the rally squad at a summer camp where over 50 teams were attending learning new routines and competing with each other, cheerleaders told me that they were having the best relationship with each other ever. I believed that their congenial relationship was attributed to the competitive external environment. The conduct as well as performance of each team were constantly watched and scored. They had to make up routines and perform them every day, on the basis of which groups were evaluated. This competition put pressure on them but also forced them to cooperate with each other.

Some adolescents cooperated with peers when they shared responsibility for a common project such the school newspaper or a yearbook. Members of journalism and yearbook classes often had a division of labor to cover multiple tasks efficiently. Sometimes these tasks could be done concurrently, but at other times one task could not be undertaken properly until others were completed.

The former refers to a case in which more than one student was assigned to one job. For instance, Greenfield photographers developed pictures by themselves in the school darkroom equipped with four enlargers. Working together in a darkroom required cooperation because even the light from an enlarger could damage others' developing papers. Therefore, before they shot a flash of light through a negative onto a
paper, they informed others not to open the black box of developing papers. Then, when they moved to chemical trays, they often had to wait patiently until the person ahead of them finished. Cooperation was imperative in this situation.

The latter case also demanded cooperation among members. If a photographer did not cover an athletic event, a reporter's effort to write an article on the game was most likely to go in vain. Until pages were properly laid out in the journalism class, they could not be sent to a printer. Students became aware of the importance of cooperation in completing their individual tasks and in meeting deadlines for the group's sake.

Peer cooperation was also observed when seat work or homework was assigned. Sometimes, the seat work required cooperative efforts, e.g., a group presentation of the daily news in Political Process class, writing a paper in a group in an English class, and a "trivial pursuit" contest between groups in Resource Room classes. Adolescents also helped each other with individual projects. When given problems to solve in a math class, students immediately formed groups and worked together. This natural grouping for seat work was common during classes. Sometimes it created not only a cooperative mood but what might have been termed "cheating." Some students allowed their friends to copy all of their work during the "working together" sessions.

In other cases, adolescents volunteered to help with friends' projects despite the fact that their final results would be compared with each other. For example, Brian and Rick were eager to help their classmates with a biology project. The project was to find a dead
animal, remove its tissues by natural decomposition or boiling, retrieve the bones, and reassemble them. Brian and Rick picked up a few dead animals along highways for their classmates and helped them with the "most yucky" process, i.e., removing tissues.

Pragmatic Negotiators Within the Duality of Ideals

Greenfielders' behaviors reflected three pairs of seemingly contradictory ideals, i.e., egalitarianism and elitism, inner-directedness and other-directedness, and competition and cooperation. Conceptually, ideals of each pair were mutually exclusive. In the lives of adolescents, however, these ideals functioned as harmonious compliments rather than six separate concepts. The following questions arise: "Did young people try equally to live up to all of the ideals?" and "How did they resolve the internal paradox between the contrary ideals?"

My observations led me to believe that they adopted these ideals depending on situations. The ideals of egalitarianism, inner-directedness, and competition reflected the ethos that oriented adolescents' lives. At the same time, adolescents realized that consistent adherence to these ideals was not always possible in their everyday lives. In some situations, their behaviors exhibited the opposite ideals, i.e., elitism, other-directedness, and cooperation. Most adolescents neither observed these ideals in the extreme nor advocated faithfully following any of them. Social sanctions--e.g., criticism, rumors, peer pressure, negative labels, and social exclusions--seemed to function as counter-forces that discouraged
adolescents from conforming "too much" to one side of the dual ideals.

First, some adolescents who behaved like "pure" egalitarians had been criticized for being idealists. This label could cost them privileges in their social lives. The adolescents who transcended the age barrier for friendship ran the risk of being severed from interactions with their own classmates. The interactions with one's own classmates could become critically important at various times, in particular during their own class functions. Those who acted out their ideal of egalitarianism regarding gender also experienced their share of frustration. In the teenage society where courtship was glorified, the image of the "liberated" deprived some teenagers of the pleasure of being treated like males or females. They complained that their peers were not interested in them as potential boy/girlfriends. In addition, when teenagers tried to be equally friendly to people of different socio-economic backgrounds, their friendliness was suspected of being "fake." Also, the people who denounced discrimination against the "low" class people and criticized elitists were accused of acting self-righteous.

Extreme elitism was also criticized. When upperclass people mistreated lowerclass students, the older ones were accused of being unfair and arrogant. People who adopted traditional sex roles were called sexists. Boys and girls alike who discriminated against peers on the basis of their social status were criticized for being "stuck-up."

Second, criticism was leveled for being too inner-directed or too other-directed. Those who dressed or acted too differently from others were regarded as strange and weird. They were likely to be avoided by
peers. The following complaint was made by Cindy, who dressed like a "punk": "Teachers ignore me because I'm different." A sophomore boy also experienced subtle rejection from his peers due to his expression of individuality:

[People think] because my hair is long, I am into drugs. I am strongly against drugs. I am still a great basketball player. A lot of people also think I gave that up just because I have long hair." [Classroom Journal]

In both cases, too much inner-directedness invited unwelcomed treatment from peers and the staff. This social and emotional alienation often functioned as powerful sanction against the extreme individualistic behaviors.

As much as the noticeable deviation from the group norm was discouraged, extreme other-directedness—i.e., blind obedience to group norms—was also disapproved. For instance, people who seemed to follow group norms all the time were criticized for being too conforming, or were called "air-head" (referring to those who lack intelligence and individual opinions).

Third and finally, regarding competition and cooperation, adolescents responded negatively to those who showed too much competition or cooperation. On the one hand, teenagers who became very competitive toward their peers were criticized for being self-centered and hard-headed. Those who were too self-conscious about their performances in school activities also gave an impression of being tense, not-fun-to-be-around, or selfish. They tended to have poor reputations and were most likely to be shunned by their peers.

On the other hand, adolescents that seemed too cooperative were
discouraged by negative labels such as "brown-noser," "goody-goody," or "wishy-washy." In this case, cooperative behaviors referred to subservient as well as compromising behaviors. Teenagers who appeared to agree with adults readily or be open to various opinions could be subject to these unfavorable reputations.

Young people realized that an unswerving and exaggerating adherence to these ideals would hurt their social life. In adolescent society in which individuals' social acceptance among their peers was critical in leading an enjoyable life, most would not risk jeopardizing their social lives by violating social rules. Consequently, most Greenfielders tried to avoid consistently observing one ideal over the other. Rather, they seemed to shift their positions between dual ideals. In the continua of egalitarianism/elitism, inner-directedness/other-directedness, and competition/cooperation, many Greenfielders steered a moderate course, leaning toward one pole in some situations and toward the opposite in other situations.

Successful "actors" in the adolescent society were successful negotiators between the contrasting ideals. They were able to pick appropriate ideals for situations and to behave accordingly. Those who compromised a moderate route with flexibility were more likely to evade criticism from peers and to be classified as "popular." This pragmatic ability to compromise was viewed as an indicator of their social adequacy. Most "average" adolescents preferred an opportunistic adjustment to individual situations rather than a more consistent commitment to certain ideals. These adolescent social dynamics seemed to produce a "middle-of-the-road" mentality and to discourage young
people from consistently living up to ideals. Only a few of them appeared to commit themselves to being "idealists," which was not favored among adolescents.
Notes

1Daily Bulletin was a memo issued by the central office at the high school every morning. It contained announcements of upcoming events of that day or the next day, the lunch menu of that day, or recipients of the Chance Award.

2Elizabeth secretly told me later that no essays seemed to have been turned in and a staff member asked her to write one.

3Contestants tried out in groups of two to four people, which enabled them to build a pyramid. Points were given on the basis of individual performance rather than group performance.
PART III

DOING ETHNOGRAPHY
CHAPTER X

DOING FIELDWORK

This ethnography is based on a year of fieldwork conducted in Greenfield High School and the Green Lake community in Oregon. In this chapter, I describe the procedural dimension of the ethnographic research including four steps: selecting a site, gaining entry among adolescents and maintaining rapport, collecting and recording cultural materials, and analyzing data and interpreting cultural meanings.

Selecting a School and Its Community

In order to pursue my interest in American adolescents for dissertation research, I looked for a small senior high school and its community in Oregon that were willing to tolerate the relatively long-term presence of a quiet "intruder," an ethnographer. Two criteria were considered in this searching process: a manageable sized school of less than 500 students and a location in a small rural to semi-rural community. My preference for a small school was based on the idea that I might be able to make close contact with a majority of students. I also preferred a rural location because I wanted to experience a "traditional" way of doing fieldwork. Traditionally, anthropological fieldwork has been conducted in societies where natives live in cohesive communities and share a culture. I viewed high school adolescents as natives of a culture that was formed within social boundaries of a
school and, in turn, was embedded in a local community.

A few school districts with those characteristics were contacted but my efforts to gain entry ended in vain. The emergence of Greenfield High School, a desirable alternative, finally turned my frustration into euphoria. The high school was a slight variant from the original criteria, in that its enrollment exceeded 500 students and its surrounding community encompassed more than one rural town. The greater community, equivalent to Green Lake School District, included a small city and three rural to semi-rural towns (see Chapter II). In spite of the size, the community was often united by its high school activities. Therefore, I settled with this community and Greenfield High School.

In mid-December of 1986, I visited Mr. Smith, then principal of Greenfield High School, for an initial contact. My research proposal was warmly received at this level by the administrative "gate keeper." I described my study as an ethnographic endeavor of a foreigner to learn about American youth culture. I proposed to participate in normal student life during fieldwork from January to December, 1987. After listening to my brief account of research methods and timeline, the principal told me that he could imagine my presence at the school as one of the foreign exchange students. Both of us agreed that my appearance (Asian features and young-looking for my age) was credible for a foreign high school exchange student which would help me gain access to teenagers and maintain rapport with them.

My ethical preference, however, was to introduce myself as a researcher rather than a foreign exchange student. I was glad that I revealed my true identity from the beginning. If I had taken the
seemingly "easy" way, I would have not only been unethical but also encountered technical difficulties, such as making up a train of lies and confining myself to school activities all the time like other students.

Without further probing, the principal approved my long-term presence as an ethnographer in his school. He added:

You found the right community for your study because it's a melting pot of kids from professional families...hippies...lumber mill workers...farmers....It's like a big family. But there's such a diversity....This community is a microcosm of American culture. [Field Journal 12-16-86]

The next step was to seek permission from the superintendent, the next superior in the school hierarchy. My proposed role as a student-like adult puzzled him because it did not fit the typical structure of an educational institution. In his legalistic frame of reference, a school environment consisted of two constituents: staff (liable adults) and students (legal minors). The superintendent was concerned about my undefined and rather unfamiliar status in between the two groups of constituents. I assured him that the in-between status would allow me to gain entry among adolescents and maintain objectivity by "detaching" myself from the young people to a certain degree. I was finally granted entry to Greenfield High School after one more serious discussion with him.

Gaining Entry Among Adolescents and Maintaining Rapport

The morning after the final approval from the superintendent, I stood in front of a mirror contemplating what to wear to school. I was supposed to be introduced in a faculty meeting that morning and then be
left on my own in the midst of students. My field journal entry that
day described my ambivalence in choosing my primary identification in
the school:

I spent more than 15 minutes in the morning [which is long for me],
deciding what to wear. I didn't want to overdress for students
[because I wanted to look like them] nor underdress for faculty
[because I wanted to be treated professionally]. I first chose a
pair of dressy pants and a V-necked sweater with a matching blouse.
I thought wearing pants wouldn't make me look too formal to
students but the kind and shape of the trousers might be formal
enough for teachers. But at the last minute, I decided to choose
more of a teenage-like attire. I changed the dressy pants to jeans
and pumps to sport shoes. Now, I looked like a high school kid.
Especially in a ski jacket! [Field Journal 1-8-87]

Who could have guessed that this incident was the first indicator of
internal battles that I was going to experience thereafter in choosing
between my association with adults and with adolescents? As the first
battle ended in favor of the latter, I often found myself make similar
decisions throughout my fieldwork.

After the initial meeting with school administrators, I began
"hanging out" among adolescents in and out of school. I placed myself
where students were supposed to be: e.g., classrooms, student lunchroom,
student restrooms, student parking lot, halls, school dances, sports
events, fast-food stores, a shopping mall, local churches, and at teen
activities in the community. As an Asian-looking newcomer, I was
readily recognizable in the predominantly white student population and
among students who knew each other well. During the first few months of
my fieldwork, several students asked me if I were a new student, a
senior, or a foreign exchange student.

In a health class, Tom, a sophomore, sitting two rows in front of
me sent me a written note asking, "What school year are you in?" I
answered, "I'm going to the University of Oregon as a graduate student. Here in Greenfield High School, I attend all levels of classes—one for freshmen, one for sophomores, and one for juniors and seniors." I passed the note back to him with my answer. He sent the note back with another question, "How old are you?
..." Surprised at my answer, he responded, "You look about 15-16 years old." This note exchange went back and forth two more times during the class. I was concerned about the teacher's possible annoyance from this minor "disruption," but I found myself enjoying a feeling of acceptance and the thrill of sharing clandestine actions with the teenager.

I took this way of showing curiosity as a sign of acceptance, but I was soon disappointed at the lack of similar approaches by other students. My disappointment level was high because my professional ego was boosted by several scholars' and other adults who indicated that teenagers would be delighted to become a part of the research. I noticed that those less established, such as new students, were most likely to approach me first and seemed to be readily accepting of other newcomers.

Agar (1980) coined the term, "professional stranger-handlers," to refer to the first people who approached him when he began fieldwork. According to him, these professional stranger-handlers, often "deviants," approach strangers first to scrutinize the strangers' identity. In my case, one of the first approaches was made by Holly, a junior, who transferred to this school four months before my study began. She was a year older than most of her classmates because she had been out of school two times (see Chapter VIII). A sophomore who had
transferred from a local Christian school also approached me early.

My initial contacts were not, however, limited to the less integrated students. Tom was active in the rally squad and played football while keeping his grades above a "B" average. Basketball players and a cheerleader also approached me first at the beginning of my study. Therefore, the people who initiated contact with me first were not necessarily "deviants"—marginals of a society. In my case, they were rather far from those who were emically (i.e. from an insider's view) defined as marginals, namely those who frequented the "smokers' shed" (see Chapter VI). As a matter of fact, I got to know smokers only later in my study.

Staff cooperation smoothed my role transition into that of a student. I was allowed to purchase school lunches with student tickets. I also was assigned a hall locker and a gym locker. An English teacher included me in class activities with other students. I was given a biology test to take when I happened to observe the class on an exam day. On a day when electricity went out in school and students congregated in the hall, the teachers present did not allow me to leave the area, just like the other students.

The young people observed me participating "on their side" in activities. From time to time, they rewarded my "stepping-down" approach with personal invitations: some called me to sit next to them in classes or school events, which often yielded a "gold mine" of information, or they included me in family or social activities. Tanya, a sophomore, invited me to her home for several weekends to teach me how to sew. Sewing was her hobby and, at the same time, an economical way
of being well-dressed. Charlie, a junior, invited me to observe a
"skateboard session" (see Chapter VIII). Numerous home visits were made
upon the adolescents' invitation. Sometimes I was introduced to their
parents or guardians and became involved in conversation with adults
but, other times, the students kept me to themselves. As time went by,
I offered rides to some students, and others felt comfortable asking me
for rides home or to go shopping. The car itself created a private
space where I could talk with them, i.e., interviewing the students
(Spindler and Spindler also experienced the advantage of using their
automobile for conducting "private" interviews, 1986). As my novelty
among insiders waned, my feeling of familiarity waxed with the
teenagers, the school, and the community.

By the end of the fieldwork, I was able to recognize most of the
seniors and a majority of the student body by both face and name.
Unfortunately, I was not able to talk to everyone at least once as I
first expected. Five hundred students were still too many to do an
intimate ethnography.

Collecting and Recording Data

Participant Observation and
Ethnographic Interviews

I collected most cultural data through two main methods:
participant observation and ethnographic interviews. I observed the
adolescents' lives in classrooms, on the school grounds, at home, and in
the community, focusing on the non-instructional, informal aspects of
their activities. I did not confine my study to the school boundaries
but I spent the majority of my time interacting with adolescents in school-related activities. During the observations, I employed different levels of participation ranging from "passive" to "moderate" to "active" one (Spradley 1980:59-61). At athletic games, for instance, I mostly observed adolescent behavior, with little participation on my part. In classrooms, I mainly observed the students but sometimes participated in class activities. In adolescent social functions where I was less afraid of interrupting their normal lives, I actively joined their activities. For instance, I participated in school dances with them.

For the first few weeks, I regularly attended four to seven classes a day. Returning to the same classes helped me develop friendships with some of the students. Later in my fieldwork, I made an effort to sit in different classes, at least once, in order to observe as many of them as possible. In most classes, I was moderately involved: I listened to lectures, took some notes, and participated in some class activities; I neither engaged in class discussions nor did homework.

During lunch time, I bought a school lunch at the student cafeteria, ate my brown-bag lunch with students in the hall, went out to a fast-food store, participated in intramural sports, joined a student Bible study, or just walked around the campus like other students. I often participated in students' lives actively during lunch because this time represented the most relaxing and least restricted hour for most students during school. Some formal interviews were done during lunch time.

After school or on weekends, I observed and participated in
students' lives outside of school: I visited their homes; watched athletic games; worshipped at local churches; and participated in school functions such as dances, rally and music competitions off campus, and field trips. I also attended meetings or events in the community and I interviewed local citizens when I was not engaged in adolescent activities. I was a privileged observer and, at the same time, a passive participant at formal meetings. On most informal occasions, however, I felt comfortable playing the role of a moderate or active participant.

Participant observation was often accompanied by informal and formal ethnographic interviews. The informal interviews mainly refer to informal conversations with adults as well as adolescents. Whenever I had opportunities to meet adolescents, I asked many questions to learn details about their lives in and outside school. The formal interviews were held when the time and place of the interviews were prearranged, and sometimes informants were informed of interview topics; I did not structure each question in advance. Both types of interviews began with an open-ended, descriptive question, i.e. a "grand tour question" (Spradley 1979:86-88). I often began by asking, "Could you describe your day?" "What did you do this last weekend?" or "How do you spend time after school?" New questions evolved from informants' answers during interviews.

During the summer, I conducted extensive formal interviews with Marylinn about her history, her friends, her school and home life, and her job. Her mother participated in some of the interview sessions. The interviews took place either at her home or at mine.
Data Recording and Word Processing

All data from participant observation and informal interviews were hand-written in shorthand in the field and transcribed daily on an Apple computer word processor. Some formal interviews were hand-recorded at the scene and later were word processed onto the computer; others were recorded on audio tapes and transcribed directly onto the computer. As many fieldworkers have discovered, the transcribing process seemed endless and tedious; the transcription of a 90-minute tape took from 13 to 15 hours. All the fieldnotes and interviews were stored on disks with identifications by a research technique used, date, and page numbers.

I discovered four advantages to word processing my fieldnotes and interview transcripts. First, I did not have to worry about producing clean fieldnotes on site, which freed me to concentrate on participant observation and interviews. Second, the illegibility of hand-written fieldnotes protected the information from being inadvertently exposed to others in the field. Third, processing the information twice, once in the field and again on the computer at home, aided my memory of data already collected. Several adolescents and adults were pleased at my memory of our conversations because they felt I was really "listening" to them. Finally, the information already saved on disk was readily available for later use, especially at the stage of data analysis and writing.

However, this modern technology that was supposed to make jobs easier sometimes turned out to be burdensome because the daily word
processing of fieldnotes doubled the work. As a result, the enormous amount of data recording curtailed my nightly sleep and at times deprived me of the joy of returning to the field the next day. Later in my fieldwork, I often made a conscious effort to make legible notes in the field to save time in order to participate in more activities.

Collecting Other Types of Data

In addition to fieldnotes from participant observation and interview transcripts, multiple sorts of data were collected. In my field journal, I recorded my feelings and concerns in the field. Even though the journal was not kept regularly, it provided invaluable information about myself as a human being as well as an ethnographer. Also, photographs of events in school and in the community captured the vitality of certain scenes.

Other indispensable data came from works produced by students: classroom journals that students wrote on given topics in English classes, personal journals that individual students wrote for me, essays, homework, the annual school literary magazine, school newspapers, yearbooks, posters for school functions, election campaign posters, and personal memos addressed to me. Significant information and insight were gained through a survey with open-ended questions administered to all seniors in the class of 1987.

Information was also collected through documents and handouts distributed by the school and the school district: the student handbook (distributed annually) that listed general rules with respect to student affairs; daily bulletins (a typed page with daily announcements issued
by the administrators for teachers and students); weekly bulletins (a typed page with weekly schedules of activities in the school and the school district, that was distributed to staff); monthly calendars (typed pages containing schedules for each month, that were distributed to staff and sent to students' homes with a monthly lunch menu); memos from administrators and staff to teachers, students, and their homes; district and school athletic policies; school lunch menus; and school board agendas and minutes. The final source of data included the Green Lake newspaper, handouts produced by local community groups, and articles from the Riverville newspaper.

Data Analysis and Cultural Interpretation

As an initial step in data analysis, I reviewed the collected data repeatedly. In this process, I was able to identify several categorical topics. After classifying the information according to the topics, I undertook organizational "cutting and pasting" in the computer in two ways. Regarding cutting, after all data were stored on disk, I had freedom to move pieces of information around. I separated pieces of information according to topics and printed each of the pieces on a five-and-a-half by eight-and-a-half inch card. Each card was labeled with a topical category, the date, and page number that corresponded to that of the original fieldnotes. The second way allowed me to do both cutting and pasting on the computer by using the "clipboard." Items of information pertaining to a specific topic were separated (cut) from their original files, collected (pasted) in a new file through the clipboard, and printed as a single file. The printout of the new file
contained information regarding a certain topic.

Then I reviewed pieces of information within the topical framework. This process of data analysis began while I was conducting the fieldwork, and the process continued during the time of writing this ethnography. In the summer of 1987, I analyzed the responses of the senior survey administered in May, 1987. At the same time, I prepared a paper to present at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting scheduled in November, 1987. These intensive endeavors during the summer helped me organize my thoughts and directed the foci of the fieldwork in fall. Through reviewing my fieldnotes and undertaking the "mini" analyses, I tried to make sense out of the details of adolescent life and to discover themes intuitively.

Throughout the fieldwork and writing of this ethnography, I constantly reminded myself to search for cultural meanings in adolescent utterances and behaviors. Wolcott (1982) has pointed out that a lengthy time on site or the employment of ethnographic research techniques does not necessarily make a study "ethnographic." According to him, as well as other anthropologists, the essence of an ethnography is cultural interpretation. Geertz lists three characteristics of ethnographic description:

[I]t is interpretive: what it is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; and the interpreting involved consists in trying to rescue the "said" of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms. [1973:20]

The cultural interpretation of this ethnography was constructed by a Korean, female ethnographer in her late twenties who observed, participated in American adolescent life, and tried to make unfamiliar
phenomena familiar to herself. This interpretation was also born in
dialogues between science and art, observed facts and the ethnographer
as a research "instrument," pieces of information and their contexts,
and self and others.

In summary, this chapter dealt with the procedural dimension of
fieldwork. I chose Greenfield High School and its community because
they were manageably small and the school district was willing to
participate in the study. I gained entry among teenagers as well as
adults, and maintained rapport particularly with young people by
assimilating myself in appearance and behaviors and taking the
"one-down" approach (Agar 1980:69). I collected data from various
sources, employing participant observation, ethnographic interviews,
document collection, and a survey method. The collected data were
analyzed through combined "mini-analysis" and "grand-analysis." In the
process of data analysis, I searched for cultural meanings of adolescent
everyday verbal and physical behaviors.


Notes

1 A clipboard refers to a temporary storage place within the memory capacity of the Apple computer. It is reserved for temporary storage of an item of information moved from one file ("cut") to be relocated in another file ("paste").
CHAPTER XI

REFLECTING ON ETHNOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCES

The process of doing ethnography does not limit ethnographers to the scholarly tasks of describing and interpreting cultural data. Until recently, ethnographers' field experiences tended to be reserved for dinner table conversation. Since Malinowski's field diary was published in 1967, more anthropologists appear to have been liberated to publicly discuss their field experiences, both pleasant and abhorrent, in writing. In most cases, though, their "confessions" have been still kept separate from ethnographic texts that have been chiefly devoted to cultural descriptions. Under the umbrella of interpretive anthropology, however, some anthropologists have "bravely" experimented with incorporating the personal dimension of field experiences into ethnography (see Crapanzano 1980). This confessional mode of ethnography swings ethnographers from a "positivistic," objective orientation to the humanistic, subjective one.

Taking a moderate stand between these two orientations, in Being an Anthropologist (1986) Spindler collected essays on field experiences of ethnographers who authored 11 case studies published in the series of Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology. He carefully warned the readers that "...fieldwork is not all feeling, self-criticism, and identity search" (p.v). Fieldwork needs a balance between the "significant aspects of field research methods" and the "personal dimension" of
fieldwork. The former, referred to as the "procedural" aspect, pertains to "what one did to obtain what kinds of data." The latter, the personal aspect, is concerned with "the struggle to survive as a person with a personal identity forged in another culture, one's own, while trying to grasp the outlines and meanings of someone else's" (p.v). Spindler criticizes contemporary humanistic anthropologists for tending to overemphasize the personal dimension of fieldwork in "violent swings of mood and mentality" (p.iv).

By its nature, anthropological fieldwork does not allow ethnographers to remain as objective observers and mechanical researchers. Fieldwork is a "lived" experience in which ethnographers subjectively encounter other human beings—often unfamiliar ones—who put forth their own subjectivity. Intersubjectivity between self (researcher) and others (natives) in the field provokes an inquiry of self as well as others; the dynamics between self and others are also subject to examination. Then, the period of writing an ethnography forces ethnographers to relive their field experiences as they review recorded data and unrecorded memory. During the process of doing ethnography, ethnographers reflect on, examine, and criticize their own field experiences in both personal and procedural aspects. This "experiential, reflective, and critical activity" is considered as "the very strength of anthropology" (Rabinow 1977:5) which separates this discipline from objective and positivistic social science orientations.

This chapter is devoted to a discussion of personal experiences in a confessional mood. Vignettes illustrate my reflection on field experiences in terms of examination of self, dynamics between myself and
natives, the inequality of languages, and after-effects of the fieldwork.

**Examination of Self**

**Identity Search**

I began my fieldwork as a loner in the midst of an unfamiliar crowd. I often found myself in situations in which I had to decide actively on my associations with certain adolescents. While this situation freed me from a prescribed identity, I sometimes experienced a sense of insecurity.

Accepting this freedom as a blessing, I attempted to build friendships with young people from a variety of groups. One of the first students who approached me attempted to strike up a friendship. She initiated various activities with me: she invited me to her house, suggested we go out for lunch or shopping in town, asked me for rides, and took me to her aunt's house to show me her horse. After doing such activities a few times, she called me her "best friend." I initially appreciated her welcome but soon began feeling burdened. First, I could not encourage such devoted friendship with one student because I wanted to get to know a wide range of students. Second, I was afraid that she would become too dependent, which was not desirable given my temporary status with the school.

I was also conscious of my image because it would influence my accessibility to certain students. After learning about the stigma on smokers in the school, I avoided being associated with smokers as a
group although I got to know them as individuals. My "extreme" concern about my image, for research purposes, kept me from going out to the smokers' shed for the first term.

My effort to develop friendship was partially rewarded by gaining a positive image as a person of indiscriminate friendliness to everyone. However, I sometimes encountered confusing situations in which some of my friends found me interacting with someone with whom they would not socialize. When my friendship with some teenagers conflicted with my friendship with others, one party either ignored me or tried to take me away from the other. Soon I was losing some relationships that I had built.

One day when school was "blacked out" due to a temporary power failure, students congregated in their groups in the hall waiting for the administrators' decision on an early dismissal. My journal of that day recorded my feelings as follows: "I, for the first time, felt lonely. I felt I needed my group. Everyone belonged somewhere but not me." Recognition of my concern about a sense of security and belongingness partially answered the question--"Who am I?"--that persistently followed me during these two years of doing ethnography. For me, this was not so much an existential question as a relational question; I was seeking my social identity in relation to others.

I also searched for my identity by trying to identify similarities between the teenagers and myself in high school days. If I were a high school student in Greenfield in 1987, whom would I be like? Whom would I hang out with most? Would I be perceived as a nerd, a socialite, an active future citizen, or a jock? To my surprise, these questions
elicited multiple similarities between my own high school life and that of these American adolescents whom I associated with most. Crapanzano suggested that this similar-seeking endeavor is a part of fieldwork:

The ethnographer's entry into the field is always a separation from his world of primary reference—the world through which he obtains, and maintains, his sense of self and his sense of reality. He is suddenly confronted with the possibility of Otherness, and his immediate response to this Otherness is to seek both the security of the similar and the distance and objectivity of the dissimilar. [1980:137]

My longing for security was reconciled by finding key informants. Among a few key informants, I found Marylinn extremely helpful and personable. Fortunately, she was also well-informed, articulate, part of the "in-crowd," and considerate. Above all, we felt comfortable with each other; we shared similar values, personality, and concerns. This mutual comfortableness facilitated our working relationship and strengthened our personal friendship. I am still amazed at the fact that I could see myself in my informant. I learned about myself through her: for example, how other-directed I was and how much my mental well-being relied on social acceptance. This process clearly illustrates the hermeneutic wisdom of "the comprehension of self by the detour of the comprehension of the other" (P. Ricoeur quoted in Rabinow 1977:5).

"Spoiler Role"

The process of ethnographic research helped me realize my role as a "spoiler." Beals, Spindler, and Spindler suggested that "one of the functions of anthropological research has become that of playing a spoiler role in regard to the findings of other sciences" (1973:359).
Wolcott elaborates the spoiler role as that of "contradicting broad
genralizations by providing exceptions from the ethnographic record, of
the sort: 'It's not so in my village'" (1981:4). Anthropological
"spoilers" challenge authority established on the basis of limited facts
or myths. I discovered many counter-examples to stereotypic images of
adolescents and to my preconceived notions of ethnographic research. My
spoiler role was activated when the discrepancy became obvious between
what I was led to believe by other sources and what I learned in the
field.

The stereotypic image of adolescents, based on first impressions or
mass media, tends to focus on "at-risk" areas such as drug and alcohol
abuse, pregnancy, and superficial images of certain cliques.
Greenfielders were not immune to these problems. But I have found many
young people were not involved in these "problematic" areas. I also
discovered that many "at-risk" young people were open-minded and
personable. In addition, cliques were neither always formed on the
basis of family socio-economic background, nor were they fractional.
Cheerleaders in Greenfield High School were not all from well-to-do
families, nor were they "air-heads." As a matter of fact, most of them
were serious students with a 3.5 GPA or higher (above "B+" average) and
they did not usually "flirt with" football players. Not all Greenfield
football players were so masculine and boastful as to intimidate
non-jocks. Academically and socially "in-crowd" students were not
always from middle or high class families; in fact, many students from
working class families achieved highly in Greenfield.

Second, my field experiences challenged my preconceived notions of
doing ethnography. The first preconception pertained to the ideal type of ethnographer. My readings regarding ethnographic research gave me an impression that successful ethnographers (1) stayed in a field for a long period of time—one year or longer; (2) kept notes ceaselessly; (3) ran around frantically in the field to catch as many activities as possible; (4) sustained their excitement about learning new things and meeting new people throughout their long-term fieldwork; and (5) dreamt about fieldwork. This type of ethnographer was often invoked in books of anthropological fieldwork. I assumed that this type of super full-time ethnographer had written valuable ethnographies.

My reality conflicted with these characterizations to a certain degree. I did not live in the community where my fieldwork was being conducted. Despite my intent to keep up with word processing my fieldnotes, fatigue occasionally kept me from meeting my expectation at the end of the days when I had spent several concentrated hours on listening, observing, and trying to maintain rapport. Doing participant observation and interviews, I spent an average of eight to ten hours a day in the field for the first few months; as time increased for data organization and writing, my involvement in the field decreased. To a certain degree, I sustained excitement about getting to know new people and learning different aspects of their lives. My sporadic emotional withdrawal sometimes overshadowed the excitement. I also contemplated my fieldwork while traveling, eating, or even sleeping at times. I did not, however, feel that all these efforts were sufficient to make me an ideal ethnographer.

Another example of my preconceptions related to the image of
teenagers as "welcoming natives." The endorsement of American scholars, friends, and school administrators for my research idea led me to believe that the teenagers would welcome me with open arms because I was new, interested in learning about them, and from another continent. At the beginning of my fieldwork at the school, some students asked me about my identity and nationality. Their initial responsiveness to my presence seemed to prove my expectation to be correct. As my novelty wore off, most Greenfield students became rather indifferent to my presence. I also had an expectation at the beginning that these young people would be eager to talk about themselves and be thrilled to have someone listen to them for hours and hours. Now I question the accuracy of this image.

Doing ethnography certainly provided me with opportunities to continue my identity search and enact the anthropological spoiler role. I discovered more about myself as a human being as well as researcher and came to intellectualize personal experiences throughout the process of doing ethnography.

Dynamics Between Self and Others

Impression Management

"Impression management" (Berreman 1962) is a survival strategy employed by both adolescents and myself in the process of building up a relationship. Impression management activities included the "discourse of politeness" (Campbell 1987:246-248), minimization of dire consequences, and preclusion or withdrawal from possible embarrassment.
These attempts are attributed to human inclinations to protect one's self-image and to test the limits of possible relationships when people cope with strangers.

First, the discourse of politeness was a commonly used strategy. During my first couple of months, many students asked questions about me and my country. I assumed that their curiosity grew out of genuine interest in me and I took it as a personal welcome. I had continued exchanging greetings with most of them since our first encounters. After studying in the field for several months and even being introduced as a researcher in the school newspaper, I was amazed at students' ignorance of who I was. I was also puzzled by the fact that the same adolescents who greeted me before ignored me at school or in the community. I took it as a personal rejection at first. This hurt feeling was partially overcome when I realized that the initial friendliness of some teenagers was not necessarily an invitation for friendship but an exercise in the discourse of politeness or even mere curiosity.

The discourse of politeness was also demonstrated when young people changed their "earthy" language into formal discourse in front of me. This switch of language was more noticeable when they were engaged in conversation with me than when I was just bystander to their conversations with peers.

The second kind of impression management, minimization of dire consequences, is illustrated in the following cases. After the first few weeks at the school, I had a chance to sit with a group of boys and girls for lunch in the cafeteria. A freshman girl mentioned, "I'll be a
cheerleader" (meaning that she will try out for the rally squad next year). Other girls, juniors, dropped the corners of their lips to show their disapproval of her idea and dissuaded her saying, "Don't do it."
A boy soon joked about the appearance of some cheerleaders, "Bonnie has legs as big as this" (indicating their size with his open hands) and "Liz has thick lips. She puts on a lot of lipstick." The junior girls seemed to feel uncomfortable about my presence, while he was gossiping about the cheerleaders. They turned to me and asked, "Do you talk about others in your country, too? We don't gossip all the time." On another occasion, I asked a boy if there was a prevalent grouping among students. He identified groups such as "smokers," "jocks," and "nerds" and then added "I don't belong to any clique. I basically get along with everyone."

Both vignettes above illustrate minimization of effect; the first regards a group impression and the second concerns an individual impression. With remarks from the first and second vignettes--"We do not gossip all the time" and "I basically get along with everyone"--the teenagers recognized their problems with gossiping and grouping but attempted to assure me that the problems were not that serious. These impression managing remarks purported to minimize the negative effect of some phenomena by presenting counter examples. In this way, teenagers spared the outsider from making a generalization on the basis of negative impressions on "American" teenagers and themselves.

The third type of impression management is to avoid possible embarrassment by precluding others from activities or withdrawing oneself. The two following stories show precluding and withdrawing,
respectively. In an overnight field trip of 10 students (four girls and six boys), a few boys engaged in unharmful shenanigans against the girls. While the girls (including me) left the tent unattended one evening, the boys "raided" the tent, "stole" the girls' underwear from individual bags, and hung them up on a camping kitchen stand set in the middle of our camp site. All from our party saw them; needless to say, the "victims" of the prank were embarrassed but laughed about it. Fortunately my own belongings were exempted from their raid; later, I learned that the "gentlemen" searched my bag but decided to exclude me from the laughable embarrassment.

To project a favorable image, I sometimes withdrew from certain activities. One example was in an all-night party after the graduation ceremony held in a student's house (see Chapter IX). I attended the party in order to get a glimpse of an informal adolescent party but did not want to get involved fully in their private activities. As time went by, more teenagers got drunk and some of them threw up around the house. I also became more conscious of my non-conforming behaviors (I drank only a little beer). When I finally left the party, I felt relieved because I did not have to give the impression that I was "policing" them.

Impression management did not necessarily interfere with my maintaining rapport with youth or distort a fair representation of their culture. These three forms of impression management might reflect cultural dispositions of adolescents. Through the strategy, I found myself testing limits to how close I, as a professional stranger, could enter teenagers' lives and how much the adolescents were willing to
reveal their inside stories to a stranger. The impression management also helped both parties sustain a sense of trust toward each other by establishing a realistic understanding of each other's expectations.

Reciprocity

I tried to return favors to those who helped my research in several ways. I offered verbal gratitude, material items, monetary rewards, food, rides, and speeches about Korea.

Because the students were the major helpers in my study, I tried to reciprocate with them more than with adults. First, I verbally expressed my thankfulness to all informants, whether their assistance was intended or not. I also gave some teenagers rides home or to go shopping, treated them to sodas or snacks, bought small gifts for birthdays, and paid a small amount of money to my key informant for her regular assistance during the summer. In addition to my intended reciprocity, the teenagers may have felt that they received social and/or intellectual rewards from my attention to them. Their question, "Why did you choose us in a small town?" implied their pleasant surprise at my interest in them, in spite of their "remoteness." They were also given opportunities to observe me, an Asian researcher, while being observed, and to ask questions about my country while being asked about themselves. When I visited their families, I brought some baked items and fixed Korean meals for some families.

For the school staff, I expressed my appreciation by bringing baked items to the faculty lounge. Such a gesture seemed to reveal my intent to thank them and evoked increased communication with the staff; at the
beginning, most staff seemed indifferent to my presence. Another way of creating reciprocity was sharing information about Korea. I was asked by a teacher to give a talk about Korean communication styles in her three classes. It was the first and last official request by a teacher, although several teachers inquired into my interest in such involvement in their classes.

Returning favors was often spontaneous and sporadic. I could not respond properly to all the favors I received because it would have been endless. I constantly asked myself if I was unconsciously exploiting them. My ethics of reciprocity reminded me of returning favors directly and in a more recognizable way to my informants, either in the form of materials or verbal rewards. My limited resources—time, money, and energy—prevented me from expressing my thanks in more tangible ways. Verbally expressed gratitude, albeit intangible, was more affordable to me. In response to my concern with conscious reciprocity, my colleagues stated, "Teenagers will be happy to find someone who is willing to listen to them with patience for hours" and "The adolescents will benefit from this kind of study." Despite some truth in these statements, I could not stop seeing a potential danger that ethnographers could abuse this type of statement to rationalize their exploitative behaviors.

My next question was "Do I try to reciprocate with adults more than adolescents because the former hold more powerful positions as gatekeepers?" In the hierarchy of an educational institution, administrators had higher positions than teachers and teachers than students. In home settings, parents tended to have the "final word"
over their children. Consequently, if the higher authorities had refused to take part in my study, I was aware that the study would not have taken place. The assistance of adults could not be underemphasized. At the same time, I wondered if it was appropriate to be more concerned about reciprocity with adults than with teenagers because of the power structure. My study focused on youth culture and the young people were my immediate informants. I felt strongly that they deserved more of my appreciation and reciprocity.

Marginality: Blessing or Barrier?

Although being generally well received by the young people and gradually slipping into the natural scenes, I was only partially accepted as their "kind." My spotty attendance in their classes might have affirmed them that I was not exactly like them. No teachers asked me to show a hall pass when I was seen out of class during periods. No detention was given for any of my absences or skipping classes. They observed that I turned in no homework, took no exams, and received no grades. They found my name under one of faculty mail slots. They also saw me writing notes all the time, even during the Veteran's Day Memorial ceremony. I might have exhibited too many "deviant" behaviors from those of "typical" teenagers.

I seemed to be accepted as a semi-student and semi-adult, differentiated from school staff. On a field trip, teenagers considered me not as a chaperon but as a "kind of counselor." My presence did not seem to threaten the adolescents in various settings where adults were not normally present. A senior boy later talked about me in a meeting,
"She was not like an adult who told us what to do. She blended with us. It was nice." However, the teenagers sometimes did not seem to know how to deal with me in "liminality" or "the period of margin" (Turner 1967:93); I was pushed into an in-between status, marginal to both teenagers and adults. For example, on a field trip bus, students left a seat for me between theirs in the back and chaperons' in the front. On another occasion, my informant who became a good friend told me a lot about her birthday but excluded me from her birthday party. I was treated as a student or an adult, both, or neither, depending on situations.

While I concentrated on associations with adolescents in school, I played more of an adult role in the community. Parents of students, school district staff, and community members expected this of me. The adult role legitimated my attendance at school board meetings and parent meetings. My presumed identity as a "responsible" adult gave me access to information unavailable to adolescents. The adult image also earned me parental trust: parents who would not allow their daughter ride with her "irresponsible" peers did not mind her riding with me. Since giving a ride to teenagers gave me time to talk, this trust often was to my advantage.

Adults' acceptance of me was not always a blessing. Especially when I was with both parents and teenagers, my dual roles clashed with each other. Despite my effort to keep my priority on friendship with the teenagers, I was often treated as a friend of their parents. If we rode together in a car, I was given a seat next to the parents or I was addressed more by the parents than by the adolescents. Both parties
seemed to take my role as an adult for granted.

For example, after the graduation ceremony, I was standing with a number of students, listening to them plan what to do next. They decided to go to a boy's house, and I was invited to come along with them. The boy added, "Oh, mom is at home. You can talk with her," affirming that I knew his mother. I followed his car with my own. As soon as we arrived at his house, he and his mother seemed to take it for granted that I was going to talk with the mother in the family room while the rest were making other plans for the evening in the kitchen. I wished to be with these young people; I felt "trapped" with an adult. While I was talking with the boy's mother and his older brother who was going to college, the teenagers left without telling me where they were going. They might have thought that I was in the "right" place with my kind of people--adults. I was assumed to be a "responsible" adult who could take care of herself in that strange household.

"The Inequality of Languages"

Asad (1986) proposed that the activity of doing fieldwork in other culture resembles that of translating a text in a foreign language. According to him, "In the field...the process of translation takes place at the very moment the ethnographer engages with a specific mode of life....He learns to find his way in a new environment, and a new language" (p.159). In the process of cultural translation, inequality between the languages of the ethnographer and of the natives interferes with a fair representation of a native culture in an ethnographic text. In this section, I will discuss the inequality of languages as I
have experienced it in three dimensions: (1) between myself and natives in the field, (2) in the process of textualizing the teenage culture, and (3) between my text and American readers.

First, I experienced inequality between my English as a second language and American teenage English. When I began my fieldwork, I had acquired good competency in English with several years of school English in Korea and four years of living in the United States. My English vocabulary included mainly standard expressions and academic jargon. I found myself incompetent in the high school language to the degree that I was sometimes unable to respond properly to teenagers and unable to copy their remarks in verbatim.

An incident in a class reminded me of my incompetency in teenage slang. In a class for juniors, I was sitting behind a girl whom I had not talked with before. She sent me a note reading as follows:

Are you stoned? yes no
Do you get stoned? yes no
Why?
Because I ______ like it.

I did not understand what she meant by being "stoned" or why she asked me the question. She reworded the term "being stoned" as "smoking dope," which still did not come across to me. I finally guessed that the term probably meant smoking marijuana. Even though its meaning was cleared to a degree, I still wondered about the intent of the questions for a few weeks. When I finally asked about her reason for the question, "Are you stoned?" she responded that the question could be addressed to someone who was being too quiet. The response satisfied my initial curiosity, but I still do not know whether that was her real
reason for the question. In addition to slang that teenagers used, I realized that there were gaps between my language use and that of the youth, although most of the students tried to speak "proper" English to me.

The second type of inequality of languages was recognized in the process of translating the culture of adolescents into a text: namely, writing. As Asad correctly suggested, language inequality became obvious at this step even though it had not been recognized much before. My textualization underwent the following stages: (1) I recorded what I observed through my lens, the lens of a scholar and a foreigner; (2) I interpreted the lively pieces of experiences within an academic framework; and (3) I textualized the materials to make the cultural data palatable to academics. In addition, having Korean as my first language put limits on my cognitive frame. My advisor, Harry Wolcott, noted that as recorded in fieldnotes my American teenagers all seemed to be speaking Korean English. His remark would remind us of the constructiveness of ethnography.

We, all ethnographers, construct our fieldnotes on the basis of what we hear and what we see. This constructive process inevitably includes ethnographers' language and world view in a controlled academic manner. In my case, the inequality of languages between my text and native culture appears more obvious because I am writing an ethnography in my second language. The same problem may be less recognized by readers of ethnographies written by American anthropologists because their texts are presented in their eloquent first language. However, during their fieldwork, they may have experienced a similar, or even
higher, degree of language inequality because many of them conducted research with minimal competency in their informants' languages or through translators.

My third type of language inequality concerns "distance" between my text and my readers. Many ethnographies present exotic cultures to American readers. Cognitive distance between the foreign cultures and readers is distinctly noticeable. Consequently, readers take the distance for granted. This ethnography of American adolescents may not pose the same kind of language inequality between the text and readers because the text would be too familiar to readers. Rather, the inequality of languages expresses itself delicately when the ethnographer's version is compared with the natives' version of their own culture. Varenne, a Frenchman who studied a mid-western town in the United States and wrote an ethnography in English, pointed out the tactful task as follows:

The task is more delicate when the observer addresses himself to the very people whose culture he is reporting on, for how useful the type of knowledge an outsider has to offer is not obvious. [1977:xi]

It is not an easy task to present an ethnography to natives because these two parties—ethnographer and natives—may represent different worlds constructing their own reality. The notion of "propriospect" (Goodenough 1981) also reminds us that people construct individual versions of their own world. Thus, no one's cultural version stands as the authority. The variant versions among natives and between natives and ethnographers can create controversy over whose version or interpretation is most fair to the real world. It may be almost
impossible for ethnographers to receive favorable responses from all natives to their ethnographic texts. The difficulty of presenting a text to natives may come from the "we-know-it-all-and-so-what" attitude. While I am convinced that there are many interpretations of a culture, it is a challenge to assure my American readers that one more interpretation—even of an outsider—can contribute to the understanding of themselves.

After the Fieldwork

The completion of my fieldwork marked the beginning of a new chapter in my professional and personal life. Professionally, I devoted the following year to writing this ethonography. In the course of writing, I continued to search for the cultural meanings of youth life by reviewing notes and other materials and by relistening to taped interviews. I also tried to maintain "faithful" contacts with some adolescents and their families by telephone conversations or visits. Personally, I have clung to the unanswered questions regarding my acceptance among adolescents, the effect of my presence on their life, and of my experiences with them on my life. After the fieldwork was over, I discovered that the two realms of my life as a professional researcher and a human being still interplayed just like they did during the fieldwork. In a sense, post-fieldwork contacts with the informants have turned out to be a continuation of the ethnographic research to a certain degree, although I cherished personal friendships with them as well. Differing from the period of the fieldwork, I have been able to play more of the role of friend than of researcher after the end of the
Continued Friendship

I officially completed the fieldwork at the end of December 1987, as I originally proposed to the school district. Since then, I have maintained contacts with teachers, students, and their families, and attended some school functions as a personal choice.

Especially, I have continuously enjoyed my friendship with Marylinn and her family. Her family and my husband and I have invited each other over for home visits and dinner. Marylinn has invited me to a few school functions and telephoned me to tell me how things are changing in the school: a new principal, a strengthened tardy policy and the students' protest against it, and unexpected breakups and romantic match-ups between certain boys and girls. Over the telephone, Marylinn's mother has also informed me of changes in her family: her husband's new job, her involvement with a community women's choir, and her daughter's new boyfriend. My contacts with them have thus informed me since my physical departure from the field.

Since the end of the fieldwork, our friendship has grown out of the original working relationship between a researcher and an informant. My inner conflict about my dual roles has been eased because I neither have to deal with it on an everyday basis, nor am I compelled to behave like a strict researcher. I feel more relaxed about telephoning or visiting them without feeling like an investigator.

However, from time to time, the pattern of the relationship that we set at the beginning has influenced our friendship. I sometimes find
myself in a situation of holding myself back from expressing my opinions or encouragement, fearing that they may unduly influence Marylinn and her family’s natural course of life. For instance, at the end of her junior year, Marylinn was planning to run for a major student leadership position. I personally felt that she was well qualified for the position. Although I expressed my endorsement at the time that she informed me, I soon regretted it because the ethnographer in me warned, "Don't try to influence your informant."

I sometimes wish that I could become more of a true friend who gives advice. The educator in me says that Marylinn has a potential to pursue a professional career successfully if she wishes: she has intelligence, leadership, public skills, and sensitivity to others' feelings. At this point Marylinn only knows that she will go to a community college; she does not know what to "do" with her life. Her parents agree that she should go to college and possibly to university, but they do not seem to envision concretely that her life can grow out of their socioeconomic status. Looking at Marylinn’s potential, I am tempted to advise her to apply for scholarships for colleges, to show her options for future careers, and to generally encourage her to look for the best opportunities for herself. However, the researcher in me seems to win the fight inside, detaching myself from these commitments.

Despite my struggle between scientism and humanism, I am convinced that a friendship which began with a scientific incentive will continue to exist with more of an humanistic interest. This is a beauty of ethnographic research—-a scientist is allowed to remain a human being in exercising his/her profession.
Continued Puzzles

While I have kept in touch with Greenfielders after the completion of the fieldwork, unresolved puzzles have lingered in my head. The puzzles revolve around the questions: "Was I accepted by the adolescents?" and "What impression have I left with them?" Even after a year of fieldwork, I have not fully comprehended how to interpret responses from the adolescents regarding my presence among them. On some days, they recognized my presence and warmly received me at their school and in the community. They initiated brief greetings or struck up long conversations. On other days, the same people totally ignored me. I was often confused about my status among the adolescents.

This confusing phenomenon was repeatedly observed during my post-fieldwork contacts with the Greenfielders. Three occasions within a month—a prom, a National Honor Society banquet, and at graduation—raised my bewilderment to a peak. One afternoon in March, after the fieldwork was completed, I received a telephone call from a girl who informed me that members of the National Honor Society had selected me as a guest speaker at that year's annual banquet. She added that I should not feel pressured to accept their invitation, but that my acceptance would please everyone in the group. She was calling on behalf of the organization because she knew me better than the others, and she also indicated that it was originally her idea to nominate me. Even though I took her statement, that "everyone" wanted to have me as a speaker, with a grain of salt, I felt honored and accepted by the adolescents. I accepted the invitation and confirmed it with the
faculty advisor in late April.

Then, at the beginning of May, I accompanied another girl to help the student leadership class decorate a hall for the junior/senior prom. Since I knew the student leaders and many of them were in the National Honor Society, I expected at least recognition from them. Surprisingly, none of them greeted me and some acted as if they had not heard me when I greeted them. My confusion did not cease there. In a week, the banquet took place and those who ignored me on prom night attended the meeting. After I delivered a seemingly "well-received" speech, several students, including the "unfriendly" ones at the prom hall, came to greet me and have pictures taken with me. One boy, known as being "stuck-up," and who had never greeted me at school and had refused my request for cooperation during the fieldwork, even struck up a conversation with me. What a change!

In early June, I attended the graduation ceremony to express my good wishes to graduating seniors. At graduation, I again coped with "cold shoulders" from those who had treated me in a friendly manner at the banquet; at the same time, I was surprised at the unexpectedly friendly greetings and hugs from boys and girls who had not shown an interest in me during my fieldwork. I have not been able to discern the reason for the students' seemingly "inconsistent" behavior.

Regarding the incidents of alleged "inconsistency," several questions were raised: Was the feeling of acceptance or unacceptance self-created? Did my status change from that of nobody (a quiet student from a different culture) to that of someone of importance (a guest speaker and active performer) after the "successful" speech? If so, did
the change affect adolescent impressions of me? Did I happen to catch them in different moods; or were the varying responses to me mere coincidences? I do not have an answer for this puzzle yet. However, I continuously remind myself of the ethnographer's mission to distinguish cultural phenomena from mere coincidence (consider the difference between a wink with an intent and a twitch in the eye, as discussed by Geertz 1973:7) and to search for the cultural meanings of social phenomena.

Influencing and Influenced

Another unanswered question is "How has my presence affected the world view of adolescents, and, conversely, would my experiences with them influence my perspective on young people?" An inquiry into this question poses a difficulty because effects may not be revealed quickly nor explicitly in most cases. However, I suspect that mutual influences have been occurring.

Joy's mother telephoned one day and told me about her daughter's new friendship with a Chinese-Hawaiian boy. Joy met him in a leadership camp during the summer after my fieldwork was finished. Since the boy lived over a hundred miles away, they did not meet often but they did correspond and telephone each other. They invited each other to their respective homecoming dances. Although her mother suspected that the long-distance relationship might grow into a serious one in the future, she accepted the fact that her daughter regarded him as a special person in her life. In this overwhelmingly white community and school, intercultural dating was rare and unusual. I recalled a conversation
with Joy about intercultural dating a year ago. The talk was spontaneous and concerned with a hypothetical situation. Of course, she did not have an intercultural friendship with him nor was there any indication that she was seeking one at that time. I sensed from our talk that both she and her mother neither endorsed intercultural dating nor did they put it down. When this girl actually chose a boyfriend from a different ethnic group, I began to wonder how much her family's good friendship with my German-born husband and me had affected their view of intercultural courtship.

Another issue of influencing informants concerns sharing the ethnography with them. I showed Marylinn and her mother a draft of Chapter I in order to check on the accuracy of my description, as well as to abide by my professional ethics. I was concerned about my analysis of Marylinn's friendship with Linda because it could be interpreted somewhat negatively. Both Marylinn and her mother "approved" of the chapter. In addition, I shared the descriptive chapters of the high school and the community with Mr. Smith, the now retired principal. His response to the chapters was also positive. I was pleased with their responses; however, I wondered if their looking at their own lives through my lens of reality influenced their perception of themselves. I was reminded of an anecdote that an anthropologist discovered, with terrible disappointment, that his informants provided him with information on their kinship system on the basis of an ethnography done by his predecessor in the same community.

Thus, not only might I have unintentionally influenced the world view of adolescents but I also sense that my experience with them has
affected my view of young people. My personal encounters with different categories of adolescents, including so-called good and at-risk students, have taught me to look at them as human beings first, before considering any social and academic labels given by the system or others. It is clear to me now that those who "hang out" in the smokers' shed are "John" or "Nancy" first, before being "smokers," and those who cheer for sports teams are "Marla" or "Louise" before being "cheerleaders." I do not know how these invaluable experiences with the young people will shape my "propriospect" (Goodenough 1981:98), but they will undoubtedly affect it.

My Goal of Understanding Adolescents

Have I accomplished my goal of understanding American adolescents? My answer is both "yes" and "no." My positive answer is based on my concept of understanding that was summarized in my speech addressed to the National Honor Society banquet. An excerpt follows:

What is understanding? When I began my research, I was determined to learn about adolescent culture and to understand these young people. In order to understand them, I felt it was necessary to make myself closer to them. In order to bridge the gap between myself and the teenagers, I wore more of their clothes—jeans, tee-shirts, and sport shoes—and did what students usually did in school. You might have seen me going to classes, having lunch in school, and going to school dances. I believe that my effort helped me come closer to many young people and become friends with them. However, looking like them and acting like them did not guarantee my understanding of them.

I needed more than that. I realized that the more important thing was to make the psychological gap between them and myself smaller. What does it mean to close a psychological gap? I could see the answer from the word "under-stand." A real "under-standing" of others could not come until I was able to stand under others. "Standing-under" others required four stances: (1) coming out one's own shell of values and judgments, (2) lowering oneself and elevating others, (3) opening one's mind and tuning
into others' voices, and (4) trying to look for what others have, not what others lack.

Based upon this concept of understanding, I believe that I have made considerable headway toward my goal of understanding the adolescents. I have learned something about the culture of American youth—to the extent possible at present within my intellectual and cultural limitations.

However, I do not claim that I have fully accomplished the goal; I lack a complete portrait of American adolescents. What I have obtained is perhaps a caricature of the whole, or a close-up picture of a few parts. I doubt that any study, even an extremely extensive one, would succeed in the task of drawing a complete, perfect portrait of American adolescents. What ethnographers of adolescents try to achieve is to make modest contributions to the understanding of young people. I would be content if my bit of understanding made a contribution to the on-going task of understanding of adolescents.
At the beginning of my research, I occasionally dreamt of my fieldwork. My anxiety was reflected on the dreams that often turned tantalizing. For instance, some of the students turned into my old friends and then they gave me troubles in my dream.

After the banquet, many parents and students approached to compliment me on the speech: for instance, "We enjoyed your speech," "It was the best speech that I have ever heard in the Honor Society banquet," and "We could relate to your speech well."

I only noticed one case of intercultural dating in school. My intercultural marriage seemed to confuse, maybe surprise, some community members. A few days after I visited a student's house and met her grandparents (her guardians) whom she told about my intercultural marriage, she told me, "My grandparents have a prejudice against a mixed marriage, but I don't." But I have not encountered any direct unfair treatment due to my intercultural marital status during my fieldwork.
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