ORGANIZING DIALOGUE BETWEEN SCIENTISTS AND CITIZENS: PROBLEMS IN THE USE OF VIDEO IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Problem and Objectives

The underlying theme of this thesis is a concern with the role of continuing adult education in the adaptation of societies to the stresses arising from advanced industrialization and the threat of environmental deterioration. The idea of a "science of man" is taken as the foundation for the re-organization of general and continuing education. Within this framework growing points of synthesis in technology (general systems theory) and social philosophy (the theory of human nature) were seen to be converging on the predicament entailed in what appears to be a human evolutionary threshold. The concept of an "active" or "self-guiding" society is presented as the most persuasive model of the social form in which the "science of man" might be institutionalized as a response to this evolutionary crisis.

The body of the study undertakes an analysis of an experimental continuing education course distinguished by a) a concern with broad themes such as human nature, systems technology and social change; and b) the organizational innovation of combining the resources of a continuing education program and a TV network. The objectives of the course evaluation were: a) to analyze the organizational problems involved in presenting such integrative concepts to a broader public through televised media; b) define the perspectives of a group of laymen (the class/audience) interested

in such questions, and to articulate the difficulties they had in interpreting the material presented; and c) in the light of the above considerations suggest positive measures for improving future programs of this type.

Methodology and Data

The primary techniques of investigation were those of participant observation and in-depth interviews. Data was collected in the form of field notes, tape recordings, internal documents, and informational questionnaires.

Summary of Findings

The central organizational difficulty stemmed from the inflexible format imposed by the objective of video-taping the series. This prevented any significant modification of the program despite general acknowledgement that changes were necessary. The ambiguous dual direction of the series did not succeed in reconciling the divergent interests of continuing education and TV broadcasting. As a consequence, the initial expectations of the participants were frustrated, producing a redefinition of objectives and resignation.

The class/audience lacked initially and in the given circumstances was unable to develop any sense of unity or to articulate any consistent reaction to the series. This was related to the impersonal, highly structured format and the restrictions this imposed on personal interaction, as well as by the hereogeneity of the class members. This diversity is described in terms of

typologies of motivation and levels of intellectual awareness which give some indication of the difficulties in presenting abstract, value-charged integrative concepts in a non-individualizing learning situation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is argued that the failure of co-ordination between the interests of continuing education and the TV network might have been resolved by moving toward either greater planning centralization or more participation and planning flexibility. On the other hand, the problems of communication posed by the motivational and intellectual heterogenity of the class members might have been reduced by an effort either to popularize or to focus on instruction. An attempt to broaden program appeal through the use of media techniques to draw upon more widely shared interests and understandings, might have provided a more satisfactory series for both the class-audience and for the mass broadcast envisioned. Or alternatively, the program might have been more closely oriented to specific instructional objectives, a strategy which would have allowed the development of sufficient common ground for both dialogue and sufficient motivation for individually directed self-exploration. Such an instructional format would have made the program suitable for re-broadcast to special interest audiences.

Finally, the entire project provided testimony to the remarkable underdevelopment of the use of video for continuing education in Canada, despite the numerous pilot projects and media training facilities now in operation.

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I. INTRODUCTION: DIAGLOGUE ON MAN AS AN EXPERIMENT

As the title of this thesis suggests, the major objective of the study is to analyze the organizational problems and educational problems and educational consequences of combining a continuing education class with TV video for rebroadcast. This combination of interests and resources constituted the organizational aspect of innovation in the series. Yet there was a second innovative feature which, combined with the first, makes it possible to speak of the series "Dialogue on Man" as an experiment in continuing education. This second characteristic relates to the content, which can be summarized in terms of an effort to provide an integrative, interdisciplinary view of human nature and its relationship to the possibilities of controlling social change for human purposes. It is the task of these introductory pages to describe in more detail the thinking that lies behind such content.[1] In the process it should become more evident that the communication of such abstract concepts creates peculiar difficulties for communication which cannot be readily contained within the framework employed for teaching mechanical skills.

The very ambitiousness of these objectives provided difficulties which cannot be eliminated even in the most effective of programs of this type. In attempting to draw out the general implications of research on the theoretical frontier of several disciplines, the specialists themselves are no longer "experts" but

"students" who have yet to fully master their material. At the same time the material itself is inadequate and subject to continuous revision.

The following all-too-brief discussion will seek to indicate in general terms the evidence for the imperative redefinition of the foundations of general education. First, this will require the argument that there are threats to the quality and even survival of advanced and developing industrial societies and that the existing pressures for scientific specialization and narrowly conceived piecemeal problem-solving are inadequate. Second, the fundamental considerations required for the philosophical, pre-political underpinnings for such an alternative will be sketched. Third, the general characteristics of the kind of society that such an altered perspective might make realizable will be described. And finally, the role of general and continuing education in facilitating such a transition will be touched upon. The implications of the evolutionary framework developed will be drawn out with respect to the problem of evaluating continuing education programs. This will in turn lead into the main part of the study.

A. The Imperative of General Education

Rather than begin with criticisms of the assumptions underlying current practices in general and continuing education -- where they exist at all, it is perhaps more revealing to outline the historical context within which they must be evaluated. The justification of such programs and appropriate criteria to judge them must reflect both the specific needs of the communities and

society which support them <u>and</u> the general principles which provide a basis for organizing educational activities to realize those needs. In a word, general and continuing education cannot be viewed simply as some culturally disembodied and ahistorical idea. It must first be viewed in terms of the adaptive significance it has for specific human populations.

Modifications of the natural and social environments introduced by advanced industrialization, have created grave threats both to the quality and even the continuation of human life. While this bankruptcy of simplistic notions of "progress" signals a profound failure in the application of technology, there is a strong case to be made for the argument that the <u>ideals</u> of science as an instrument of human self-development are capable of re-definition and subsequent use as the basis for the reorganization of the production and use of scientific knowledge. Thus, the crisis of advanced industrial society is simultaneously the crisis of the very knowledge that made such forms of social organization possible. The reorganization and reorientation of one cannot proceed without a comparable transformation of the other.

To the degree that this distorted use and even abuse of the possibilities of technology reflects certain culturally maintained values that are now inappropriate, or have perhaps always been so and only now can be generally recognized as such, educational institutions have a central responsibility for giving citizens the intellectual tools required to comprehend the issues in question and the practical alternatives. Thus, the development of new knowledge and its application must be co-ordinated with a set of consistent

developmental priorities, a task which requires kinds of knowledge, forms of participation, and types of leadership which presently do not exist in sufficient quantities.

For this to occur I would suggest a revision of the scientific curriculum of universities, organized around a revitalization of the concept of general education, is required. Nor is this simply a question of sensitizing scientists during their university years. For the issues involved require understanding on the part of all levels of leadership and as broad a segment of the general public as feasible. The problem is that such objectives simply cannot be realized in a four year undergraduate program. While this can potentially provide the necessary foundation, the gap that remains to be filled is that of ensuring that such learning continues throughout the active life of the individual. Only in this way is there some prospect of the educational process realizing the kind of "feedback" objectives essential to controlled social change.

To speak of the crisis of industrializing societies is to assume that there are emerging or existing problems which cannot be resolved within the existing problem-solving framework. Though this perhaps does not require emphasis, a brief outline, first, of the contours of the threats, and second, the shortcomings of given strategies will be sketched.

1. Threats to Survival and Quality of Life in Industrial Societies

a) Ecological pressures

Perhaps the most novel and in the long-run most threatening (nuclear war remains, of course, the most ominous short term threat even if it has lost its place in the headlines) is that of the

pressure of the consumption patterns of affluence, even though among a small minority, upon the resources of "spaceship earth".[2] The singular inability of modern economic theory to have anticipated -- and its continuing failure to fully take into account -- long-term resource constraints constitutes one of the most flagrant examples of the myopia of disciplinary approaches to problem-solving.[3] The paradoxical consequence of this situation is that increasingly it can be seen that the probability of underdeveloped societies approaching the consumption levels of current affluent countries is close to nil. Nevertheless, efforts to dissuade them from attempting to do so are taken, with some justification, as the rationale of the wealthy intent upon preserving their own position. When we realize that taken as a whole so-called 'foreign aid' is fundamentally a means of maintaining economic and political stability and developing markets for the consumption of capital and technologically intensive goods exported from the rich countries, the prospects look ominous indeed. In short, unless developed countries are willing to accept some kind of limit to economic growth and transfer the resulting surplus skills and capital to development elsewhere, the situation seems intractable.[4]

b) Economic Competition

Moreover, the competition within and between societies, which tends to be focused on a narrow range of material goals, continues to be a source of destabilizing conflict. The most politically expedient way of staving off a confrontation has been rapid economic growth which allows the poor to become better off in absolute terms, if not in relative. Typically, this has long been

sufficient to sustain capitalist societies with the development of welfare state measures.[5] But this dependence upon crude growth for stability cannot continue indefinitely. Thus, as in the case of international inequality we are faced with the necessity to stabilize consumption levels at the top first. As it is, those few affluent individuals who recognize the problem tend to think it is possible to stop growth while implicitly freezing the existing distribution of wealth and advantages. Within democratic societies, however, this is an illusion. A no-growth society must simultaneously be a more egalitarian one, if it is to remain democratic.

c) Cultural Alienation

A third source of threat stems from the alienative effects of advanced industrial societies which continue to erode the capacity of individuals to engage in effective collective action.[6] The resulting cultural heterogenity and conflict seems to be increasingly fragmenting the population and undermining efforts to reconstruct new types of communities. The incessant mobility and interpersonal instability creates the basis for increasingly individualistic personality types whose hedonistic anarchism make it unlikely that any coherent groups can organize to redirect society. Moreover, to the degree that such individuals serve those interested in continuing the patterns of high consumption through the proliferation of diverse "identity markets", which provide endless opportunities for relieving personal anxiety and inadequacy, such individuals become prisoners of the very structure they may overtly defy. Travel and non-urban living can become as readily an expensive narcotic as new cars, a point which has not been lost upon tourist promoters and land developers.

2. Crisis of the scientific ethos: science vs. society

While scientist/technologists in general share a belief that the major threats are in principle containable, significant numbers seriously doubt that this can occur in the given framework within which science is presently produced, distributed and communicated.[7] That is to say, that the simple development of new and better technology will not be enough because: a) the socio-cultural context in which their application might occur on the requisite scale does not exist; and b) even the development of the possible technologies requires a more flexible framework than presently exists.

The sources of these difficulties lie in both the organization of science and technology and of the societies in which they work. First, the pressures for specialization within science have outstripped the capacity for generalization that is required for the application of scientific knowledge.

Second, the primary reliance upon market forces for the production and deployment of technology is incapable of providing the foresight required for the realization of long-term needs. In short, the incompatability of short term profits and long-term requirements becomes increasingly evident in various spheres. Third, the lack of a consistent set of societal goals undermines any attempt at such planning which then becomes bogged down in short-run political considerations. The interconnections between technological innovation, economic power, and political power are such that breaking out of the vicious circle of the neo-capitalist growth economy appears impossible, at least until the average person is given some sense

that his needs for security and variety in life can be realized in some other way than through the "American dream" of every family with its suburban house, mountain cabin, stable, swimming pool, private college, yacht, three cars, etc.

8. Growing Points of Synthesis

Given the crisis and inadequate responses referred to above, in what direction does the educator turn for indications of alternative foundations for the relationship between technology, science, man and society? The past decade has witnessed fundamental shifts within philosophy, natural and social sciences which suggest that the bases for more viable alternatives are emerging. First, in the physical and biological sciences, integrative perspectives have emerged in the form of "general systems" theory and its effort to describe the underlying uniformities of nature and to develop appropriate control technologies. In the social sciences, on the other hand, the reversion to the central question of all social theory -- human nature -- has led to the reassertion of the peculiar difficulties of controlling social change in cultural systems which can be treated as if they were "systems" only for limited purposes on the basis of their formal biological and physical analogues. The historical character of social systems, the fact that they are the consequence of the on-going activity of human actors require that they be recognized as "open systems" which in a sense are not really systems at all. But that is a point which cannot be overlooked: at what point is an aggregate so unsystematic as to no longer be subject to meaningful systems analysis in other than purely meta-

phorical terms?

1. General systems theory: the unity of science.

General systems theory and philosophy constitute a diffuse set of convergent movements of thought which embrace a range of scientific and philosophical issues such that it can be seen as the heir to the tradition of the "unity" of science in Western thought.[8] This diversity, which ranges from the subtleties of the philosophy of science, searches for formal interdisciplinary uniformities, control technologies, and theories of man and society as systems.[9] While such thinking has greatly extended the potential applications of science, it has not succeeded in eliminating major substantive problems that stem from the limited degree to which its object in the social sciences -- individuals, groups, societies -- are indeed determinate systems which can be usefully described in formal languages.

The reasons for this limitation is implicit, nevertheless, in the basic principles of the framework of general systems. In that it acknowledges man and human cultures as part of the evolutionary hierarchy of complexity and organization, it must acknowledge that there are aspects of social phenomena which cannot be subsumed under the framework of a system of thought based upon the search for formal identities in nature. The emergent properties of socio-cultural evolution create discontinuities which underlie the unique aspects of the human sciences. The social sciences and humanities are concerned as well with the dissimilarities of human phenomena. Any effort to organize and control the direction of change which does not take into account such historical differences is doomed to

ultimate failure. As a consequence, the notion of a "science of man" conveys a rather different perspective in which General Systems Theory becomes a potential instrument of human purposes rather than a means which becomes their ends as well.

2. Philosophical Anthropology: the theory of human nature.

The idea of a "science of man" has forcefully been developed by Ernest Becker (1967, 1968, 1971). In mediating between the Rousseauian romanticism of the New Left and the pseudo-realism of the various bio-determinisms which have always provided sustenance to the interests and/or disappointments of the conservative, he has provided what is in effect a model for a new kind of political culture. That is to say, he has sketched the outlines of a rational ideology that could provide the basis for consensus of a new kind of political system in which political conflicts could be worked out in a radically different context. Within such a framework scientific technology would operate under the constraints of collective needs rather than expand unchecked and without direction under the impact of individual profit motives. Further, in as much as the scientist and planner is by definition human and thus shaped by the social process in which he operates, the dangerous illusions of scientific hubris could be restrained. This contrast between the role of a science of man, drawing simultaneously upon American pragmatic naturalism and critical European social theory, is aptly expressed in a somewhat different way by Paul Goodman:

> It was the genius of American pragmatism, our great contribution to world philosophy, to show that the means define and color the ends, to find value in operations and materials, to dignify workmanship and the workaday, to make consummation less isolated,

> more in-process-forward, to be growth as well as good. But in recent decades there has occurred an astonishing reversal: the tendency of American philosophy, e.g. analytic logic or cybernetics, has been to drain value from both making and use, from either the working and materials or moral and psychological goods, and to define precisely by intermediary, logistics, systems, and communications, what Max Weber called rationalization. Then the medium is all the message there is. The pragmatists added value, especially in everyday affairs. Systems analysis has drained value, except for a few moments of collective achievement. Its planning refines and streamlines the intermediary as if for its own sake; it adds constraints without enriching life (1970:199-200).

3. Macrosociology: the ideal of an "active society".

The perspectives outlined above suggest the belief that to some extent the re-organization of scientific priorities carries with it the possibility of a breakthrough, a new threshold of organization, for human societies. If so, for the first time the prospect of a stage of societal evolution might be partially anticipated prior to the fact. The reason for this is self-evident: the very step itself is unique in that it requires for its realization a degree of collective self-awareness hitherto largely absent. The industrial revolution was largely the unintended consequences of the actions of individuals and groups pursuing their own interests, as was each prior major evolutionary transformation. They just happened. But the message of the current crisis is that it cannot "just happen" again.[10] Without collective foresight evolutionary regression is highly probable.

The kind of "political culture" which should underlie such an emergent type of society has been already touched upon. To extend this concern a step further, we might ask what the structural characteristics of such a society might be like.

Such a utopian model has been developed by Amitai Etzioni (1968). Taking, as does Becker, the reduction of alienation as the central moral problem of social science, he constructs a model of the formal features of a society that would operate as a self-realizing system. But this suggestive framework perhaps should be juxtaposed to the similarly intentioned but more pragmatically oriented observations of Paul Goodman in his "Notes of a Neolithic Conservative". There we find a vision less epic than Etzioni's American version, but perhaps more suited to the historical peculiarities of Canada. As Goodman puts it:

> Since I am often on Canadian TV and radio, I tell it to the Canadians. If they would cut the American corporations down to size, it would cost them three or four years of unemployment and austerity, but then, in my opinion, Canada could become the most livable nation in the world, like Denmark but rich in resources and space and heterogeneous population, with its own corporations, free businesses, and cooperatives, a reasonable amount of socialism, a sector of communism or guaranteed income as is suitable to affluent productivity, plenty of farmers, cities not too big, plenty of scientists and academics, a decent traditional bureaucracy, a nonaligned foreign policy. A great modern nation not yet too far gone in modern mistakes (1970:198).

C. General and Continuing Education and Social Adaptation

At this point it is appropriate to begin to relate these considerations to the specific problem at hand: the content of general and continuing education. The current state of affairs has, I think, demonstrated the inadequacies of the dominant philosophical rationales underlying such programs. Since it is on the basis of such assumptions that rational criteria of evaluation must be based, it might be instructive to consider the existing alternatives.

1. Three Traditions in General Education

A recent survey of general higher education (Williams, 1968) has identified three different foundations for programs in the United States, the only country where such interests have a long tradition. The first, the neo-Thomist, provides unity for Roman Catholic colleges, but remains parochial in its influence and peripheral to the concerns of contemporary societies (Williams, 1968:223). Perhaps the most well-known expression of this influence has been the Great Books which have been utilized in adult and continuing education programs otherwise conducted in a neo-humanist framework -- the second and most dominant tradition. This antiquarian tendency in neo-humanism may be taken as an expression of its inability to sustain its critical inspiration.

> The image is apt. To the critics of New Humanism and the Great Books the whole thing smelled of Hellenistic and even medieval antiquarianism, separated by an abysmal gulf from most of the realities of modern society: a fog-shrouded castle that a few well-intentioned but hopelessly misoriented people were trying to construct smack in the middle of the jet runway of modern life (Becker, 1967:21).

This tendency is also a reflection of its eclecticism, yet it remains potentially critical in its neo-humanist emphasis on the aristocratic ideal of personality. Thus it can be argued that the failure of the New Humanism stems from never having been given an adequate application (Becker, 1967:11).

Nevertheless, one can raise the question that there are even more fundamental flaws than eclectic and antiquarian interpretations. Two examples support this position. First, the example of Nazi Germany and the America of the Vietnamese War have made us increasingly aware of the limited civilizing effects of classical humanism

transferred without direct reference to the great issues of the present. Second, as one study of the impact of the "Great Books" in continuing education concluded:

> In general, members of each major faith show a less single-minded dedication to their own denominational position and a greater acceptance of "liberal alternatives." The trend is not interpreted as one of dramatic changes in faith but rather as an expansion of the breadth and scope of religious ideas which are considered to be worthy of serious attention. Political changes appear to be more clear-cut, the trend being for an increase in concern about loss of civil liberties, accompanied by an increase in concern about too much government -- a syndrome which may be alternatively interpreted as "18th century liberalism" or "new conservatism" (Davis, 1957:114).

What then of the third tradition, which is more commonly known as "progressivism" but whose underlying philosophical positions are those of naturalism and instrumentalism. Contrary to popular belief, the influence of progressivism has been confined predominantly to the primary and secondary levels:

> The impact of the views of John Dewey is widely recognized in the fields of nursery schools,primary schools, and secondary schools in the United States. His influence is much smaller at the tertiary level, because colleges of liberal arts have been more influenced by classical humanists, rationalists, and the traditional ideas of Europe -- except in the case of few experimental colleges. The insecurity flowing from the cold war has led to conservatism, and a search for intellectual and moral certainty, through philosophies based on dogma (Williams, 1968:222).

This evaluation was made prior to the events of the late 1960's and stands as a characterization of the previous two decades. One of the merits of Ernest Becker's work on education has been to recognize this problem:

> Needless to add, a philosopher of Dewey's stature -- the Kant of the twentieth century, if I may make so bold -- knew what the lack was. He knew what education lacked, that it was not enough to make it "progressive," that it also had to have a critical content. The easy

> carpers on progressive education very conveniently overlooked the whole of Dewey's vision ... When Dewey, late in life, lamented the aimlessness of education, he saw that it lacked precisely a frame of reference, a unified objective, and that without it, education would continue to flounder (1967:81).

Though Dewey was in the American context a "radical," his vision was perhaps restricted by living in a world in which liberal optimism could be reasonably entertained. Neither the contradictions of the American experience, nor the limited applicability of that experience to the underdeveloped nations had become clear. As a consequence, though the tradition of which he was the leading figure has bequeathed us the foundations for a viable philosophy of science and social psychology for the science of man, three major dimensions did not receive adequate attention. <u>First</u>, the social psychology lacked the explicit dilineation of either existential inwardness or conflict of the subconscious. <u>Second</u>, the social psychology was not accompanied by a comparable elaboration of a structural sociology. And <u>third</u>, the biosystemic constraints imposed by nature did not receive adequate consideration.

In failing to elaborate a depth psychology, Dewey was unable to deliniate the interconnection between individual pathology and social structure. This deprived his moral vision of much of the force of a unifying ideology for social action. Becker, in retracing Dewey's roots in Hegel, Marx, and Darwin, finds some of the insights of Freud a missing element. Taken together, he develops the idea of a synthetic theory of alienation as the basis of a science of man as anthropodicy (Becker, 1967, 1968). At the same time this moral ideal is contrained by a realism stemming from an appreciation of some of the implications of Freudian theory and more recently of ethology:

> Finally, belatedly making peace with Freud and leaning onto Fromm and Rank means accepting into one's thought a truly rounded and less rosy view of human nature; whereas I once as a social scientist dedicatedly followed Rousseau in his straight-forward view that man is natural and good, and is "corrupted by society," I slighted the darker side, side of human evil and viciousness....I don't mean to imply that Rousseau has been negated or supplanted, that the Enlightenment hope is an empty fantasy, but only that modern psychology has revealed that the task of bringing into being the New World that Rousseau hoped for will be so much more problematic and difficult than he dreamed (Becker 1971:ix-x).

For the macroscopic perspective missing in Dewey -- and in early American pragmatism in general, the work of Etzioni (1968), Dunn (1971), Buckley (1967), and Birnbaum (1969), should be referred to. Drawing cautiously upon cybernetics and systems theory and combining this with the historical dimension found in Marx and Weber, they provide some indications of what an adaptive future society might look like.

There is yet a third dimension of Dewey's naturalism which was not fully developed in his writings, in part because of the failure of science itself to anticipate the limits of nature before the onslaught of industrialism. This threat to the biosystem can be increasingly seen as the counterpoint, a collective imperative, which must be reconciled with the directly felt individual imperative in alienation. This requires a macroscopic naturalistic level of analysis to supplement the microscopic or social psychological perspective emphasized in Becker's writings. They are certainly not contradictory, though their complementarity is not automatic. For some strategies of ameliorating alienation may involve a focus on exclusively individual interests. This is the paradox of the ideal heroism of religion if pursued to the exclusion of secular interests.[11]

2. Knowledge in Evolutionary Perspective

Taken together we have some of the basic insights for viewing the problem of knowledge in evolutionary perspective.[12] The idea of an "active society," whose primary goal is the reduction of alienation, provides a specific framework for viewing the historical problems of the educational process. Taking into account that societies are in turn set within the constraints of nature and her limited resources the task of reducing alienation must proceed within more limited material means and with full awareness of the biologically competitive interrelationships of societies and their interdependence.

The implications of this framework for general and continuing education can only be touched upon briefly. The essential point is that such educational activities must increasingly be evaluated not in terms of short-term "economistic" criteria, but with respect to long-term adaptive needs. For this purpose cost-benefit analysis has only limited applicability. Such long-term values are necessary for the translation of foresight into actual social and educational policies. Here we have, in effect, an excellent demonstration of the constraining effects of "systems" type approaches that proceed from within the ideological framework of the political status quo rather than at the behest of the critical evolutionary perspective of the science of man. For only there can such vague notions as survival and quality of life be given a specific meaning and incorporated into collective action.

3. Dilemmas of Social Accounting in Continuing Education

Continuing educational activities may be conceptualized in at least three different ways: structural (formal), functional, and processual.[13] The first, structural, corresponds to the outward form of the activity: classroom, self-directed group, residential conference, voluntary association, or the tutorial relationship. While this stress on form is useful for some research purposes where the peculiarities of a specific form are under examination (such as the interpersonal relationships in residential settings), it operates at too low a level of generality to capture the basic common features of educational activities. Thus, to speak of continuing education in general, a much broader framework is required.

With this problem in mind, recent work has suggested the utility of breaking down the concept of continuing education into functional categories. This allows a focus on the "output" or goals of the activity, an important consideration for many purposes in planning and evaluation. A study by Levin and Slavet (1970) has suggested seven functions for continuing education.[14] As opposed to the proliferation of actual structures which carry out such activities (functions), ranging from public to private and various combinations, such a strategy provides a useful perspective. Yet a closer examination of its limitations and dangers provides a useful introduction to the problems of evaluation in continuing education, especially of efforts to use various forms of "systems" type analysis.

The definitions cited above were taken from a study prepared for the state of Massachusetts by Levin and Slavet and reflects an effort to evaluate its programs in terms of a "cost-benefit" analysis.

A problem becomes immediately apparent, that of measuring costs and even worse, benefits. In any case each measurement decision requires interpretive value judgements and a methodologically necessary exclusion of the measurement of long-term values. The reasons are in part methodological (they cannot be measured with the same rigour as other variables) and partly theoretical, (estimation of longer term considerations requires a theory of social change). For instance, while the Massachusetts study advocates enhancing the priority of both agency citizen-client education-information and public staff development programs, the lack of serious studies on their "economic" benefits is taken to justify a relative neglect of these areas (Levin and Slavet, 1970:20). This same logic is used to exclude avocational education altogether:

> Given other needs, education for avocational purposes does not seem to warrent a major effort by the state. In terms of economic return, the cost-benefit ratios as determined by standard procedures will not be high because this activity is not likely to result in higher salaries, promotion or increased ability to get a job. A heavy state commitment in this field is less urgent since the market consists mainly of persons who have both time and money to pursue leisure oriented programs which are not directly related to generating added income. Participants in avocational education tend to be better educated, and to be in the high earnings element of the state's population who can make private arrangements for leisure time pursuits (emphasis added) (Levin and Slavet, 1970:66).

Such a conception of education as a "market" in which participation is "profit-oriented" serves to severely limit the framework of planning and is representative of a mentality in which the "objectivity" of measurement totally displaces the question of appraisal. Here is not the place to call into question the assumption underlying computations of increased earnings provided by education in which this is credited as representing the quantity of collective

gain. In advanced capitalist societies with chronic unemployment there is a great deal of evidence that vocational training beyond a certain point tends to determine who gets jobs rather than significantly affecting overall productivity. As such they serve to increase individual mobility more than the GNP; to count all increases in income as a collective benefit becomes misleading. Had that person not taken that job someone else -- without the training -- could take it.

The admission that the "economic return" "as determined by standard procedures" would not be high from avocational continuing education touches upon but fails to tackle the underlying methodological dilemma: the contradiction between short-term and long-term calculations of monetary benefits. Until such analysts develop methods for estimating the potential benefit say, for example, of changed consumption patterns on the part of an individual over a fourty year period, they cannot escape the charge of conducting pseudo-scientific research. Nor can they be taken seriously as definers of policy given such narrow frameworks of evaluation. For that reason it is advocated here that measurement be supplemented by reasoned, long-term appraisals, a strategy which in turn must act upon the conception of measurement and the subjective decisions that go into the formulation of research programs.

A further problem of this kind of functional breakdown of continuing education activities is that it glosses over the historical sources and pernicious effects of the institutional separation of vocational and non-vocational continuing education (Hely, 1962:74-7). In general the history of adult education is characterized by a relative neglect of vocational and professional education. The

most obvious reason for this being that the technical training of the producer was of obvious economic benefit to the employer and thus carried out directly through on-the-job training and apprenticeship systems. Only with the recognition of the discriminatory effects of these private programs and the general public awareness of the threat posed by economic inequality and the increasing pace of automation, did vocational training become a popular public activity in North America. (As pointed out earlier, the popular myth that "education" alone can solve all such problems is tenacious and continues to dominate government planning. It is obvious that new training programmes are considerably more expedient than restructuring the economy.)

Public support for non-vocational training, however, has always been a struggle carried on by well-meaning individuals with a blind faith in the civilizing effects of "culture" and "liberal education". Such programmes were supported of course, largely because of the social positions of those organizing them. In any case the general tendency was to assume that vocational and professional training was the task of youth education, except in those exceptional circumstances where adults required basic education (literacy) to even participate in privately sponsored on the job training. This kind of activity was, of course, strictly separated institutionally from non-vocational training of adults.

But as became apparent by the time of the 1960 Unesco conference in Montreal this separation was untenable. In an era of incessant economic change, retraining confined to new vocational skills -- which might become obsolete within a few years -- was not sufficient to create the generalized occupational flexibility required in the

age of automation (Hely, 1962:75). As a Unesco sponsored study summarizing these discussions concludes:

> Both the workers thrown out of work by automation, and the managers of large-scale organizations, who face the complexity of decision-making in a rapidly changing society, need not only retraining and professional refresher courses but the broad understanding of society which only liberal education can provide. Just as important are the similar needs of the peasant in the developing countries of the world....He needs literacy. He needs training in the new technical skills he must use. But literacy and technical skills by themselves are not enough. He must be offered educational training which will give him the perspective to see changes in terms of national ends and means, which will provide him with the power to exercise some influence on their nature and direction....(Hely, 1962:77-8).

From the perspective of a decade, we are increasingly aware that even advanced economies must come to terms with limited means and ends: adult education as primarily a vehicle for economic growth is no longer an unquestionable assumption.

As a consequence, any efforts to conceptualize the planning of continuing education which artificially breaks up the task into functional categories completely misses the practical problem of combining vocational and non-vocational goals, an objective which flows from the recognition of their interrelationship. Thus, the isolation of avocational and cultural education as well as citizen-client education from various levels of occupational training makes no long-term sense. For the first is the source of the values and appraisals that make client-citizen issues make sense. Nor can occupational training at any level afford to neglect the task of utilizing leisure time (following from short work hours and more frequent periods of unemployment at upper occupational levels) or the communication of the general understanding necessary for occupational competence in a rapidly changing economy. But how do you

measure the increased flexibility resulting from a more constructive (and perhaps less consumptive) use of leisure time, of an increased capacity for continuous self-guided, re-training on the job? These are the kinds of questions (higher-level, largely non-measurable "functions") which confront what is best termed "continuing education" today, and suggest the scope of the task of re-orienting attention from narrow conceptions of "cost-benefit" analysis.

4. Toward a Processual, Self-Guiding Model of Continuing Education

A third strategy as opposed to structural and functional, is found in the attempt to view educational activities as a social process. Stemming from the Deweyian tradition, this basic approach has been applied to continuing and adult education in a recent study by Cyril Houle (1972). Since this study was not available until after the field work for the series under examination had been completed, I was not able to organize my research with his contribution in mind. Nevertheless, given that my initial orientation was very similar, much of my own work could be readily translated into his schema. Still I have not attempted to do this formally, preferring to stay with a format consistent with the data as collected. An outline of his basic orientation, however, is useful as it coincides with the perspective outline above. Yet to the degree that his approach is purely formal and does not consider the current situation in continuing education, I do find it necessary to depart from his "system".

In his effort to "identify the basic unity of process" that underlies the surface realities of those disparate activities labeled "adult education", Houle provides the following definition:

> Adult education is the process by which men and women alone, in groups, or in institutional settings seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge, or sensitiveness; ot it is any process by men and women improve in these ways (1972:52).

The model of education design developed from this position is taken to rest upon the following seven assumptions:

1. Any episode of learning occurs in a specific situation and is profoundly influenced by that fact.

2. The analysis or planning of education activities must be based on the realities of human experience and their constant change.

3. Education is a practical art.

4. Education is a cooperative rather than an operative art.

5. The planning or analysis of an educational activity is usually undertaken in terms of some period which the mind abstracts for analytical purposes from complicated reality.

6. The planning or analysis of an educational activity may be undertaken by an educator, a learner, an independent analyst, or some combination of the three.

7. A design of education can be best understood as a complex of interacting elements, not as a sequence of events (for further elaboration, cf. Houle, 1972:32-40).

In Houle's formulation of the problem of educational design, two complementary actions are essential to planning: first, to establish the basic category of the learning situation and two, to apply the more general framework or model of design to that particular activity (1972:40). For this purpose he proposes a set of eleven such categories of "educational design situations."[15] And, as he emphasizes, "the central question is not 'Is Category A better than Category B?' but 'In what circumstances is Category A better than Category B?"

The importance of the distinction between various types of learning activities, and the most appropriate criteria for establishing such a typology, becomes evident when we consider the difficulties encountered in current discussions. There are those who automatically assume that education is about the formal classroom situation in which a teacher stands at the front of an audience of students. In response to this formalism, however, a number of other types of situations have been advocated and practised, such as the small self-directed group, the residential conference or institute, the voluntary association, and the tutorial relationship.

Two problems emerge from this kind of classification and the institutional conflicts from which it emerged. On the one hand there is a tendency for each of these forms to become the basis for assertions of exclusiveness or superiority to all or some of the others. What is gained in the clarity of immediate recognition is lost in a failure to make more subtle distinctions that would allow a more comprehensive view of learning situations. In short, there is no way for the planner to decide the circumstances in which one approach may be more useful than another. He is left with a set of distinctions more readily utilized for polemical assertions of universal superiority.[16]

What is needed -- and this is what Houle attempts to provide -- are analytical distinctions more adapted to the more fundamental processes underlying educational activities rather than focusing on their outward form. For the latter obscures, for instance, the centrality of the sources of authority and direction with respect to control and planning. Nor does focus on the outward form provide any sense of the commonalities linking the great range of educational

contexts. Thus, Houle sets out in brief form a more comprehensive set of design distinctions.[17]

Whereas the functional cost-benefit approach is useful for some evaluative purposes, the process approach has the advantage of describing concretely what happens in educational situations. But left in these terms, the process analysis does not really tell us how evaluation should be carried out. What criteria are we to utilize to design programs? What are the kinds of priorities which should be asserted in the current situation of continuing education? Unfortunately, Houle has nothing to say about all this. He has in effect separated process from policy to such an extent that the link is left totally up to the reader, outside of vague references to "individual improvement."

This is, of course, the limitation of all efforts at "systems" analysis which seek to operate at a level of generalization more abstract than any specific historical situation. Discussion is carried on at the level of abstract principles of education design. The <u>ends</u> of such design are not considered. Houle's principles could be used equally well by the Communist Party or the Four Square Gospel Church. While this is consistent with the level of abstraction at which system theories operate, it is ironic that Houle's model retains the form but not the substance of formal systems analysis. That is, he uses the jargon but does not provide the basis for concrete operationalization.

Now my purpose is not to criticize him for having not developed a formal model, but for having jumped on the bandwagon of "systems theory" without fully realizing what this requires. Moreover, in the process he neglects the kinds of considerations which

are the appropriate tasks of non-formal but systematic inquiries. In short, he must do what systems theory cannot do: help specify the contextual factors crucial to educational design and to suggest the kinds of needs which could be met through appropriate continuing educational resources.[18] Implicit in my discussion of the kind of re-direction required in continuing education are the kinds of considerations Houle would have done well to take into account. Thus, while I accept his suggestions regarding the nature of educational processes and the generic problems of educational design, I have found it necessary to take the further step of specifying the <u>content</u> of the educational tasks under examination. To do this makes it possible to take into account the special difficulties that arise given the kinds of objectives that viewing the problem in evolutionary perspective provides. The application of the concepts of educational process is not possible <u>without</u> taking into account that which is to be communicated and to whom. Every type of learning situation has its unique problems.

As a consequence, a precise division of labor between the administrator-planner and the educator is not the most effective strategy. The administrator cannot plan in the vacuum of systems and processes. For it becomes quickly apparent, as this study discovered, that disciplinary experts have little awareness of the problems of popularization nor the integrative framework within which to develop general programs.

This failure on the part of Houle is perhaps related to the general tendency in the last two or three decades for the "progressive" educationists to lose sight of the content of programs. As a consequence, Houle's weakness is rooted in aspects of Dewey's own

philosophy which were not adequately developed. As Becker suggests:

> How clear Dewey's philosophy was in its historical aim, how consistent in its internal coherence, how unmistakable in its social-problem focus. How clear too the reason that it failed, in all three spheres. Like all the other great visions and proposals that sprang from the breast of the Enlightenment, it was a clarion call to action, to liberation, to a new human image. And like them, it was little more than a call -- it was a form that lacked content (1967:80-1).

As it happens, the series under examination was content-oriented in that this provided the primary motivation for its organization. The dialectical relationship between the subjective perspective of the science of man as "anthropodicy" -- the overcoming of the socially reducible sources of alienation -- and the objective naturalistic framework of "education for survival" provided an excellent basis for discussion. These poles were in addition precisely the dimensions of Dewey's tradition which had not been adequately developed. But accepting this content, and the appropriate goals for general and continuing education, <u>how</u> do we go about designing appropriate educational situations? It is this question which dominates the following analysis of the series "Dialogue on Man." And these are precisely the kinds of questions which must be approached from the social psychological perspective characteristic of viewing education as a social process.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The length of the introduction is somewhat unusual and deserves some explanation. It is essentially an argument for a particular philosophical-scientific framework for viewing the tasks of continuing education. While it was my original intention to develop this as an independent, self-sufficient thesis, the scope and complexity of the issues raised quickly outstripped my capacity for controlled analysis. As a consequence what is presented here is more in the form of a polemical statement of a position rather than a close reasoned effort at demonstrating its validity.

The objective of the subsequent sections is thus to outline in a tentative, preliminary form some of the general perspectives of the dialogue around which a new consensus is hopefully being shaped. This is intended not as a contribution to the dialogue itself as such, but rather as an exploration of the problem of translating its implications to a broader public. In a sense then, it suggests some of the organizing points around which an intensive non-technical inter-disciplinary programme might be developed. Of course more specific considerations, such as those dictated by the background and abilities of the potential audiences have not been taken into account. For example, whether those involved in such a programme were undergraduates in general, science or non-science students, graduate students and faculty or drawn from the population of those interested in "continuing education," would have a fundamental shape on the details of the presentation -- the illustrative examples, the emphases, the depth and the breadth.

The shape of this outline and especially the points of conflict around which it has been suggested that dialogue should ensue, have been profoundly influenced by a reconstruction of the series "dialogue on man" which often revealed (if usually unnoticed or dimly perceived and articulated at the time) interesting differences of perspective and value. In particular the interpretations of the materials of the two permanent panelists are foundational.

The reminder of the thesis (Chap. II-V) involves the analysis and evaluation of a continuing education programme designed to communicate some of the fundamental concepts of the perspective outlined briefly in this introduction. Thus the content of the series poses special problems of communication between specialists and lay citizens. The problem here is certainly the crucial educational dilemma of the decade: how can the knowledge elites of modern societies communicate to non-professional leaders of public opinion the concepts necessary to make intelligent (adaptive) decisions? Underlying this concern is the assumption that if indeed these concepts can be communicated, the value imperatives they contain will provide an adaptive spectrum of choices. If they cannot, decisions will continue to be increasingly made in terms of conceptual maps of the world which are distorted both emperically and with respect to the values which may be reasonably reconciled with them.

[2]For a representative sampling of literature touching upon this point see: Commoner, 1971; Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1970;

Meadows, et. al., 1972; Odum, 1971; Shepard and McKinley, 1969; Ward and Dubos, 1972.

[3]cf. Georgescu-Roegen, 1971.

[4]cf. Horowitz, 1972.

[5]cf. Birnbaum, 1969; Hauser 1971.

[6]The literature here is overwhelming. On aspects of modern culture see: Bennis and Slater, 1968; Slater, 1970; Klapp, 1969; Means, 1970; Toffler, 1970; Ferkiss, 1969; Zijderveld, 1971. On social stress, Levine and Scotch, 1970. On sensitivity movements, Back, 1972.

[7]For historical background see Armytage, 1969. For a neo-Marxist perspective: Marcuse, 1966 and the reply by Habermas, 1971. For conservative views: Ellul, 1964 and Grant, 1969. Anarchist criticism: Goodman, 1970. Behaviorism: Skinner, 1972. Cybernetics: Vickers, 1970. And the distortions of communication: Schiller, 1971.

[8]In tracing the science of man in his "synoptic chart", Becker (1968:344-345) fails to note this movement as the successor to the breakdown of Logical Empiricism as a source for inspiration for the unity of science. But the shift from an attempt to reduce scientific knowledge to a common language, to that of the structural and functional isomorphisms of "systems" has proved more fruitful. While this adds nothing new to the science of man as philosophical anthropology, it does, I think, constitute an advance that facilitates the application of technology. The question remains, of course, whether it will simply serve the interests of those with power under the current status quo or will it instead operate under the critical scrutiny of the "science of man."

[9]The basic documents here are Bertalannfy, 1968 and Buckley, 1967, 1968. Also Laszlo, 1972. On applications to social science: Youngquist, 1971; Attinger, 1970. The implications of such techniques for control technology are stressed in Youngquist, 1971.

[10]For such a future orientation see Sackman, 1967; Dunn, 1971; Etzioni, 1969; and Bell and Mau, 1971. For a popularization of Etzioni: Breed, 1971.

[11]The problems entailed by the fact that value systems tend to be defined exclusively in terms of a limited perspective or level of analysis has been emphasized by Pepper, 1958, 1960. See also Potter, 1971.

[12]See Purpel and Belanger, 1972 for such an evolutionary perspective. The articles by Scriven, 1972 and Harman, 1972 are especially helpful syntheses.

[13]On administration in continuing education see Shaw, 1969; for teaching techniques, Stephens and Roderick, 1971.

[14]On cost-benefit analysis and related techniques see Wildavsky, 1966.

These functions are as follows (by Levin and Slavet, 1970: xx-xxi):

1) Adult Basic Education (ABE), which concerns educational programs designed for persons with less than the equivalent of an eight grade education.

2) High School Equivalency, which provides education from the completion of the eighth grade level up through twelve years of school.

3) Citizenship Education, which is designed to prepare aliens... for citizenship. It may include ABE and high school equivalency education in addition to instruction in civics... and history.

4) Occupational Education and Training, which includes pre-employment and skill training and occupational upgrading. For disadvantaged adults this usually includes ABE and possibly high school equivalency education.

5) Avocational and Cultural Education, which cover leisure-time instruction, courses and related activities...

6) Staff Training and Career Development of State Officials and Employees, a critical, neglected area which has not normally been included under the continuing education umbrella, but is considered sufficiently important and relevant to be accorded high priority.

7) Citizen-client Education, which refers to the education responsibilities which all state agencies have for informing and educating the public about agency goals and problems... Examples are environmental education, driver training activities and anti-smoking campaigns. This broad heading includes health education, family life education, education for aging, consumer education and other types of education aimed at special client groups.

[15]The eleven major categories of educational design situations are as follows (Houle, 1972:44):

Individual

C-1 An individual designs an activity for himself.

C-2 An individual or a group designs an activity for another individual.

Group

C-3 A group (with or without a continuing leader) designs an activity for itself.

C-4 A teacher or a group of teachers designs an activity for, and often with, a group of students.

C-5 A committee designs an activity for a larger group.

C-6 Two or more groups design an activity which will enhance their combined programs of service.

Institution

C-7 A new institution is designed.

C-8 An institution designs an activity in a new format.

C-9 An institution designs a new activity in an established format.

C-10 Two or more institutions design an activity which will enhance their combined programs of service.

Mass

C-11 An individual, group,or institution designs an activity for a mass audience.

[16]A similar situation is characteristic of psychotherapy where the formation of various "schools" has inhibited the recognition of common underlying "curative factors" or processes. This is the thesis of Yalom, 1970.

[17]Once the appropriate central and subordinate categories of educational design have been identified, the task of the planner becomes that of harmonizing the special characteristics of the activity with the more general criteria of the overall framework of educational design (Houle 1972:46). The following diagram captures the key features - the "decision points" - of such a model (Figure #1;47):

1. A possible educational activity is identified

2. A decision is made to proceed

3. Objectives are identified and refined

4. A suitable format is designed
    a. Resources
    b. Leaders
    c. Methods
    d. Schedule
    e. Sequence
    f. Social Reinforcement
    g. Individualization
    h. Roles and Relationships
    i. Criteria of Evaluation
    j. Clarity of Design

5. The format is fitted into larger patterns of life
    a. Guidance
    b. Life Style
    c. Finance
    d. Interpretation

6. The plan is put into effect

7. The results are measured and appraised.

[18] Houle describes his framework as a "system" and alludes to the systems theoretical approaches in education as thus far unable to deal with other than large scale operations and therefore incapable of dealing with the routine planning activities of the learner and educator (1972:23-25). In effect Houle attempts to get his model into the fashionable "systems" framework through an implicit re-definition of the term to include what is essentially a qualitative processual model. Thus, in his glossary, he notes:

> system: A body of interdependent factors which form a collective entity. Here most commonly used in two senses: as the way of planning or analyzing education designs proposed in this book, or as the way of achieving the same end proposed by someone else.
>
> systems analysis: The conceptualization of a general process, usually in a diagram, by which the making of judgements and the taking of actions can be put into an orderly and established flow of work (1972:236).

Needless to say, these definitions do not correspond to the more rigorous formulations of operations research. Rather, they speak more of Dewey. As Houle notes at one point:

> When some of the detailed conceptualizations of process (such as change theory and systems analysis) grow tedious and mechanical, it is refreshing to return to their well springs in Dewey's writing to gain the vast perspective it provides (1972:13).

This is a crucial point which Houle does not elaborate upon -- a fact which underscores a major limitation of his own study. He refuses to raise explicitely the issues involved in his rejection of more formalized systems models. In particular, he does not refer to the value priorities implicit in the use of such models which require the utilization of quantifiable variables (ultimately money) to the exclusion of all other values and objectives.

Unlike Houle, formal systems theorists do raise the question of the ends of educational activities and quickly resolve the matter through reference to their functions and their monetary value. In that the question of value is raised, this corrects a limitation of Houle. However, in that its method entails inadequate solution, it provides an example of questionable expediency.

II. THE STRATEGY OF EVALUATION: SOME METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Research Procedures: Measurement vs. Appraisal

The final phase of an educational activity is of course that of assessment - a kind of feedback procedure crucial to the planning of subsequent projects.[1] As Houle puts it:

> While a program is under way, it's quality is constantly being appraised by its participants. After it has been completed, they all make a summative judgment of how good it has been. When the members of a group, class or conference disperse, never to be reassembled, when the spirit and harmony of their community of interest disappears, when the final speeches have been made and the good-byes said, what values remain? Has it all been worth while?
>
> The answer to this question is provided by the use of a dual process. The first is measurement, and the determination by objective means of the extent to which learners have achieved the criteria of evaluation. The second part is appraisal, a subjective judgment of how well educational objectives have been achieved. Appraisal may incorporate the data provided by measurement but it goes beyond them to sum them up, to reflect about their meaning, and to make a final culminating assessment of the value of the activity. (Houle, 1972:182)

Unfortunately, Houle provides little guidance as to how such appraisal should be carried out. This is surprising given the difficulty of measuring results in the great number of continuing education programmes concerned with communicating general concepts rather than specific bodies of knowledge or skills. Whereas he refers to the literature on evaluative measurement, we find nothing specific with regard to appraisal (cf. 1972:299-300). Further, by

stressing the objective-subjective duality of the evaluative process, he leaves the unaware reader without any guidance as to how qualitative procedures may take on objective characteristics which allow something other than purely "subjective judgments" in the customary arbitrary sense. Nor does he take adequate account of the often specious "objectivity" of evaluative measurement.

Accordingly, it is necessary to spell out in some detail the theoretical perspective and research techniques appropriate to an ethnographic case study based upon participant observation.

1. a) Theoretical perspectives

As an evaluation project this study borrows selectively from the wide range of possible ways of looking at social reality in a disciplined (scientific) way. Given that my primary interests are not oriented to specialized social research as such, the specific theoretical subtleties of social research have been subordinated to a focal interest in the design and content of the series in question. For these purposes the most straightforward, communicable, and personally congenial perspective (or way of slicing social reality) was found to be what has been termed symbolic-interactionism.[2]

The most fundamental distinguishing characteristic of this approach as opposed to the more formal and standard research design is the focus on the individual's conceptions of the meanings of his actions. These meanings, rather than objective factors (age, sex, educational level etc.), are taken as important explanatory factors in their own right rather than regarded as messy details

which sometimes contradict objective generalizations. Such objective relationships are not totally excluded, for we can hardly conceptualize social action without them. Thus, there is some consideration of the impact of the physical format of the series upon its functioning or of the effects of age, ideology, or social background upon the behavior of the participants, but these are all peripheral to understanding what the individuals involved are doing and what they are thinking and saying about it. In a sense this strategy is "subjective" in that it takes as valuable information, i.e. data, facts which ordinarily do not lend themselves to precise ordering let alone quantification without grotesque distortions. Some elements of the series are enumerated for informational purposes and a sense of perspective, but this is again peripheral to the main discussion.

The most fundamental strength of the qualitative strategy of participant observation[3] is that it facilitates the "knowing" of phenomena in a direct manner rather than "knowing about" them through intervening mediaries:

> In order to properly understand that style of sociological research variously called "participant observation," "qualitative observation and interviewing," "the case study approach" and the like, it is necessary to begin with a look at some aspects of modern human kind...A significant feature of being a modern person... is to <u>know about</u> a wide variety of other human beings but not to <u>know</u> them. To know about a category of human beings is to have it represented by second parties that such a category exists. We can know about Hottentots, Russians, presidents, delinquents, hippies, or whatever through newspapers, television, face-to-face reports, and other <u>mediated</u> means. But we can also <u>know</u> people through our own direct, face-to-face associations with them, extending over some significant period of time (Lofland, 1971:1).

In so doing, of course, the researcher self-consciously uses

in a more rigorous and disciplined manner a technique which is characteristic of all human interaction:

> In order to feel that one understands what is "going on" with others, most people try to put themselves in the person's shoes. They try to imagine or discern how the other person thinks, acts, and feels. They try holistically to assess the life situation of the other as this other conceives it. In sociological parlance, this is called "taking the role of the other!" ...The fullest condition of participating in the mind of another human being is face-to-face interaction. Face-to-faceness is the irreplaceable character of non-reflectivity and immediacy that furnishes the fullest possibility of truly entering the life, mind, and definitions of the other. Through taking the role of another face-to-face, one gains a sense of understanding him (Lofland, 1971:2).

And as is true of all interaction in novel situations, there is simply no way of anticipating what is to be encountered and to that extent the research strategy is continuously undergoing modification. This becomes difficult, however, in a short series of several weeks where the pressure of the rapid succession of events and their seemingly quick termination does not allow adequate reformulation of the research procedures. In short,

> A major methodological consequence of the commitment is that the qualitative study of people _in situ_ is a _process of discovery_. It is of necessity a process of learning what is happening (Lofland, 1971:4).

To the degree that the phenomenon under investigation is not routinized, to the degree it is novel, the discovery of what is happening cannot be fully anticipated and "learning what is happening" becomes all the more difficult, especially when it contradicts expectations and requires an on-going analysis of the kind that participants themselves generally do not have the time, skills, or psychological distance to attain.

The analysis and evaluation of a single event poses severe problems if we do not know much about that category of events of which it is a part. Such is the case with the series in question. We could label it as a "continuing education course" but that would provide us little insight into precisely what it was all about and especially why a TV Network got involved. In short, this study is faced with evaluating a "unique" event in the sense that from a practical methodological point of view, there is nothing else with which to directly compare it. As a consequence, the task of the investigator of such an unexplored social setting - what we might call an "experiment in integrative adult education" - becomes much closer to that of a reporter than to the traditional image of the objective investigator armed with his scientific instruments. A study such as this is designed to be what has been termed a "reasonable substitute" for first hand, face-to-face knowledge that evades the formalization, objectification, depersonalization, and ultimately the "scientistic" distortion of social events.

A summary description of the "reporter's role" in such a "reasonable substitute" for face-to-face knowing has been provided as follows:

> Using the term "reporter" in the general sense of "he who makes a report" (of whatever kind), it can be said, first, that the reporter should have himself been close to the people he reports on. By the term "close" I refer to four types of proximity. (1) He should have been close in the physical sense of conducting his own life in face-to-face proximity to the persons he tells about. (2) This physical proximity should have extended over some significant period of <u>time</u> and variety of circumstances. (3) The reporter should have developed relationships that provided him reasonable access to the activities of a set of people through their entire round of life. (4) He should have conducted his

> reporting activities in such a way that his reportage can give close and searching attention to the minute matters. He should have paid attention to the minutiae of daily life (Lofland, 1971:3).
>
> Second, the report should be truthful. It should describe what the reporter in good faith believes actually went on; it should be factual...
>
> Third, the report should contain a significant amount of pure description of action, people, activities, and the like. The reality of the place should be conveyed through representation of its mundane aspects in a straightforward manner...
>
> Fourth, fully to capture the reality of a place, the report should contain direct quotations from the participants as they speak and/or from whatever they write down. The reality of face-to-faceness that permits most fully knowing is the reality of spoken messages and gestures...
>
> While the four features just described speak to the legitimate humanistic ends of sociology, it must now be said that _sociological_ studies have to embody yet a fifth feature that strives for a _scientific_ goal. The scientific goal is that of explicit and articulate abstraction and generalization; or, in other words, _analysis_ (Lofland, 1971:3-5).

The focus of analysis here, however, is rather different in that in an evaluation study the primary concern is with assessment. In other words, this analysis is not directed to specifically disciplinary concerns for generalization (for instance, in the subdiscipline of the sociology of education), but to the practical task of judging and modifying a type of consciously organized event. Such a practical interest in the realization of certain abstract objectives (communication of integrative bio-evolutionary concepts in this case) is somewhat different from a purely theoretical interest. For the question is not only _what_ happened but _what_ should have happened and how this might be done in the future.

Such a strategy is in keeping with the initial projection of the dialogue series as one in which "experts and audience can take turns at being both learners and teachers." The problem

is that such a feedback process must be constructed; it is not inherent in the nature of social things in the degree that is necessary for optimal learning and development. This study is a self-conscious effort at such an amplification of the feedback process by which ideally experts and audience would take turns being learners and teachers. As became often painfully clear in the course of this study, people simply do not without resistence cast off their ego-involvement for the sake of feedback adjustments. As a consequence, only the distance provided by the formalities of scholarly discipline and the passing of the event itself will allow the "dialogue about the dialogue series" itself to complete self-consciously that which neither time nor tempers could contain within the pressures of the series in its weekly movement.

(b) Techniques Employed

The qualitative methodological procedures utilized (participant observation, in-depth interviews,[4] documentary analysis (tapes, written materials)) follow from the interactionist perspective outlined above and the evaluation objectives of this study. An attempt was made for informational purposes to use a simple questionnaire at the first session and a somewhat longer "response to the series" questionnaire following the last session, but the poor response rate for both rendered the results of limited value (cf. Appendix A). Other simple enumerations were made based upon interviews, but on the whole the warning of an experienced researcher was heeded: "...in doing a qualitative study, do not try frontally to play the quantitative game" (Lofland, 1971:62).

2. Sources of Data

In the Appendix a detailed account of methodological problems and the sources of data lying behind the study can be found. It is sufficient to note here simply the general nature of these sources:

1) Participant-observation: field notes supplemented by recollections provided the basis for a chronicle of observations on the development of the series from its conception to realization; the observation of each of the sessions of the series and a number of other related gatherings, as well as various personal discussions with organizers and participants.
2) Tape recordings: audio recordings of all the televised proceedings provided the content of questions and dialogues.
3) Documents: memoranda and position papers circulated by the panelists and organizers provided supplementary insights into the organization, content, and reactions to the series.
4) Informational questionnaires: an initial and follow-up questionnaire provided limited background information on the audience and individual reactions to the series.
5) In-depth interviews: interviews of several hours duration with a substantial majority of the audience (carried out during the weeks in which the series was taking place) provided the basis for developing an understanding of the world of the people to and for whom the event had been created.

3. Unexamined and Open Questions

There are some open questions concerning this audience which could not be answered in the given circumstances and the procedures utilized. Most of these center around the representativeness of the audience in "Dialogue on Man" (cf. Lofland, 1971:5, quantitative backdrop vs. qualitative foreground). For instance, how does the audience compare with those in continuing education programmes as a whole? And second, how does it compare to the TV audience which finally viewed the series? While neither of these questions can be answered in other than speculative terms, several points can be raised which point in the direction of hypotheses which might be worth examining for other purposes (cf. Lofland, 1971:63 "auxiliary conjecture").

There is reason to believe that while the audience was perhaps representative of the programmes on the "Quest for Liberation" of which it was a part, it is much less representative of continuing education as a whole. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that a number attended on the basis of direct and indirect acquaintance with the panelists. On the other hand, there is also some question as to whether this audience is significantly representative of the eventual TV audience, at least if the discovery of the series were simply a random event on the part of regular TV viewers. This is suggested by the fact that though lagging registration prompted the organizers to devote a session of the popular "Hourglass" programme to an interview by the moderator of the two permanent panelists, it is questionable that this had the intended impact.

Not one of those interviewed specifically mentioned (though none were directly asked) this as a factor in their decision to enroll in the programme. Perhaps for a number, who had become acquainted with the series from other sources, they were then prompted to register at the last minute and failed to fully acknowledge the TV interview as a final catalyst of the late registration. In any case, all of this does raise the significant question as to whether those who watch "Hourglass", or more likely who watch TV regularly at all, correspond closely to the type of person likely to comprehend and be interested in a course such as "Dialogue on Man." Tentative answers to such questions would be essential for any extensive programming of this kind in the future.

B. Objectives of Appraisal

This study must be understood in terms of its explicit objectives, inasmuch as they lie behind the criteria of selection for the collection of data and their interpretation and evaluation. Most importantly, these objectives are somewhat different from those which might ordinarily be found in a study directly sponsored by either the Continuing Education Programme or the TV Network. The interests of such organizations are defined primarily in terms of performance criteria which are chiefly quantitative and "subjective." This may sound paradoxical, but they represent the two polar positions with respect to the problem of educational evaluation and are for that reason ultimately complementary. For television, as we know it in North America (and despite the existence of the national public network in Canada), the only highly developed means of programme

evaluation (for organizational-bureaucratic purposes) is that of "ratings", or simply, how many people watched. The number of people involved is then determined by each individuals subjective decision to watch or not. To a degree, this is the criteria for evaluation of many education programs i.e. the numbers of people attending and simply their subjective satisfaction.

For the purposes of educationally-oriented programmes, (and likewise for public-sponsored programming) however, this strategy is not adequate. For here some relatively objective means is necessary to assess more qualitative aspects of a programme. Not simply how many, but what kinds of people watch becomes important. Moreover, the mere fact of their attention is not sufficient evidence of success. How did they interpret the material presented? At what level and with what kind of personal response did this occur? In a word, how effective was it in communicating certain abstract messages whose content is central to the formulation of the ideas of the "opinion leaders" of society? (cf. Everly 1971).

The importance of this evaluation effort is implicit in the cybernetic organizational concepts mentioned in Part 1. Continuing education and video as a means of realizing its objectives are essential to the creation of a society in which effective feedback links are to be established. In this context dialogue is potentially more than a few isolated individuals tossing about a few abstract ideas; it is the intellectual leadership of a nation engaging in the kind of personal development necessary for modern industrial societies to become masters of their own fate.

These considerations then may be summarized as follows:

In the introductory chapter an effort was made to outline the general perspectives which lie behind the integrative views of the two permanent panelists and which give some idea of the kind of content dealt with by the series. In the following sections the objectives are to:

a. Analyze the organizational problems involved in presenting such integrative concepts to a broader public through televised media;

b. Categorize the heterogenous motives and intellectual perspectives of the group of laymen (the audience) who were interested in understanding such concepts;

c. In the light of the above considerations suggest positive measures for the improvement of future programs of this type.

FOOTNOTES

[1]cf. Young, 1965.

[2]For symbolic-interactionism in general see Blumer, 1969. On research strategies stemming from that orientation, Denzin, 1970. For comparable phenomenologically inspired treatments, Cicourel, 1964 and Bruyn, 1966.

[3]On participant observation see Glazer, 1972. Given the lack of familiarity of this approach outside anthropology, I have alloted some space to its general defense and justification.

[4]Hints for interviewing were taken from Dexter, 1970; Lofland, 1971; Richardson et. al. 1965; and Hyman, et. al. 1954. The principle of using life-history type material for an ideological biography is based on Lane, 1969. I do not claim to have taken advantage of all their suggestions.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE DESIGN OF THE SERIES "DIALOGUE ON MAN"

A. The Series in Context: Continuing Education in Historical Perspective

This second part is concerned with the detailed examination of a unique (though as will become apparent not entirely unprecedented) experiment in the use of television media for the purpose of "continuing education." At the outset a number of definitional and historical considerations must be touched upon to place the series "Dialogue on Man" in perspective.

1. The Concept of "Continuing Education"

It is noteworthy that "adult education" as we know it is largely a result of the 19th century industrial revolution and the democratic currents that followed. Surprisingly, the initial impetus was not the vocational training of workers or technicians, but the provision of the rudiments of a "liberal education." This stems from the fact that the initiative came from those religious and philanthropic interests concerned about the general immorality and degradation of the working classes (Hely, 1962;16). Even though the primary effect of such work was that of remedial education (literacy training), the ostensible purpose was to give the elite of the working classes the necessary basis for moral lives as citizens. The two leading examples of Denmark and Britain maintained

throughout the foundational period in the 19th century that such training be concerned with "life" and not with "livlihood" (Hely, 1962:19). Given the dominance of Britain, the Commonwealth, and the Scandanavian countries in the first Unesco conference on Adult Education held in Elsinore, Denmark in 1949, such a restrictive conception of adult education as "workers education," especially the literate elite of workers was maintained (Hely, 1962:33-36). Only the experience of the following decade, combined with the expansion of participation in the UN on the part of the "Third World" did the concept come to enjoy the multiple meanings currently assumed. By the second major Unesco conference held in Montreal in 1960, "adult education" had become....

> recognized as an all-embracing term covering all organized provisions for the education of adults, whatever the level and whatever the motivation and purposes. Within its framework could be included a wide range of distinct but related fields which might well be distinguished one from another by their own qualifying terms, e.g., "higher education of adults", "liberal education of adults", "literacy education for adults", vocational education for adults", "residential education for adults", "fundamental education", "workers education", "education for leisure", etc. It was this process of clarification of terms during the 1950's which made possible the agreement on principles which was one of the most striking features of the Unesco conference at Montreal (Hely 1962:61-2).

At the same time, this broadening of the concept of "adult education " to include such a variety of contexts elicited a reformulation of the more fundamental educational questions. The term "adult education" itself reflected a conception of life as a two-stage sequence of childhood training followed by adulthood. This contrast between education and "adult" education was an artificial one which interrupted the more fundamental notion of education as a

life-long process:

> This new vision was given a sharper focus at the Unesco conference. What is new and fresh is the realization that acceptance of the concept of life-long education involves a re-examination of the whole educational system. Elementary, secondary, and even university education must be seen <u>not as a preparation for life but as a preparation for adult education</u> (Hely, 1962:64, emphasis added).

Though this conception had little impact upon pre-adult education at that time, it actually lies behind many of the changes that have been occurring in the past few years. The most important aspect of this is the shift from teaching a body of traditional knowledge valid for life, to skills necessary for a continuous learning capacity. As Margaret Mead put it more than a decade ago, "we are now at the point where we must educate people in what nobody knew yesterday and prepare people in our schools for what no one knows yet, but what some people must know tomorrow" (quoted, Hely, 1962:66).

From this perspective, even the current substitute for adult education - "continuing education" - misses a subtle theoretical point:

> "Continuing education", to the adult educator, was the continuation of education after formal schooling, adter the "preparation for life" period. They seldom stopped to consider the implications of life-long cradle to grave education in terms of a total educational system based on this concept. If they had, and some are beginning to do so, they would realize that life-long education is not "continuing" education but "continuous" education and that all aspects of education should be planned as a whole (Hely 1962:66-7).

2. Television and Continuing Education

Since all "educational" material is potentially "entertaining" to some degree and all "entertainment" potentially informative in some way, no hard and fast distinction between educational and entertainment programming is possible. Thus, in a larger sense all television is educational and if anybody at all watches, it is entertaining. The problem then is to recognize the continuum of programming (cf. Groombridge, 1966:12-15). But, for practical purposes, there is a useful distinction to be made between Educational Television (ETV) and Instructional Television (ITV):

> ......educational television is a medium which disseminates programs devoted to information, instruction, cultural or public affairs, and entertainment....Thus, ETV is a broad term encompassing all types of educational programming. ITV (instructional television), on the other hand, is only a part of ETV; it is specialized service that provides either total or supplementary formal organized instruction (Koenig and Hill, 1967:xv).

Much of the confusion arises from the fact that these definitions are rooted in the distinction between commercial and non-commercial programming. In a sense ETV might be best contrasted with the Commercial TV which generally includes overtly "educational" material where required by public regulations or when it is sufficiently popular to attract a mass audience. Thus we find that in a country like Britain where a government-controlled network dominates, the official description of ETV corresponds to what Americans prefer to call ITV; "Educational television programs for adults are programs arranged in a series and planned in consultation with appropriate educational bodies to help viewers towards progressive mastery or understanding of some skill or body

of knowledge" (quoted, Groombridge, 1966:14). Presumably, the BBC considers itself, as a non-commercial operation, to be by definition what Americans would call "educational TV" by which is meant non-commercial TV. The case of Canada's CBC falls somewhere in between, in that while CBC carries a number of "educational" programs which are not acceptable by commercial criteria, it still depends upon advertising revenue for a major proportion of operating expenses.

3. Mass Media and Continuing Education in Canada

The fairly extensive literature on the development of adult education in Canada suggests that as a frontier society of immigrants the communication of practical skills (occupational skills) has always had an important place in public support of education. Yet surprisingly, given the early move of the government into the field of mass media with the CBC in 1936, the record with respect to the utilization of mass media for the purpose of continuing education has been mixed. Whereas the utilization of radio for this purpose was extremely innovative in the early years, the emergence of television in the 1950's undermined the educational efforts of radio - except for an elitist audience - which was in turn not followed by the successful utilization of television for similar purposes. This seems to be in large part a reflection of the limitations imposed on a single channel forced to rely upon the mass audience required for large advertising revenue (cf. Miller, 1966).

That Canada, a country plagued by regionalism compounded by geographical vastness, should have failed to provide leadership

in the field of educational and instructional television (except in the case of Ontario), despite an early commitment to public support for broadcasting, can only be explained by the short-sightedness and complacency of academic and governmental elites. Indeed, it is remarkable that the United States continues to lead in non-commercial broadcasting despite a chronic unwillingness - until very recently - for government at any level to accept responsibility for such activity.[1]

4. The Case of British Columbia

Given the failure of national initiative, the provinces have been forced to rely upon their own limited resources and in some cases, limited imaginations. Whereas Ontario took the lead in developing the use of video for instructional purposes in the schools, even it has had difficulty in providing an alternative network. British Columbia has made practically no advance. The introduction of cable systems and the availability of an American ETV cable channel has further reduced incentive for provincial initiative. In the process, of course, the potential of continuing education remains restricted by a failure to take advantage of a powerful tool of communication. Whereas the history of adult education in B.C. is characterized by extensive use of radio in the earlier years and of audio-visual services (filmstrips, films) (Selman, 1966:52-3), television has played a negligible part.

Only in the past year or so has a program utilizing educational TV for the secondary schools begun in British Columbia. The focus of this program, carried out at the B.C. Institute of Technology,

is on the production of TV clips for use as supplemental teaching aids primarily in closed circuit situations. The prospect of Educational TV in British Columbia has been discussed in the legislature, focusing on the possibility of university courses via Television, but there has been no action taken. The new N.D.P. provincial government however, has expressed an intention to develop a provincial educational network.

A major source of this failure - aside from the reluctance of educators, especially at the university level to see such media as anything other than a dehumanizing threat to their vested interest - is connected with the fact that in Canada communications are a federal responsibility and education primarily a provincial one (Miller, 1966:52). Thus the problem of funding is a continuous one.

At the Federal level, in order to develop provincial education media, the licensing must come through the Canadian Radio-Television Commission, the decision making body responsible for the administration of mass communications in Canada. At present this body has not clarified its priorities nor established goals for the use of the mass media in Canada, and has left educational TV to the responsibility of the provincial governments. The CRTC does stipulate that cable TV companies must provide an educational TV channel if requested by the provincial governments. This channel is in addition to the space provided for a community channel.[2] However, the cable companies do not have to provide adequate programming or facilities, thus the programming presently developed for the community is deficient and at present the cable station as an innovative educational outlet is almost totally neglected.

B. Origins of the series

Understanding the origins of the series under examination is essential for a comprehension of many of the problems encountered. For all concerned (including this study) the series was an experiment that required initiative, foresight, and a capacity to innovate within traditional structures not presently organized with such activities in mind. In such a situation the kind of "feedback" provided by this evaluation study may provide helpful insights into how under more ideal circumstances the educational objectives uniting those concerned might be more adequately realized. Thus, this is a study in "what went wrong" rather than a eulogy to the successes of the project, one of the most significant being that the program ever occurred at all. Given the current low priority of educational television and the disciplinary conflicts within universities, this was an achievement that must not be glossed over.

1. Initial Conception: Decision to Proceed

The initial conception of the program can be traced at least as far back as a conversation between the Educational Coordinator and the Biological Scientist in 1971 many months prior to the series. It was initially conceived to be oriented around some of the interests of the Biologist. As the months passed, however, there were a number of changes as more individuals were included and the perspective of the topics to be covered was widened by the inclusion of a Social Scientist. As will be indicated later, this broadening of scope may have been unwise.

The prospect of televising the series was linked to the

long history of mutually supportive relationships between the Educational Coordinator and the TV Network. As a consequence of this earlier cooperation, usually involving the televised interviews of noted intellectual personages brought to Vancouver through the University, a personal link had developed between the TV producer and the Educational Coordinator.

As the planning for "Dialogue on Man" proceeded, and the question of financial support raised its head, the Educational Coordinator took the initiative to broaden the contact with the TV network as had been discussed on previous occasions. Thus began a more ambitious effort to bring together the University and the mass media in a manner that would allow a program that neither could carry out with its own austere resources.

As will be indicated in more detail subsequently, the fact of the cooperative basis of the venture introduced a series of constraints which would impair the format and flexibility of the programme.

2. Objectives and Expectations

Four perspectives -- not without their internal differences to be sure -- representing four distinct sets of interests and corresponding expectations can be distinguished. Recognition of these divisions is central to any attempt at analysis and evaluation of the series in question, for each point of view casts some insight into the series as a "social setting". These perspectives include: the educational initiators, the panelists (there is a degree of overlap between this and the first), the TV Network, and the audience (class).

(a) The Educational Initiators

The official description of the series contained in the continuing education brochure described the class as:

> An interdisciplinary attempt to create dialogue in public spaces toward the development of new understanding of the great central perennial questions of What is Man? What May I Hope? What Can I Know? What Shall I Do?

This "Third Program in the ongoing Humanities and Life Sciences series" (i.e. "Dialogue on Man") was appropriately subtitled as "Dialogue Between the Biological and Cultural Levels on the Basic Nature of Man." Thus, the "principal discussants": (what are here termed "permanent panelists") were a Professor of Biology and a Professor of Sociology/Anthropology, both of whom had been engaged in work on related themes. These two would be joined by "guest panelists" in various specialized fields, each of whom would individually meet with the two permanent panelists, a moderator, and the audience once a week for eight weeks. In order of appearance the guests were described as a theologian, psychiatrist, ethologist (zoologist), philosopher, physician, and medical geneticist.

In this introductory brochure it was further noted that the program would be videotaped for "possible" broadcast at a later date. Yet it was emphasized in block letters that "Audience participation will be encouraged and emphasized." In keeping with this the size of the class was noted as "limited": The location was well-known and convenient: the University Center for Continuing Education.

This introductory section was in turn followed by a tentative "description and outline" of the program and some quotes -- "notes for reflection before attending this program". The summary statement

of the overriding questions giving the program coherency -- developed by the Educational Coordinator in consultation with the Biologist -- provides a concise glimpse of the vision underlying the project:

> Does 20th Century man now possess the basis for a new image of himself which can give the confidence and organizing power to cope more successfully with the challenges of our age? .... Has a new frame of reference emerged from the ferment of the current life-sciences revolution? .... Can the old conflict between a bioevolutionary interpretation of human behaviour and a full respect for human uniqueness be resolved?

As the statement continues in another paragraph,it is suggested how the organization of the series is to realize this objective of outlining a "new frame of reference".

> ....In search for a new understanding of the biological roots of human culture each specialist will help measure man's biological needs for adaptability and survival against cultural needs concerned with quality of life, with meaningfulness and with self-esteem.

And what of the audience, the class?

> ....The audience will be invited to expand the discussion with comments and questions of its own so that real dialogue can develop in which experts and audience can take turns at being both learners and teachers.

How seriously were these objectives taken by the organizers? There is little question that as an aspiration, as a vision of what optimally might be achieved, all concerned were in agreement as to the significance of the task. Where they differed, however, is with respect to how they might be achieved and the likelihood that they might be. For those with extensive experience in such continuing education programs, principally the Educational Coordinator and the Social Scientist, the difficulties that quickly

became apparent were readily adapted to.

The Educational Co-ordinator's response was to suppress some of his prior enthusiasm and accept that the program had indeed achieved more limited goals of the type realized by the typical program. The sense of providing a "new frame of reference" is thus replaced by the more subjective criteria of entertainment, and with the more limited perspective that the "idea behind the program was to show the stimulation inherent in a discussion of these issues, show the general drift of the arguments, and determine whether any of these issues can be communicated".

While this is valid at one level -- that of the official role of the Coordinator -- it involves a suppression of a more personal commitment to the actual content of the program, a point underscored by the element of discipleship between the Educational Coordinator and his two permanent panelists. For indeed such a program could never have been organized without the personal relationship with these two panelists and his personal attachment to the intellectual perspectives which they represented. And ironically, it is this very ambitiousness nurtured by intellectual conviction, that set up a situation in which the Educational Coordinator and others would be frustrated. In a word, the expectations generated by the vision of the "new perspective" on man required a program which simply could not be realized fully in the given circumstances. Understanding why this was the case is of course one of the themes of this essay.

The summation by the Educational Coordinator at the conclusion of the program expressed the expectations of the principal groups in this way: "The TV Network was more interested in getting

a product; I was interested in disseminating information and sharing. The Biological Scientist saw his point of view as being important to get across whereas the Sociologist likes to talk to audiences".

(b) The Panelists

For the Biological Scientist this series provided a first step toward bringing some of his interests to a broader academic and non-academic public. As a consequence, he found it difficult to reconcile his own enthusiasm and intellectual excitement with the general failure of the participants and other panelists to grasp the full significance of his arguments. Yet this did not deter him from a continuous effort to improve the situation. The most important product of this was the successful initiative to bring in a final guest panelist (a biophilosopher) as a substitute for the summing up statements of the permanent panelists.

The Social Scientist, very experienced in such continuing education efforts and with undergraduate teaching, never seemed to share the expectations of the others. This was reflected in his general refusal to participate in the planning sessions for the series as a whole as well as the individual programs. On the other hand, this attitude served as a defense against the frustrations inherent in such educational efforts. His writing however, betrays a kind of educational optimism which contrasts somewhat with his more pessimistic stance in public gatherings. In any case, this experience and the sense of limited expectations stemming from it gave this panelist a distance from the proceedings which, on the surface at least, averted any sign of disappointment or frustration,

though he did recognize and respond to suggestions for change when introduced on an interpersonal level. Yet he did not deem it worth the trouble or effort to actively exert his influence in a significant manner, despite his close working relationship with the Educational Coordinator.

The guest panelists, as a whole, had a limited awareness of the goals of the program. Not only did most of the coordinating meetings not occur but those that did occur were marked by a lack of consensus. Thus the guests were either unable or disinterested in directing their presentations toward a common theme and as a result utilized their time simply for supporting their own disciplinary approach.

The moderator provided the link between the TV network and the educational aims. Although he became involved in the program primarily because he was under contract to the producer, yet he was interested and intrigued if somewhat anxious regarding the intellectual stature of the panelists, "they could cut me up". Thus this intellectual hesitance and the lack of pre-planning made him unable to master or coordinate the discussions and they were aimless and unsatisfactory to all concerned. As a result the moderator became primarily concerned with making the program interesting TV and intelligible to the mass audience. His disgust with the entire exercise can be summed up by his comment regarding the in-studio class/audience when their complaints were made known; "well, what do the smucks expect for 10 bucks".

(c) The TV Network

The case of the TV producer is revealing in that it suggests a resigned attitude toward the problems of providing mass presentation of more complex materials. Thus, the TV producer suggests that "despite the fact that the mass public doesn't want to watch this it should be available so I want to do my part". This last phrase has been underscored because it conveys a sense -- corroborated by other responses -- of a feeling of responsibility to do something but some doubts, or even a profound pessimism, as to what this might involve.

He viewed the series -- something new for him -- as somewhat of a "whim" and an opportunity for allowing the Educational Coordinator to get some experience in the "imperatives of the media". Yet as a producer he is usually only indirectly involved in the actual making of programs. Generally his staff does most of the preliminary work whereas he makes the administrative and budgetary decisions. As a consequence of this and his personal relationship with the Educational Coordinator he may have let the series develop in a way that ran against his better judgement as a producer of entertainment. But given that the "message of the course" appealed to him and his underlying conviction that the style and technique of programs are only "novelties" and the content is "everything", he failed to intervene in the interests of providing a more entertaining program. A sense of regret and resignation became apparent as the series progressed.

In short, we have an element of the best and an element of the problem of public and educational programming: an earnest

desire to do something worthwhile but a limited conception of how, and the limited resources with which to realize this objective. This is not unrelated, of course, to the rigid budgetary and other controls inherent traditionally in all types of television work.

At a highly generalized intellectual and ideological level, all of the organizers and permanent performers shared a sense of the importance of both the content of the series and its significance as an experiment. They differed, however, in the expectations invested in this particular series; in the way in which they would specify the shared perspective, in the ways in which it might be most effectively communicated, and in how they would deal with the actual problems encountered in the series. Such problems would produce minor conflicts in the course of the weeks of filming. But most importantly, this shared vision with respect to the content of the program, the fundamental integrative concepts to be communicated, established a critical standard against which the programme must be assessed. Thus although criteria more appropriate for typical continuing education or educational television programmes could be used, in this study, the evaluation is oriented toward the organization for the communication of the content, for the content is the unique aspect of the program and the source of inspiration which culminated in its creation.

To the degree that the actual realities of the series in progress made it obvious that the shared objective of a critical dialogue in which the "new perspective" on man would unfold, would not be realized, each of the major participants tended to fall back on the particular interests of his position rather than the common

interests of the dialogue. For the Educational Coordinator this meant that the criteria applied to normal continuing education courses -- verbal classes and audience interest -- became central. For the TV producer and the moderator, providing material at a level suitable to a mass audience became the overriding concern. For the two chief panelists, just getting across their own position became a preoccupation. In short, with the failure to realize the common vision, there was a tendency for more specific and narrow interests to pull the course of the programme in different directions. But the inflexibility of the programme itself, kept such conflicts only at the discussion level and the series continued to unfold despite efforts at modification.

(d) The Audience/Class

Given the number of people in the audience, the type of expectations held for the series was extremely diverse. Since the related questions of audience interest and participation will be treated in a subsequent section, only a brief summary of the initial anticipations of the class members will be sketched.

In general, audience expectations of the course were extremely vague and ill-defined. All professed interest in the questions that were to be presented but for the most part they "had no preconceived notions of the course". A number of individuals came to the course because of a specific interest in one or the other of the topics: e.g. a christian educator interested in the relationship of theology to the present problems of man, a nature lover who, on reading Lorenz's On Aggression, wanted to participate in discussions on animal behavior, or a student who had read one of

the social scientists works and wanted to hear more. However, for those with more precise interests and those with more general interests, both were generally in agreement with a statement from one participant: "I guess I hoped 'Dialogue on Man' might summarize much of the material for me".

Taken as a whole, it is perhaps fair to say that aside from annoyance on the part of some due to the lack of audience participation, there was a general sense of "getting one's money's worth", but little or no talk of visions of a "new perspective". Only those with previous acquaintance with the work of the two panelists spoke in such terms, and even there few gains in understanding were noted. For those with the most background in these issues, there was a general dissatisfaction that prompted poor attendance and in several instances at least, a refusal to pursue the series further.

C. Series Format

The format of the series constituted the organizational vehicle through which the expectations held for the program were to be realized. The planning of such a format is caught between the idealized conception of what might be done and the constraints imposed by various limiting factors. Houle, for example, speaks of two crucial decision points which can be analytically isolated. The first, what might be called the idealized format, he describes as the phase of designing a "suitable format"; the second, he terms the problem of fitting such a format into "larger patterns of life". These correspond to what he refers to under headings such as guidance (who is to be included in the course?), life style (how can the

prior responsibilities and obligations of participants be taken into account), finance (how can the program be supported and how much should it cost participants), and interpretation (or the problem of public relations or presenting the activity to the larger public (Houle, 1972:46-47). In the case of the series in question none of these questions is especially significant for the purposes of evaluation. Since the program was organized under the auspices of an already existing continuing education program, the constraints in these areas were built in. Participation was open to anyone who wished to pay the modest subsidized fee and though the size of the class was in principle limited by the size of the studio, the question of too many people -- had it arisen -- would have been resolved on a first-come-first-serve basis. The choice of Monday evenings for the sessions was made largely on the basis of the schedules of the permanent panelists and the moderator. The question of finance required some effort to obtain a small grant from a private foundation which allowed a subsidy for the fees required, a fact which ensured adequate registration. Public relations interpretation of the series was handled through normal continuing education channels and a special series brochure. Lagging registration, however, prompted a special TV interview with the two permanent panelists and the moderator. This service was possible largely because of the TV network's involvement in the project. Ordinarily such assistance would not be available to continuing education courses.

Within the constraints of these factors, the actual format of the series was designed. When we consider the various categories under which such design might be evaluated, however, it becomes

apparent there was more concern with the rudimentary problems of adapting the usual format to the basic constraints of the situation than to any explicit effort to consider the details of optimizing possible objectives within that framework.

1. Physical Setting

The original intention had been to have the series taped to a portable unit while being held in an auditorium at the University. But due to labor negotiations and the resulting "work to rule" tactics of the union which precluded working outside the downtown studio, only the first session was held at the University and that session was filmed instead of taped. Consequently, all further sessions were held in the downtown studio. It is difficult to say whether this had a positive or negative impact on the physical layout of the series. Either setting had its problems. The university auditorium was rectangular, narrow and broken up by large pillars. As a consequence the audience was extremely spread out and conditions generally unsatisfactory. On the whole, it might be argued that the move to the studio, at least with respect to layout, was an improvement over the original location. (For several, however, the move was objectionable because of transportation and related problems and they withdrew.)

The most desirable setting in the downtown studio -- a small amphitheatre accommodating only about thirty people -- could not be utilized because the series audience was more than double this figure. The only alternative became that of blocking off a corner of a larger studio with black curtains and place the panelists on a raised platform facing the audience.

Perhaps the most important impact of the downtown studio location was not the actual proceeding of the sessions, but on the events preceding and following the videotaping. People could not be seated until moments before the beginning of the program so they were forced to remain in a small room below or stand around in the corner of the studio. Because of this situation and the awkwardness it entailed, everyone came immediately before the beginning of the session, precluding any extensive prior interaction or conversation as a "warm up" to the "dialogue". There were occasional moments of actual embarrassment for members of the audience when they were sometimes gruffly ordered around in this alien, cramped setting. In one case members were reprimanded for wearing white shirts (and thus moved to the back) and for bringing in white sheets of paper. Most had received no prior warning of these requirements for videotaping. All in all these and other aspects of becoming members of an "audience" created initial frustrations and anxieties which inhibited audience participation throughout the series.

2. Formal Structure

The formal structure of the series of dialogue sessions then had to be imposed upon this physical setting. The proceedings of each session were in outline form as follows:

1. Introductions (moderator)
2. Guest panelist presentation (approx. 10-15 min.)
3. Ad break (10 seconds or so; occasionally interrupted presentation)
4. Permanent panelist's response

5. Occasional questions from audience
6. Ad break (at approx. 30 min.)
7. Discussion - questions
8. Ad break (at approx. 45 min.)
9. Discussion - questions; abrupt conclusion.

The program was prepared to be shown with no (or minimal) editing, thus the breaks for commercials had to be made directly in a way that interrupted the flow of the discussions. These breaks, on the one hand, given their short duration (presumably because of the cost of studio time) could not be utilized for stock-taking or providing direction to the discussion. This might have provided a way of managing the sessions to increase their effectiveness. On the other hand, these breaks in the given circumstances provided annoying and often jarring interruptions of the sessions which further inhibited the adjustment to all the other complications of the studio setting.

The four crucial elements of the developing dialogue were the guest speaker, the moderator, the permanent panelists and the audience. Ideally, the moderator is the crucial link in this series of interactions, for it is he alone who is consistently in a position to redirect the discussion and facilitate dialogue between the participants. But, as subsequent discussion will suggest, this was rarely the case despite the formal structure of such a forum. Similarly, neither the guest panelists nor the audience would consistently live up to the expectations of the permanent panelists who were frequently frustrated by the specialist myopia or lack of dynamic teaching abilities of their colleagues, as well as by the frequent disruptive and digressive effects of questions and comments

from both the moderator and the audience. Interestingly, the best questions tended to come from members of the audience -- in most cases not actual registrants in the course -- who were personally acquainted with one or the other of the permanent panelists and their work. All of this will be discussed in more detail with consideration of the series as a social process rather than, as here, in its formal, structural terms.

A final formal aspect of the series was the coffee-sandwich hour following each session hosted by the TV Network. While everyone was whisked out of the studio at the end of the videotaping, they were directed to another room for coffee, sandwiches and conversation. The first two times this was held in a large room with adequate seating for all. Subsequently, for unknown reasons, a shift was made to smaller room and an ajacent office where there was no seating and insufficient space for all to be simultaneously accommodated comfortably. Consequently, a number of people left immediately given the congestion. Occasionally, others adapted by occupying another small room down the hall.

These cramped quarters which precluded the assembly of the audience and the panelists and organizers as a whole had the effect of fragmenting discussions into small groups of several persons. During the early phase of the hour, movement was impeded by the congestion. As one participant put it: "it was like a cocktail party," despite the fact that it was an occasion in which most individuals were prepared and often primed for valuable interactions. While this occasionally did take place on an individual basis, the setting limited the interactions and most importantly effectively prevented the coalescing of the group around any single theme or

common problem. In short, the audience failed to develop any sense of itself as a unit. Significantly, the one occasion when this did occur was after the second session taped in the downtown studio and in the larger adequate room. At this point, the audience, catalyzed by the prompting of the Educational Coordinator, came alive with expressions of feeling regarding the course. These were generally supressed in all subsequent sessions given the lack of an occasion or setting in which such collective expression could take place. Otherwise only especially agressive individuals could speak out and even this was generally before at most several others in a post-session conversation.

D. The Series In Process

1. Organization and Content

Visualizing the series through its week to week movement is a difficult task given the multiple levels upon which it can be observed. Perhaps the most difficult to reconstruct in a comprehensible form is the actual movement of the ideas, the movement of the dialogue itself. This is especially the case in this series given the failure to explicitly identify the most fundamental issues that would in fact dominate discussions. The two permanent panelists did attempt to do this in their introductory session, but the specialists who followed them rarely sustained the continuity with these initial statements. Nor were the issues of any single session reduced down to a manageable and summarizable size. As a consequence the reconstruction of the debate of any single session requires many pages to develop meaningfully.[3] A discussion of the content, then,

will be carried in necessarily general terms. The problems taken up include: a) the relation of the individual presentation to the integrative perspective of the series and of the permanent panelists; b) the coherency and focus within individual presentations and subsequent discussions; c) contributions of the moderator; d) contributions of the audience; e) reactions of the permanent panelists to the development of the series.

(a) Relation of individual presentations to the integrative perspective of the series.

With three exceptions, the special panelists of the series failed to directly deal with the positions developed by the permanent panelists in the first session. Rather, each of the specialists presented a somewhat idiosyncratic and generally disorganized personal version of his field and its relation to some aspect of human nature. The exceptions were the partial effort on the part of the theologian and the psychiatrist to raise issues related to points made by the Social Scientist, and the Systems Philosopher who dealt directly with positions developed by the Biologist. While the Ethologist, Physician and Medical Geneticist would seem to provide the natural counterpoint to the Biologist, their discussions made no effort to relate to the previous discussion. Nor did that of the Philosopher acknowledge any relationship to the Social Scientist's position statement. As a consequence, the audience was forced to make the connections necessary for a sense of continuity. While the permanent panelists often tried to relate the guest statements to their own position, the lack of time for exposition made it difficult to develop their points in sufficient detail.

(b) Coherency and focus of individual presentations

In principle the guest presentations might have been quite successful even if the continuity of the series was not taken into account. This would have required well organized statements that provided a stimulating introduction to a basic question or two upon which he wished to take a position. As it was the statements were not organized in such propositional terms -- they did not explicitly propose a thesis, a point for focusing the subsequent discussion (for an example of how this might be done, cf. CBC series). In some cases an evident lack of preparation led to meandering statements which had to be cut off by the moderator. In others adequate formal preparation which included extensive notes or a written statement was not adequately adapted to the needs of the audience or the occasion, again requiring interruption on the part of the moderator.

(c) The contributions of the moderator

The moderator of this particular series was very much a layman with a style of limited adaptability. His major strength lies in his capacity to get experts and celebrities to talk freely. In this capacity he has proved quite competent. The style utilized is fairly simple: a provocative question is proposed in very humble terms and the celebrity asked to give his position. Now the problem with this strategy in the kind of panel dialogue under examination is that it allows little scope for actual direction of the discussion, of a direct intervention that would summarize complex points, develop arguments, or initiate new ones. The inability of

the moderator to deal with the issues at the level of the panel lead to a strategy of interruptions in request of simplification. Thus, the discussions were "brought down to earth" but at the expense of the dialogue itself. While this was the only alternative strategy available for the moderator, it proved insufficient to change the course of the discussion once the initial guest statement had opened the session. The moderator was able to force a clarification of a few points, but was in no position to redirect the discussion in any consistently coherent way.

(d) Contributions of the audience

Audience participation was as good as might be expected under the circumstances. But it is noteworthy that a great number -- and certainly a majority of the most important -- of the questions were directed by students of the Biologist. In that sense the audience was "stacked" with largely constructive consequences. On the other hand, many of the spontaneous class questions were distracting and misguided. The problem is that typical classroom situations are dull and student questions tend to be unconstructive. While the series was "realistic" in this sense, it can be questioned whether this is a sufficient justification for its effects on the development of the dialogue.

(e) Reactions of the permanent panelists

The participation of the two permanent panelists was initially based upon the fact that both had interdisciplinary and complementary interests. Their own willingness to participate was related to a desire to communicate their ideas to a larger public. Accordingly, the program was in fact organized around them. The first session

was devoted exclusively to allowing them to outline their viewpoints; the last was to have been used for the permanent panelists to summarize their interpretation of the series. (In the end the inclusion of an additional speaker precluded these summing up statements.)

Unfortunately, the guest panelists saw their participation in similar terms -- as an opportunity to present their disciplinary viewpoint. In general, there was little effort on the part of the guests to relate directly to the theses initially advanced by the permanent panelists who found themselves in the position of not being understood adequately. Toward the end this reached the point where the frustration of the permanent panelists climaxed over the issue of the inclusion of a final speaker and whether or not he would be allowed to use illustrative technical diagrams.

2. Phases of the Series

Viewed longitudinally over time, the series can be viewed in terms of the following phases of development:

(a) Pre-series planning

Specific planning for the series began in the fall of 1971, though earlier discussions antedated this phase. Thus it was during this period that all the speakers were contacted (with the exception of one who would be added part way through the series itself), details of the series agreed upon, and the necessary arrangements made for the program to begin in early February. This period was characterized by the enthusiasm generated by the scale of the project, the possibility of gaining a wider audience through television, and the significance and depth of the issues to be explored.

(b) Initial setbacks overcome by high expectations

That the second session had to be postponed because of labor disputes with the TV technicians, and that the location and execution of the series was jeopardized for several weeks, were obstacles which the high spirits of the organizers and audience readily overcame. The first session, while not as dramatic as it might have been, given that it was taken up by long statements of the positions of the permanent panelists, was accepted as a necessary prelude. The failure of the second session to take place as scheduled, while frustrating, simply postponed things for a week. Yet there was inevitably a tendency for these irritations to raise the expectation level of the audience which increasingly looked for some reward for its frustrations. Thus, after the second session the mood of the series and the spirit of the audience was on the line.

The culmination of this phase was the brief but revealing group discussion at the end of the third session (fourth week).

(c) First depression, revolt, and new expectations

The long detailed presentation of the third session, which was far too technical for the average class member, provided the setting for a collapse of previous expectations and a momentary co-ordinated effort to change the situation. It is significant that this occurred in the "coffee hour" following the third program. Unlike all subsequent post-program gatherings, this one was held in a room large enough to accommodate the entire group. Later this room was not available and these sessions took place in extremely cramped quarters which made it impossible for any further group

meetings to take place.

In the ensuing discussion various complaints of the audience were heard and the organizers committed themselves to attempt to do something. But the only significant outcome was the mailing or handing out of some "position papers" which were supposed to facilitate understanding the sessions. Their effectiveness was limited, however, in that in several cases the presentations had little relation to the position paper and in others the paper was not available until after the program was over. But in any case, this moment of collective self-awareness and expression, renewed expectations and at the time was seen by several participants as perhaps the "turning point" in the series.

(d) Relapse and resignation

Minor alterations ensuing from the spontaneous "gripe session" of the third session (circulation of suggested readings, cutting short introductory talks) were intrinsically incapable of dealing with the fundamental contradictions built into the format of the series itself. As a consequence the next five sessions drifted by without any further protest of significance. The ensuing resignation of the audience was in part a reflection of a substantial modification of expectations to accord with realities. For several this was not possible and they simply stopped attending.

The only significant innovation in the series format once it had begun was the addition of a final speaker. The organizational significance of this initiative, however, was not complemented by a comparable impact upon the audience's evaluation of the response to the series. One reason for this was perhaps that a formal

presentation of "systems philosophy" would have been most appropriate at the beginning of the series to provide a foundation for development. As a conclusion, it was doomed to be a didactic anti-climax.

Following the phases of the development of the series demonstrates the problem of organizational inflexibility which undermines opportunities for a truly experimental strategy of program development. The consequent inability to significantly alter the format made it impossible to test out alternatives in practice. As it stands, the researcher attempting to analyse the series is forced into conjectures as to what might have been done without adequate experimental evidence to qualify, conform, or perhaps reject the point. Allowing such an inflexibility is characteristic of any situation in which budgetary limitations force short-term savings which culminate in long-term losses and waste.

The single example of major innovation, while admirable as a case of initiative, underscores the limitation of piecemeal change in a system which is adequately structured for the purposes at hand. Moreover, it illustrates the interpersonal and organizational dilemmas in a program in which there has been no effort to institutionalize even minimally, a process of organizational feedback. Such feedback not only allows the communication of criticisms and alternatives, but establishes some procedures and mechanisms for their implementation and incorporation in the re-structuring of the on-going series.

FOOTNOTES

[1]A factor of course is that the extensiveness of foreign ownership in Canada makes reliance on private philanthropy for experimental projects extremely difficult. Most of the ETV work in the United States could not have been carried out without such support (cf. Carlonson, 1971).

[2]Community being artifically divided in terms of the cable companies' economic buying power.

[3]I found this out to my dismay in attempting to analyse the tapes of the sessions as the basis for a critical discussion of the series content. The discussions were so involved and wide ranging that it proved to be far beyond the objectives of this essay.

IV. THE AUDIENCE/CLASS

A. Introduction: Profile of Participants

The collaboration between TV and continuing education created an ambiguous situation for the lay participants. People who had initially signed up as members of a class found themselves simultaneously members of an audience. Moreover, they were not simply the audience and thus the sole concern of the organizers of the series. For the real audience, that unfathomable unknown element to which the series would be ultimately projected, haunted the entire project from beginning to end. The TV organizers operated with the implicit awareness that there was a fundamental difference between the audience assembled as a class in the studio and the much larger and less aware audience of television. In this sense, the primary audience was the mass public (or at least the share that might be captured somehow), whereas the studio audience was in effect secondary, even as it served to add to the programme itself through questioning.

These distinctions are fundamental to an understanding of the subtleties of the experience and reactions of the studio audience. Having come together with the idea that they were becoming part of a continuing education class in which they would be the exclusive focus of communicative attention, adjustment to a peripheral role as studio audience proved difficult for most who would have probably preferred to sit at home and watch it on TV. Accordingly, as mentioned, the most directed and constructive questions tended to come not from

the class registrants, but from several individuals personally acquainted with the permanent panelists and their work.

Within certain limits, the registrants for the course represented a diverse sample of the general population with respect to basic objective indicators. With respect to age there were remarkably equal numbers, (unequal categories) of individuals who might be described as youth 20-29 years), middle age (30-49), and late middle-old age (50+-).[1] Similarly, a broad range of occupational groups were represented, though a majority could be characterized as belonging to middle and upper middle class helping (i.e. teaching, social work, etc.) and technical-commercial occupations. The significant number of students would presumably find themselves grouped here eventually. Only the housewives -- a crude and anomalous occupational category to be sure -- fall outside this complex. Most of these individuals by virtue of marriage or native intelligence, if not education, were not out of place. Most significantly, however, there was not a single individual who could be said to pursue a blue-collar occupation in the strict sense. The two partial exceptions confirm the point: one was a displaced farmer doing odd jobs to survive and the other a retired farmer/entrepreneur who works as a handy-man to supplement his income.[2] Another noteworthy boundary was that of racial-ethnic background: no members (based upon given names, skin color, accent) appeared to fall outside the origin categories of Canadian, American, white Commonwealth, or nothern and eastern European.

These limiting factors with respect to the social background of continuing education participants is not unexpected and is probably fairly typical of such programmes, especially those dealing

with socially avant-garde themes such as psychological adjustment and self-realization, social and biological ecology, and related topics. For only a small, if disproportionately influential, segment of the population constitutes what might be called, critically aware public opinion. Thus, though not a representative sample of the entire population, it is most certainly representative of the audience generally attracted to University continuing education courses.

The recruitment of the class members occurred principally by means of the Continuing Education Brochure circulated by mail. Nearly one half indicated this as the initial source of contact with the ssries. The remainder were led to the course (and eventually the brochure) through the participants' friends, the UBC information service, and the SFU information service -- in that order.[3] Though nearly half had previously taken one or more continuing education courses in Vancouver, it is significant that for the rest this was the first course. While a lack of evidence from other courses in this regard suggests caution, it would seem reasonable to infer that the course did attract an unusual number of newcomers to continuing education. Most surprisingly, not one individual specifically brought up the special TV interview (in which the moderator introduced the two permanent panelists) as a factor in learning about or deciding to take the course.[4]

For many, the decision to participate was linked closely with either a habit of attending continuing education courses and/or a sense of personal identification with one or more of the two permanent panelists. In only one case was participation linked with personal acquaintance with one of the guest panelists. Five

persons could be said to be "professional" continuing education students in that their participation in this particular program was linked with earlier "Quest for Liberation" programmes in previous years. One of this group, and six others without previous contact with continuing education suggested that their reason for signing up for the course was based upon previous contact with the Social Scientist (two) or had read some of his work (one) or had been recommended by children or friends (four). Similarly, eight persons attended on the basis of their knowledge of or acquaintance with the Biologist. All were associated with his university. Of these four were graduate students (three of whom had not signed up for the course), one undergraduate, and three wives with associations in the Biologist's department.

This particular category presents special problems of overlap because each of these individuals could simultaneously be located in another motivational pattern. Thus, the four graduate students associated with the Biologist were Inter-disciplinary Questioners. But, since they do not reflect the normal population for continuing education, they are anomalous cases.

Thus, something on the order of fifteen (perhaps 20-25 per-ent) of those attending linked their participation directly to acquaintance with or interest in one of the two permanent panelists.

B. Typology of Motivations for Participation

Such objective information, rudimentary as it is in this instance, provides interesting insights to the abstract social characteristics of the class participants. Unfortunately, no matter how refined such knowledge might be, it is of limited value in

bridging the gap between scientific analysis and the practical problems of educational innovation.

This question leads directly to the specific task of this study to approach the class members from the subjective side, to allow them to present themselves as they see their own motivations, the events leading up to their participation in this particular series, the larger biographical factors underlying their concerns in the kinds of issues touched upon in the course.[5] In an exploratory way an attempt has been made to categorize these self-interpretations as a means of simplifying and rendering more useful the otherwise overwhelming details of the interviews. To be sure, in an ultimate sense each of the individuals in question is unique, but at the same time there are others which, to a greater or lesser extent, share important common aspirations and dilemmas. For the purpose of capturing such similarities a crude typology serves to put into relief such commonalities through the isolation of some of the breaking points, the thresholds that distinguish qualitatively different kinds of biographical and self-identity situations. The typologies developed are only one of many possible ways to slice reality. Thus, another typology could have been utilized and the data could possibly be reevaluated for example, in terms of the typology developed by Tough (1968) for adult learning motivations.

On the basis of the intensive interview data, and in some cases through other comments before, during and after class sessions, three basic motivational patterns for course participation were isolated. Before these are considered, however, it might be useful to indicate two characteristics which nearly all the participants shared.

On the one hand, nearly all shared a sense of "searching" for answers to questions stemming from their personal situation and their reflections upon the state of the world in general. But as the discussion of motivational patterns suggests, the sense of search took different forms. To say that the participants were all searching for understanding, intellectual involvement, and personal stimulation, etc. does not tell us very much. Indeed, everyone wanted to know more about "Man". The question is what that might mean in more specific motivational and biographical terms. This also reduces the matter to a level at which it might prove useful for the adult educator who wishes to understand the composition of his class.

A second, and closely related, characteristic shared by nearly all the participants was a self-expressed sense of being involved in some kind of life-cycle transition. That is to say that participation was self-consciously linked to an awareness that their situation in life and their interpretation of it, was in the process of, or at least on the verge of, significant change. In some instances this involved a change in role: unemployment, retirement, a new job, recent arrival in the city, departure of children from home, etc. In other cases this was associated with a psychological reorientation stemming from a life-crisis based upon age, a personal crisis of some sort, culture shock (travel), etc.

It is important to remember that in such a typologizing procedure it is not assumed that the categories are mutually exclusive. For instance, with respect to the motivations of the participants, all shared to some degree the same kinds of interests. The point of the classification is simply to suggest the range of motivations and the relative numbers of individuals which could be located within

specific categories. Inevitably, many could not be readily put into any single one. Nor are these categories "psychological" in the clinical or personality theory sense. Rather, they are simply ways of organizing the reasons that were stated by the participants as the primary considerations for their attendance. Thus, there was no concern to probe for any subconscious motivations as such, though in several cases the interviewer could not help noticing the influence of such factors.

Three broad classes of motivation appeared to account for the most of the bases of participation. These have been termed as: The Intellectually Curious, the Therapeutic Experimenters, and the Happenstancers. A consideration of each of these in turn will give some idea of the way in which they characterize the motivational heterogeneity of the class participants.

1. The "Intellectually Curious"

The Intellectually Curious correspond most closely to the rational model of the student who participates for the sake of learning. Thus, for these people there is little expectation that participation will either further their occupational interests or solve any personal problems. Nor is there any strong sense that what they will gain in the course will significantly enhance their ability to effect changes in the world of politics or world affairs. In short, such motivations -- which constituted the vast majority of the class -- are very much like we should expect in continuing education, a situation where people voluntarily gather (sometimes at significant expense) to discuss abstract issues.

Yet the forms and specific content which such curiosity takes

is extremely heterogeneous. The adult educator would be ill-advised to ignore the significance of such differences within what on the surface appears to be the rational, sensible, interested elite which constitute his classes. The most fundamental source of cleavage is, of course, intellectual and ideological. There was in this case a moderate range of ideological difference: neither right nor left extremes, however, were in evidence. On the other hand, the range of intellectual understanding and general knowledge related to the course was remarkable. (The typology developed in the next section attempts to break down this intellectual diversity.) It was precisely these intellectual levels and the closely related ideological concerns which were the best indicators of an individual's reaction to the course and the nature of his participation. In general, the more intellectually aware and politically concerned the person, the greater his disappointment with the series.

To bring into focus the differences amongst those who can be described as the Intellectually Curious, some brief case descriptions might prove revealing. Three have been selected which indicate the range of intellectual motivations and the different perspective they provided for engagement in the series.

Case Study #1 - John; Grad Student, mid-twenties

John was one of those individuals -- there were perhaps seven -- for whom the course was indirectly related to their professional interests. These were people who had received narrow professional training of some sort, but found themselves increasingly in need of some kind of re-tooling to give them a capacity to deal with new kinds of questions. These included a mathematician, a dentist involved in a dental education program, and four graduate

students. John illustrates this kind of interest most clearly in that he is finishing his PhD. in the biological sciences (ecology and population genetics). As he put it: "I have good training, now I need some education." In order to do this he had been branching out by sitting in on some anthropology courses and attending continuing education programmes. He felt that coming from a traditional science background made it difficult for him to work out a systematic theory of what a human science is all about. So when he saw the brochure of "Dialogue on Man," he thought the series might assist him in synthesizing some of the questions he had been dealing with: "I guess I want someone else to do the work for me." His reading had in fact been quite extensive though somewhat unsystematic and undirected. He had benefited however, from a course that his wife had been taking in sociology.

> I am interested in questions like What is man, what does the science of man mean? What do we mean when we say science in that context? Science is wide open for a new philosophy, the traditional view is not working, I want to be introduced to a new philosophical approach.
>
> As an undergraduate I was a behaviourist. When I was working on my MA I took a continuing education course on theories of human development. I was reading Morris and Audrey at the point so I provided a contrast to the cultural determinists view. Most of the middle aged people in the course had different basic assumptions, they didn't feel that there was any problem, that human nature was of no real concern or importance for study. They had a primarily socio-religious view. I have now had it with the behaviourists especially after reading Maslow and the humanistic psychologists, I read Skinner and found it dead so now I am looking around trying to fill in my gaps. My department is very specialized and wouldn't be especially pleased with me for auditing anthropology courses.

Case Study #2 - Mr. Jones; market analyst, mid-fifties.

As a middle-aged market analyst who works for a large corporation, Mr. Jones has no sense that his intellectual interests relate in any way to his career. Though he had a couple of years in university study in the 1940's, he has been working since then. Even though he finds his own work tolerable, he indicates he would not work if he did not have to. Nor does he have any particular interest in changing the world:

> I don't believe in work. The man up the street, however, likes his work and there is nothing else he would rather do. But for me, if I won the Irish sweepstakes, I would take a perpetual holiday, paint a bit, read a bit...I don't want to do anything for society; I don't want to solve problems.

Thus, unlike the graduate student, Mr. Jones' intellectual curiosity is a very personal, introspective matter. His participation is seemingly more related to intellectual boredom than directed curiosity:

> I saw the write-up in the brochure and it sounded like it might deal in some interesting ways with some interesting ideas. I wanted stimulus. I have found that if I am selective in going to lectures in subject areas I am interested in and with people who talk informatively, every third one will catch and stimulate my thoughts. It won't change my life -- but I realize that to an extent it does...I want to feel that I am having an experience that is good for me. Sure, I could smoke grass or jump off a bridge, but it is difficult to decide what is good and what is bad. I am no longer sure -- there is no guide.

Case Study #3 = Mrs. Donald; homemaker, mid-thirties

If the graduate student's interests are highly directed, and those of the businessmen's are haphazard, those of many others are almost random. In the case of Mrs. Donald, for example, participation is related to extremely vague motives. A housewife for 12

years and a mother of two, Mrs. Donald has been confined in the house for the past decade and has only recently become aware that she is out of touch with much of what is happening in the world. Many years ago she had participated in the "Living Room Learning" program and enjoyed it. Yet more recently she had taken an English course but had found herself intimidated by the kind of situation:

> I took an English course and the group was very small. I felt like people were waiting for me to say something, but I just couldn't.

At a much less sophisticated level of understanding Mrs. Donald expresses the same lack of purpose and the confinement suggested by Mr. Jones:

> I am at the stage where I think I need something. I don't like the idea of working just to be working. I always dreamed of going to university, but now where do I go? I couldn't take a full time study program; my family concerns are too emotionally draining.

But unlike Mr. Jones, she is optimistic and hopes that continuing education might relate to her ability to deal with personal problems and define her own political commitments more clearly. Thus:

> I would like to know if people are capable and could develop a replacement for the old religions. I began to feel like a hypocrite so I stopped going to church, but now I feel the emptiness that remains.
>
> I think there might be a bloody revolution from all that I have read, so I want to know if we can have a peaceful alternative to revolution.
>
> I am concerned with adaptability, for both myself and my children. I have always had difficulty handling change so I want to make it easier for my children. This move to a new house meant changing schools. So if they are upset by that kind of change, what about even bigger ones?

In the case of Mrs. Donald it seems that the reading of a single book -- in fact the only one she could recall reading for a long time -- was decisive as a catalyst to her lack of awareness and

the threat it posed for her future. Yet as one who had only recently become aware of ways of making sense of such threats, she retained a sense of optimism stemming from the hope of exercising more control:

> I found Future Shock exciting and not al all depressing or pessimistic because through reading it I could understand more of the problems my husband is facing going out on his own in the business world. Sometimes I could even help him see.

2. The Therapeutic Experimenters

This small group was distinguished by a dominant interest in a personal experience, in existential involvement rather than intellectual development as such. They tended to view the world in almost exclusively individualistic terms. As a consequence, they were somewhat disappointed with the series because of its lack of a consistent "existential" approach. For such individuals, talk of abstract notions as "systems" was a waste of time. They had hoped and expected that the series would have been more concerned with how individuals can solve their problems in their own heads -- the focus, according to the number who might be classed here, of the world's ills. It is appropriate to term such individuals as Therapeutic Experimenters on the grounds that their primary concern was with the function of the series as an activity that would enhance their interpersonal self-awareness and contribute to their own self-realization. They took the notion of a "Dialogue on Man" in primarily a therapeutic psychological and religious sense.

Case Study #1 - Beverly; sales training, mid-twenties

A university graduate, Beverly works as a sales personnel trainer. Only recently does she feel that she has begun to break out of the personal hell brought about by a miserable home life and

alcoholic father. Like many who leave university to confront the overwhelming anonymity of work in the city, she turned to continuing education for social contact:

> I did not want to have a chance to think, to sit home alone and worry about things, so I signed up for three night courses.

Even though her motivations were negatively therapeutic, as a means of escaping boredom and loneliness, this was coupled with the latent hope that the course might have some positive benefits on its own:

> I suppose in the back of my mind I had hoped there might be some answers there. Such as: What the hell am I doing here? How to be happy. Or, is there really any point? But I realize there aren't any answers; there certainly weren't any in the course. I think a lot of people there wanted answers.

She reads a great deal, mostly novels and self-help psychology tracts. Accordingly, she responded most strongly to the aspects of the course which stressed individual intra-psychic conflicts as the problem of "man". As she put it in personal terms:

> But happiness comes from the inside and I can't seem to get at my inside. I am not sure that point was stressed enough in the course. If people were happy inside and self-fulfilled, they would not do harmful things....I am not much of a social creature, it is hard to get close to people.

A characteristic feature of the Therapeutic Experimenters was an emphasis on the problem of the "here and now" and the lack of any sense of the future:

> I don't have any fantasies about the future. I don't see any point in thinking about it. For a long time I received a great deal of comfort from the idea that I really didn't have to be around in the future because I would probably commit suicide.

Though such cases as that of Beverly, where desires for personal involvement, friendship, and escape from loneliness, were

the basis for participation are atypical, it should be emphasized that similar interests were expressed in different ways by nearly all of the participants. For the others, however, such motivations were not central and the failure to realize such expectations did not prove overtly frustrating. The point is one that should not be underestimated, however. One of the most fundamental and perhaps least developed aspects of continuing education is its function as a place for like-minded people in search of companionship and interpersonal stimulation to make contact. If this need can be catered to, it can become a powerful channel for bringing out the interests and developing the participation of class members. When we recognize the close relationship between affective needs and cognitive development, this is very much as we might expect. The attempt to communicate ideas in an interpersonal vacuum has limited effectiveness in a non-academic audience.

Case Study #2 - Mrs. Davis; housewife, mid-thirties.

The therapeutic basis of Mrs. Davis' participation is evident in the fact that she was talked into going by a friend who agreed to accompany her. The friend had argued that she needed to get out of the house and that her failure to do so was part of her numerous problems. These included the fact that she was at the time pregnant with a fourth child and was faced with the prospect of deciding to have an abortion. Though her husband thought an abortion a good idea, her religious training was such that she felt it was wrong to do so. Ironically, she was trying to develop the courage to resist her husband's demands for the first time in their marriage. In the midst of the crisis of decision she seriously considered asking the Social Scientist, for whom she had developed some kind of respect,

what she should do. As is self-evident, the gap between audience and panelist was at times remarkable. As it happens, a miscarriage solved the problem.

3. The Happenstancers

The Happenstancers, who numbered about nine, were distinguished by the fact that their participation was largely by chance and did not reflect a level of interest sufficient to have brought about involvement except in the exceptional circumstances that brought them to this series. The assumption that participants in a class are there for some good reason has its limits. This fact needs to be taken into account in any effort to assess the needs and interests characteristic of a group.

Four of the Happenstancers came largely to accompany others; a daughter to convey her mother, a wife to accompany a husband, and two friends of highly motivated participants. In each of these cases there was an expression of indifference to the program as such and indications that attendance was tied to the fact of pleasing others. One couple happened to receive the series brochure in the mail for unknown reasons and intrigued, they decided to come for lack of anything better to do. Disappointed with what they saw, on the way to the fourth session, they ended up in a pub instead and never returned. The final case merits more extended treatment as a special case which illustrates the peculiar circumstances which bring people together.

Case Study - Bill; busboy, early twenties

Bill is an underemployed young farmer from the prairies who came west to find a job since things were bad at home. Though he

intends to return for the planting season, he sees no future there:

> I had never planned on anything else besides farming, but now the whole concept of farming is changing.

He became involved in the course in the following circumstances:

> I wasn't doing anything on Monday nights, my only night off. I saw the blurb at the university walking around one day. It was the only one that interested me in the brochure. It made sense. The other ones didn't.

Though not a student, he managed to apply at the low student rate. To the degree that his interest was related to obvious boredom and loneliness, he might in some respects be considered a Therapeutic Experimenter. But he did not interpret himself in these terms, for he had only the vaguest awareness of notions like "self-realization" and of the kind of philosophical commitments such an interest might entail. Rather, he was a sensitive, shy young man who was trying to make his way in the city even as he really wanted to remain on the farm:

> Coming here was the first time I have had personal contact with environmental disaster, the noise, claustrophobia, and dirt in the air. Now I can see the changes. The city is one amorphous mess. No direction -- it is a sprawling animal....
>
> I feel pretty helpless about the future; the only way to live is to give up to it. I am reacting toward it on a personal level as a unique individual, but I will become whatever I am in my environment. However, when I am faced with the deluge of information of what is happening, the burden of it all becomes too much. To deal with it you have to understand it and I don't know how. I can pretend to understand and talk about it in an "intelligent" way -- say all the right phrases -- or I can ignore it. I am generally apathetic in order to deal with the weight of the number of things happening. After all, I am just a "dumb farmer....".

C. Typology of Intellectual-Conceptual Development

If the diversity of motivational orientations pose serious questions for the teacher in continuing education, this is multiplied and complicated by differences of intellectual awareness. Now this is not simply a question of some "knowing" more than others. Such an unrefined conception cannot capture the situation, for the problem is <u>not</u> so much a question of <u>factual</u> knowledge but of <u>integrative</u> knowledge. A layman may understand certain philosophical questions in biology because he is not constrained by the specialized knowledge of the professional. In short, the most fundamental element in comparing intellectual perspective in the series "Dialogue on Man" is that of concepts, the verbal building blocks of integrative, inter-disciplinary understanding.

How, then, does one go about determining the level of conceptual awareness of individuals? Traditional methods of "testing" offer little help. There are a number of reasons for this (which cannot be developed in detail here), but one of the most fundamental is that given the incompleteness and fragmentariness of the body of knowledge in question, it is impossible to develop reliable and measureable questions. For what is in question really, is the <u>potential</u> for self-sustained learning given appropriate contexts. This can be assessed -- it is being argued here -- only through a dialogue (preferably one-to-one, though a third person -- such as a spouse -- may complement to interaction) which has been self-consciously structured by the interviewer. The structure should be grounded in integrative concepts, but developed through an appropriate example or dilemma which gives a concrete point of reference which

can be related to the subject's own experiences and intellectual background.

Though this was not a specific objective of the study, this conceptual-interview format (which I informally referred to as a "cognitive Rorschach"), suggests possibilities for methods of qualitative evaluation of students either for grading or channeling purposes. While the idea of an "oral exam" is scarcely novel, the development of a more rigorous format for such an exercise provides a much more flexible and in-depth method of interrogation which can catch the student's thought in motion. This might allow the detection of progress in the student's thinking, or even more important, potential for significant gains in future learning situations. Thus, this would suggest a way of confronting directly the anomaly of the student who performs well in class on his feet, but who stumbles in highly structured examinations or even in open-ended in-class essays. The latter kinds of performances are specialized skills in their own right which in general are lacking in the adult, non-academic population. Conversation and dialogue, on the other hand, are universal social skills which laymen, however inept in written performances, may interact on par or even better than academics. As a consequence, the focus of adult continuing education on the dialogue form as both an educational medium and an evaluative tool is necessary and fruitful.

If one were interested in the details of organizing a program for the communication of bio-evolutionary integrative concepts (as in the case of "Dialogue on Man"), a minute dissection of the range of responses to the series of conceptual puzzles presented would be called for. Insights into the way in which people get bogged down,

the points at which common sense or ignorance undermine the educator's task, would be vital. Given the focus in this study on a generalized picture of the levels of such awareness, however, the delineation of actual responses will be subordinated to and incorporated in the schema of levels of awareness developed through analysis of the interview data. Ideally, each level contains within it a range of issues and problems which constitute a level of discourse with appropriate problems of communication for student and teacher alike. The dilemma of the typical continuing education course -- and, in general, of undergraduate education -- is the various levels of awareness in a given classroom. Here only a rough outline of such levels of awareness will be developed; the content of each level will not be given extensive treatment, in part because the interviews were not conducted with this in mind.[6] An interesting comparison could have been made had it been possible to continue the in-depth interviews with all the panel members. Although the small sample would have limited the development of a typology from the panel, nevertheless, a contrast between the audience and the panel could have revealed a basis of communication difficulties.

1. The Critical Student

The term Critical Student serves to refer to those class members who could discuss the issues of the course at the level of the panelists, that is, at the level one might expect to find in an upper division honors or a graduate course of a comparable subject matter. In general, those who fell into this category were graduate students, though there were a couple of exceptions. In every case intellectual curiosity was something that was at least indirectly

related to their work which provided stimulus -- and potentially some reward -- for broadening their horizons. As a consequence these individuals had sufficient familiarity with integrative and technical concepts to follow all of the proceedings.

Case Study: Karl; grad student; late twenties.

Like the majority of Critical Students, Karl is himself a graduate student whose interdisciplinary interests brought him to the course. And like these others, with the exception of those associated with the organizers, would drop out after the first few sessions. The reason for this is implicit in his demanding expectations:

> I want to either become involved in the course or receive some rewarding information. I am usually critical of other people's ideas so it will be interesting to see what happens.

Though he is now a graduate student in commerce, he has an MA in social psychology and teaches two continuing education courses himself. One is in organization behavior and the other in management. Widely read, he signed up for the course in part on the basis of interest generated by reading one of the permanent panelist's books. His failure to continue the series, however, indicates that these expectations were not realized.

2. The Critical Speculator

The Critical Speculator is distinguished from the Critical Student largely by the lack of consistency and the uneveness of depth of understanding. While he shares an intellectual aggressiveness and capacity for abstraction with the Critical Student, he lacks the capacity for dependable insightful comment. In short, a passion for logically developing dubious assumptions butressed by

sparse evidence and a touch of personal idiosyncrasy -- often rooted in the autodidactic source of his learning -- may lead him astray. Some of these, however, may readily move with further experience in continuing education into the Critical Student level of awareness.

These were people of intelligence whose work and education did not reward or satisfy their curiosity and thus had been forced to pursue such interests on the side. There was often an element of resentment towards the academics who represented authority, but in the framework of the series could be challenged by outsiders.

Case Study - Mr. James; social worker; fifties.

A pilot during the war, Mr. James served for some years after that in the diplomatic service. Upon retiring from that position, he became a social worker and continues to work in that capacity. Though Mr. James is intelligent and has a broad range of experience to draw upon, his lack of familiarity with the various scientific literatures which speak to the problems he discusses inhibits his ability to handle concepts. Nevertheless, as a Critical Speculator, he has the insight and intellectual aggressiveness necessary to participate in interesting dialogue. His comments on his intellectual interests gives some of the flavor of his concerns:

> I am interested in emotions, the paint that colors life. I don't believe in the individual, it is just a shadow of society not an epiphenomena. (sic) There is nothing inside, we live only in relationship to something else. We are filled with this hallucination of the individual ... One of the problems of social work is that they don't realize that being precedes essence. People must be relating to something and through that something find meaning.

In answering questions, he rarely provided the kind of approach characteristic of the graduate students or those familiar with well-known studies on related subjects. But on the basis of his

shrewd perception, he always managed to conjure plausible, if not entirely scientifically satisfactory answers.

3. Aware Laymen

Within this intellectually diverse group which constitutes the second largest number of participants are those moderately aware people who tend to have a university education or equivalent in experience. Typically, they read a daily newspaper and a magazine or two, as well as several books a year. They are not, however, familiar with any of the technical literatures of the topics in the course and the greater the time lapse between the present and their previous formal schooling, the less understanding they have of the topics discussed. As a consequence, they tend to be aware of the basic political issues in the news and the standard arguments for and against. But their capacity to deal with abstractions that run against personal beliefs or to raise to another level such standard questions is severely limited. Nor are they in a position to run across the kind of information or contacts that would challenge their comfortable adaptation to the status quo. They are distinguished from the Critical Speculator precisely by a relative lack of curiosity and an inability to logically follow through on arguments that may end up in challenging their own assumptions. Whereas the Critical Speculator is in a position to take advantage of any interesting bit of information that comes his way, the passivity of the Aware Laymen tends to limit his capacity and potential for self-generated learning.

Case Study - Mrs. South; housewife, early thirties

Mrs. South is a young woman with a BA in English and experience as both a librarian and social worker. Her husband is an assistant

professor in the arts. She had stopped working in order to have a baby, but is now interested in getting out again. Actually, she is already involved to a great extent in that she is active in several groups working on day-care, food co-ops, and social reform. This is related to her husband's reformist political activities. Her assessment of the course aptly summarizes her interest:

> I had hoped to find a really succinct summarization of the issues here though I knew that it wouldn't be. Generally, you do end up disappointed in such courses. It is a risk you have to take otherwise you will get nothing. One of the important things is the continual suggestions being made for reading material -- I find that helpful.

Now Mrs. South is somewhat atypical given her interest in the reading material and her apparent intention to seek some of it out. But this stems in part from being the wife of an academic, a situation which makes such habits a way of life. Though this is a conjecture, my impression was that she was serving as a kind of extension of his interests. As a consequence, she seemed somewhat restricted in her own capacity for operating with integrative concepts, especially in utilizing them in a creative way.

4. Unaware Laymen

These laymen are distinguished from the Aware Laymen by their general inability to formulate standardized public issues in a coherent manner, let alone grasp the issues in the series. For the most part these people had only a dim idea of what was going on in the outside world and an extremely limited capacity to describe those events conceptually. Their general level of intellectual awareness might be compared to that of a typical sample of first year undergraduates. As a consequence, the kinds of questions which

concerned the specialists were so abstract and unrelated to the kinds of questions they would ask themselves about the world, they did not know what to think of it all. For the most part, they had a vague sense they were getting something though not quite sure what. In contrast to a number of the Aware Laymen who resented the fact the discussions did not relate to where they were at intellectually, the Laymen tended to be sufficiently awed by the situation to refrain from criticism.

Case Study - Mrs. Benson; housewife, thirties.

Though Mrs. Benson was trained as a nurse, she had not worked since having her three children. Her husband is a science professor, but she really does not understand much of what he does outside the basic outlines of his projects. She provides a typical example of the sheltered and intellectually dormant housewife who has responded to recent discussions in the mass media:

> Germaine Greer is my savior! I thought I was becoming neurotic, here I have a wonderful husband and kids but all the time I was exhausted. So now, thanks to her, we are trying to adjust. That is part of why I took the course...I haven't done too much reading, except for the Female Eunich, but I am determined to do more...It is easy to escape as a housewife and not know what is happening in the outside world...I don't feel quite so much in a rut now. I feel I have been learning more than just the run of the mill stuff.

5. Cultists and Eccentrics

These are people who may have extremely high awareness in some areas, but who have, whether because of closure on a limited range of answers (cultism) or individual peculiarities (eccentric), a bizarre and difficult to share view of the world. In certain respects such people defy classification on any kind of standard levels of awareness test precisely because what they know or think

worth knowing does not find a place on the test. They are extremely important to distinguish, however, in that they may prove to be essential in either enriching or sabotaging a learning activity.

This is in a sense an anomalous classification which can potentially overlap strongly with any one of the others. But it deserves separate treatment because the kinds of narrowly skewed learning experiences characteristic of those classed here need to be taken into account in any effort to assess the distribution of intellectual levels in continuing education.

Case Study - Mr. and Mrs. Box; fifties

Mr. Box is a real estate office manager; his wife assists him. While for many purposes they could be classed as Aware Citizens, their longtime involvement with various "liberation" groups (they have been vegetarians for twenty-three years) is indicative of cultic interests which set them apart. While their overall intellectual horizon is limited to that of the Aware Laymen, they have an unusual background in specific areas related to Eastern Religion, self-realization, and encounter groups. Thus, while they have not read widely, they are familiar with a great deal of literature in the area of Eastern religions and existential psychology.

Case Study - Mr. Williams, teacher, fifties.

A high school teacher, Mr. Williams could for most purposes be classed as a Critical Speculator. Nevertheless, the peculiarity of many of his ideas and the aggressive way in which he presented them at times made others extremely uncomfortable. As a consequence, it is perhaps appropriate to consider him as an Eccentric. To a degree, of course, there was a tendency of this type in a number

of the Critical Speculators who as autodidacts with limited formal education had views of the world which were difficult to communicate with others.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Cf. Table 4.

[2]Cf. Table 6.

[3]Cf. Table 2.

[4]Cf. p.   where the significance of this is developed further.

[5]Cf. Tough, 68. for a comparative study in adult learning motivations.

[6]Some hint of the content of the range of responses, at least with respect to the polarizing dimensions, will be found in the brief comments on the series of questions located in the Appendix.

V. CONCLUSIONS: CRITICISMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The problems that emerged in the course of the series can be readily linked to the specific difficulties emerging from the categories of educational design involved: that of a combined service and secondly, that of appealing to a mass audience through electronic media. Accordingly, the results of the study can be organized around these two foci of design dilemmas.

A. Co-ordinating Joint Services

1. In the first place, the combining of two services raises jurisdictional questions as to decision-making. In the case under examination, both the Education Coordinator and the TV Producer shared responsibility for program design, but the nature of their specific roles and the degree of their control remained vague and undefined. Thus, while there was a definitely hierarchical form of programme design it was not at all clear who was "in charge" of things. While there was some lip-service paid to "participation" and "feedback" from the audience and the guests, this was practically speaking next to impossible and was never given any real consideration except in one "gripe-session" that emerged spontaneously after the third session.

In short, it appears that organizational control should have moved either toward more centralization or toward a more open participatory planning format. As it was, the ambiguity of dual and uncertain central leadership combined with theoretical open partici-

pation not backed by concrete procedures proved untenable.

2. Secondly, in this situation of amorphous central direction, the conflicting goals and needs of TV and continuing education were not adequately recognized and taken into account. In the process the series suffered from limitations both as TV and as continuing education.

As TV, the series failed to take advantage of the possibility of editing that is given with delayed replay. In that the best of educational confrontations have their dull moments, the possibility of editing opens the door to significantly raising the overall level of competence of the program through an elimination of repetitive and unstimulating sections. Moreover, there was no effort to take advantage of the numerous techniques available to enliven and enrich the presentations. That is, there was no use of sound, of slides, film segments, or of backup screens. Thus the program would have been suited simply to the audio media (audio) rather than video.

On the other hand, as continuing education the programme design failed largely because the class was not in an appreciably better position than they would have been as members of an anonymous television audience. This stems from the low level of actual participation either during, before, or after the sessions, the intellectual distance from the experts, and the lack of interaction with other participants. And though this reflected in part insufficient background or inadequate comprehension of the themes as presented, the series itself did little to develop such background in a systematic manner.

In short, the use of video recording detracted from the

series as a continuing education class while at the same time the fact of video recording added nothing to the series relative to the specific advantages of such technology for facilitating communication. It simply made it possible to project the same limited program to more people. The medium added nothing qualitative -- it simply increased the size of the passive audience.

B. Appealing to a Mass Audience

1. Again the untenable and constrictive pressures for compromise characteristic of the weak dual control over program design created an untenable middle result with the consequence that the goals of neither continuing education or television were realized adequately. This can be seen in the examination of the thesis that the series should have been more oriented toward instruction <u>or</u> more concerned with an entertainment strategy that would appeal to a broader audience.

The shift toward a more instructionally oriented design would have required, above all, an emphasis on the communication of the fundamental conceptual issues underlying the series. More attention would have to be paid to the series as a developing entity in which each session would in part be a prerequisite to the next, each providing background and insights building upon past learning. This is, of course, implicit in the definition of instructional television as presenting a series of programs characterized by overall integration of subject matter. In this kind of format, the problem of content takes precedence over the fact of using video: TV becomes a learning aid and its specific needs (appeal to a mass audience of random viewers) are subordinated to specific instruc-

tional objectives.

The alternative strategy would place emphasis on providing programs which can stand alone and thus do not assume extensive background knowledge or having seen the prior programmes in the series. Each segment needs only be internally organized. Furthermore, the themes must be topical, that is to say, are issues recognized by larger numbers of people. The question of genetic engineering, for instance, is a topical issue in a way that the relation between biology and culture -- framed at least in those terms -- is not, outside of an extremely select audience. Such general themes, however, can be reworked in a more popular form in such topical themes as "man as an animal" or psychogenic diseases, etc. Further, the needs of TV as a vehicle of entertainment must in this situation have precedence over instructional objectives. Especially important here would be the utilization of sound, color, pictures and contemporary associations (current events, especially of a sensational or local-regional-national nature).

2. Any effort to appeal to large groups must pay particular attention to the creation of "dialogue" as the basis for audience attention. This requires special concern with the internal organization and content -- the format -- of each program. This would pose rather different questions depending on whether a narrow instructional format or a broader educational project were being designed.

For the instructional situation advance preparation (ideally for the purpose of eventual publication to guarantee quality) provides control over length and content that facilitates the coherency of the series and communication between the experts participating.

Further, for effective dialogue to occur with such material, a moderator is required who is capable of simultaneously dealing at the level of the audience as well as the experts. A valuable addition to this process would be a post-dialogue summary and analysis based upon a careful analysis of the transcript of the programme. Careful editing of the dialogue would be crucial for sustaining audience interest and the continuity of discussion. A final consideration of such an instructional effort is recognition of the fact that this is to serve as an exemplary model to stimulate the thinking of others. Accordingly, generating a mood of enthusiasm and excitement in the dialogue process is crucial. For this to occur, however, requires both an audience that is sufficiently at ease and prepared to participate and discussion leaders with the requisite stage presence and synthesizing ability to provide coherent direction to the flow of discussion. For this purpose the average expert is ill-prepared and inexperienced. To assume that he or she will be able to perform effectively without practice, advice, and assistance is foolhardy. Instructional media performers must master the medium just as for any other type of programming. For this purpose, of course, only the most exceptional teachers should be utilized. And in this way their gifts may be multiplied many times over through video-tape.

In summary, some specific suggestions for the improvement of a similar educational program include: clear pre-planning with an articulated consensus of goals and concepts; panel presentations prepared in advance; audience/class given opportunity and specific direction for advance preparation; time before taping utilized as a warm-up period stimulating face-to-face interaction regarding the

questions posed for the evening discussion; introduction of all available visual support media into presentations; if breaks in taping are necessary, then used to summarize and redirect discussion; editing of the tape is essential; each session should be critically analyzed and summarized by the individual responsible for the intellectual content of the entire program, this can then be taped and inserted as the broadcast program conclusion and also used as stimulus for the next studio-class warm-up; and finally, an extensive discussion period for interpersonal and intellectual interaction should be designed for the conclusion of the taping. In these ways the content can be better organized and communicated and will not be presented in an interpersonal vacuum of detached meanings (cf. text pg. 66 for further explication).

Similar considerations apply to the emphasis on self-sufficient, entertainment oriented educational programmes. Though here the organization of dialogue requires a very different approach to content. Formal presentations and the provision of background would be completely subordinated to a fast-moving topical dialogue. (An example of such dialogue can be found in the CBC "Science and Consciousness" Symposium). Each programme would be developed with the idea that it would have to attract the viewer rather than be able to rely upon pre-existing motivational factors of the kind that can be assumed for those interested in instructional programming. And finally, the question of participation assumes a very different form with the assumption of a much larger and more diverse audience.

One alternative for dealing with larger audiences involves the organization of listening groups (cf. Oliger, 1967). As a suggestion for further research, it would be valuable to develop

a pilot study of this type in the video medium. With the incorporation of the suggested changes already expressed e.g. topics prepared and explicated in advance, visual support media arranged, a flexible shooting schedule etc., some significant tapes may result. These then could be broadcast in sequence over the TV network. For greater flexibility, (i.e. variable times of day) the Cable TV channel could be used. The broadcasting of the program would need to be well advertised in the conventional manner and also through professional associations and businesses that might have an interest, school bulletins, and Continuing Education programs at all levels. Listening groups could then be set up by requesting persons to enroll and a) gather a group of 10-15 persons together in their own homes or b) with the assistance of the continuing education service, arrange meetings in homes within central areas or community centers. Then with the TV programs as stimulus to begin the discussion, each of these home listening group.workshops should have a previously trained discussion leader to assist in the explanation and in bringing the issues to a more personal level of awareness. The listening group concept is ideal also because it has greater possibilities for coping with heterogenity. Those with more background and experience in a group can more easily assist others in this type of dialogue situation. Also for the essential unmet social needs of the participants it allows a context for potential intellectual evaluation.

A multitude of topics could be dealt with in this manner which is an approach somewhat parallel to the Open University System in Britain. At present there is nothing available in Canada to compare with the enthusiastic and long-range program planning developed there within Open University concept.

Admittedly, however, there are inherent limits in popularization. Even with superb teaching skills and intensive advance preparation, the frequently inevitable simplification of concepts and explanations means a loss of their flexibility for future utilization (e.g. dogma). This is another reason why the hope of mass education solving social problems has proven fallacious. Yet if a participatory democracy is the goal (i.e. where individuals have some measure of control over the forces impinging upon their daily existence) then there are few other alternatives to choose.

C. Other Considerations

Such criticisms must be counterbalanced, however, by a recognition of pre-existing constraints within the broadcast media system as presently organized and with their relationship (or lack thereof) with current continuing education efforts. In an important sense many of the previous points were beside the point in that changing the situation would require a very different context of institutional resources.

Yet there is perhaps a lesson in this fact. There is on one level a justification for such experimental programming on the grounds that only in this way will the path be opened for more ambitious efforts. This thesis may be questioned on several accounts, however. First, the lack of the incorporation of systematic evaluation into the programme itself does not provide an authoritative basis for criticism that would flow back into the institutional communications channels of both continuing education and television network planning. An experiment whose learning experience is not

adequately communicated to those in positions to change policy is of limited significance. On the other hand, when it is not presented as an experiment whose failings as a program can be accounted for in such a way as to indicate how, with different resources they might be avoided in the future, there is a danger that merely a bad precedent has been created. It might well be that in such circumstances any innovative initiative might turn out to be worse -- to the extent that it is an unfavorable precedent -- than having no programme at all, at least from the point of view of changing internal policy.

In a word, it might be argued that such experimentation must be more self-conscious of its long-term effects. In the case under examination there is no means on the basis of the information collected to judge the effect of this example on future production possibilities of this kind. In fact the tapes were erased, never to be used again and no other ambitious programs have been attempted.

What is the alternative? The most fundamental point is recognizing the full implications of the possibility of multiple replay provided by videotape. Unlike programmes which are single events, television and film provide the possibility of endless re-use, a factor which radically changes the consideration of levels of investment into initial production. If any program is to be produced at all, it is necessary to ensure that it will be professionally done in such a way that there will be a reasonable long-term demand. Yet such programming cannot be created on an ad hoc basis by two individuals cooperating in a joint service without the infusion of additional resources that would make a much higher

quality product. To do this, however, would require a much more systematic and professional approach to the development of instructional and educational television. This simply cannot be adequately done under existing contracts and as a consequence most efforts will be doomed to productions of amateurish and limited value which do not provide the kind of precedent necessary for a genuine advance in the fusion of educational and media objectives.

APPENDIX

A. INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRES

1. Results and Problems
2. Copy Initial Background Questionnaire
3. Copy Concluding Evaluation Questionnaire

B. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

1. Description
2. Interview schedule
3. Analysis of schedule
4. Problems

C. PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION

D. OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

E. TABLES

1. Sample
2. Source of contact with course
3. Previous courses
4. Age distribution/sex distribution
5. Educational Level
6. Occupational distribution
7. Motivational typology
8. Level of awareness typology

A. INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRES

1. Results and Problems

Though the two simple questionnaires, one at the beginning and one following the last session, were never taken to be central to the study, it was hoped that they would supplement the more intensive interview data and perhaps raise other questions. Yet as is often the case, a researcher's objectives may be foiled. In this case the low response rates (25 or less than 50% in the first; 12 or less than 20% in the second) provided no basis for reliable generalization, especially given the small size of the sample (50 plus). Some of the individual comments in the final questionnaire did provide, however, some interesting interpretations and opinions which were significant regardless of their "representativeness".

Explaining the low response rate is related to the chronic inability (experienced throughout the course) of the organizers to give sustained support to the evaluative project, though the final questionnaire was mailed along with other official memoranda to the audience members with stamped return envelopes. It would possibly have been better to send the questionnaire separately as the bulk of material received was apparently overwhelming. The inability of the class to 'meet' to transact such business was inhibited by the studio situation in which time was at a premium and in which all discussion was focused on getting the evenings session videotaped. Further, chronic difficulties kept the organizers and the audience itself preoccupied with week to week details in a way that detracted attention from the evaluative enterprise. In other respects this facilitated my job, especially with respect to participant observation, since I was generally ignored and my position as an evaluator underemphasized.

Two other special factors are involved. The first questionnaire was handed out in an extremely confused first session in which there was limited time and no way to ensure that all complied. As for the second, coming at the very end it may have met with the obstacle of class members' indifference. In a word, it is clear they simply did not take the evaluation of the series or at that point perhaps the series itself as a significant enterprise.

February 7, 1972
Continuing Education
"Dialogue On Man"

Hello, I am Salinda Hess and as a part of my graduate work I am conducting an evaluation of this continuing education course. I have had a chance to meet with some of you already and hope to meet with most of you in the coming weeks. Accompanying this letter is a questionnaire which I would like you to fill in and return to me tonight.

The purpose of this questionnaire (and the interviews) is ultimately rather simple: who takes a continuing education course of this nature, and why? This relates to my interest in the particular difficulties adults find in utilizing adult education resources for finding answers to the kind of general moral, intellectual, social and political questions which concerned citizens find worthy of their time. Since this course is in many respects experimental, I will be interested in your candid reactions as it progresses through the next few weeks. As a kind of mediator between those presenting the course and those taking it, I can hopefully be in a neutral position to register and take into account any suggestions, or complaints you might have. Any personal comments made to me with respect to yourselves or to the course will remain confidential and not divulged to any of the organizers of this programme.

I will be available at this number, #291-0953, if you have any questions or problems you would like to discuss please feel free to call.

Otherwise, I am looking forward to talking with you and appreciate your assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

Salinda Hess

Continuing Education
" Dialogue on Man "

FILL IN OR CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

NAME ______________________ TELEPHONE NO. __________

OCCUPATION ______________________ EDUCATION (Circle last year completed)
12 or less, 13, University 1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 (MA, MSc, PhD, MD or _____

SPOUSE'S
OCCUPATION ______________________

1. Where did you hear of this course? 1.________

2. Have you taken any other continuing education courses? If so, name any others of a similar nature. 2.________

3. Why did you decide to take this particular course? 3.________

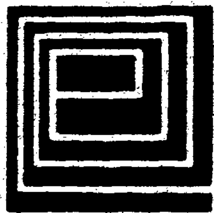
   a. No reason, just chance.
   b. A friend suggested it.
   c. I knew of the people involved in the program.
   d. It appeared to correspond to some of my reading and interests.
   e. It was a good night for me.
   f. Interest developed from other courses.
   g. Attracted by the brochure description.
   h. Other

4. What do you hope to get out of this course? 4.________

5. Are you involved in any other educational, community or social action organizations or activities? (e.g. Political Party. Church groups, professional associations, SPEC, etc.) If so, describe briefly. 5.________

6. Have you read any books or had any other experiences (e.g. T.V., radio, magazines, work, community activities, etc.) which have stimulated your interest in the issues involved in this course? If so, name or describe briefly. 6.________

If you have any further comments or questions, please use the back of this sheet. Thank you.



Center
for
Continuing
Education

DIALOGUE ON MAN : QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to give you a chance to express your opinions anonymously about the continuing education program you have just completed. I would appreciate your answering these questions in detail since your participation in this feedback process is the only way to obtain an adequate evaluation of the course.

If you have any questions, comments, or would like to talk further about the course, call me at 291-0953.

Thank you.

Salinda Hess

DIALOGUE ON MAN : EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Page 1

Session	Check if present	Check ones you liked best	Comments concerning your reaction to each of the sessions attended
February 7, 1972 Introduction (UBC) Becker and Fisher			
February 21, 1972 Eric Leyland Psychiatrist			
February 28, 1972 John Krebs Ethologist			
March 6, 1972 Elbridge Rand Philosopher			
March 13, 1972 Curt Latham Physician			
March 20, 1972 Jim Miller Geneticist			
March 27, 1972 William Nichols Religious Studies			
April 10, 1972 Ervin Laszlo Systems Philosopher			

DIALOGUE ON MAN : ANONYMOUS EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Have you been interviewed by me? circle YES NO

1. ATTENDANCE: Did the reason for your not attending some of the sessions reflect a failure of the program to sustain your interest?

   Was this due to unsuitable subjects, inadequate presentations, or were there other reasons? (I would appreciate your specifying them)

2. ARRANGEMENTS: How did the presence of the TV equipment affect your participation and concentration in the sessions?

   Was there any change as you became accustomed to the situation?

   Do you think the moderator was effective in leading the discussions?

3. TOPICS: Would you have wanted the presentations of particular topics to be changed in any way?

   Are there other topics you would have wanted discussed?

4. PARTICIPATION: Were you able to participate as much as you wished?

Would you be interested in taking part in further courses like this in the future? Please explain your answer.

5. PURPOSE: This course was intended to provide some new insights and ideas for the participants. Do you think it has been successful in your case? Please explain.

For your purposes, who do you think provided the most significant answers to the questions posed in this series, Becker or Fisher?

Any further comments or reactions to the course would be appreciated. Please return this questionnaire as soon as possible. Many thanks for your cooperation.

Use reverse sides if necessary.

B. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

1. Description

The purpose of the in-depth interview was to provide on an exploratory basis insight into background, motivations for participation, and intellectual understanding of the class registrants. A general overriding question was thus: what kind of person takes a course like this? Further, how would different people react to the actual course in progress?

As the following interview guide shows (cf. other examples of this type of open-ended format, Lofland, 1971:78-9), questioning was broken down into four sequences: personal data or general background information, development of interest in course, intellectual biography, and finally a series of exploratory questions designed to elicit opinions on a range of theoretical issues related to the content of the course.

Except for the last section, most of the interview is self-explanatory, though the guide itself does not quite convey the tendency of the interview as a whole to assume the shape of an intellectual biography in which the development of personal identity was tied up with the development of ideas about the self and the world. This is related, of course, to the distinguishing characteristic of the class as a group: a search for a framework in which to intellectually organize their personal conflicts and their concern about the state of contemporary society.

The last section attempted to provide some indication of the level at which the individual could discuss the kinds of concepts which were taken by the interviewer to be fundamental to a comprehension of the issues surrounding the interface of biology and culture. That is, the topics examined were taken to provide some indication of the facility of the individual in participating in and contributing to the content of the "dialogue". The emphasis of the questions tended to fall upon the macro-bioevolutionary concepts discussed by the Biologist. No specific attempt to deal with the more personal and elusive question of exploring the ways in which individuals understand the "self", especially in its paradoxical and dualistic relationship to the body. Yet for those who did not follow such themes, talking about phenomena such as social pathology revealed severely limited comprehension of the current understanding of such phenomena.

2. Interview Schedule

i. Personal Data: interests, educational background, occupations, children, religion, etc.

ii. Relation to the course:

How did you become interested in the course?
Have you taken other courses?
Where did you find out about the course?
Why this particular course?

Expectations of the course: what do you think it will will be like, how do you hope to profit from the course?

Self-evaluation of position and interest in the course.

iii. Intellectual background:

What would you say are the five most important books published in the last few years?
/or What books have you read recently that made a particular impact on you and why?

Can you name any books on the relationship between man and his environment that you would recommend to friends?

Radio and TV habits: Any significant programs that have had an impact or raised issues in your mind?
Encounter groups?
Political party?

iv. Theoretical Awareness

Question subjects:

1) sociological macro-microrelationships

2) interpretations of economic inequality and evaluations

3) conceptualization of ideas of nature and biological evolution

4) conceptualization of social pathology (esp. sexual deviance)

5) images of the future

The five topics of discussion or questions probing theoretical awareness were phrased approximately as follows, though often questions by the person interviewed or development of examples on my part altered this significantly. But this served the purpose at hand which was to elicit serious discussion of difficult topics to see how

adequately the class members could pose questions, grasp abstract bio-social concepts, and point toward answers.

(1) How would you react to this paradox: In Canada physicians earn something like three times or more than the skilled laborer and yet there is a chronic shortage. (e.g. perhaps a half must be imported). Why would you suppose that in Russia, where physicians earn less than some skilled laborers and not all that much more than most, there is an adequate supply of physicians and an abundant surplus of competent people who desire to be physicians?

Comment: This question requires the individual to bring to bear a host of concepts of a social psychological, macro-sociological and political-economic variety that is a useful test of generalized capacity for sociological reasoning. Moreover, the issue has implicit ideological overtones and allows some opportunity for expression the individual's understanding of the difference between the Soviet and Canadian political system.

Explaining the Canadian situation of shortage required a grasp of macro-sociological forces and the mechanisms by which market forces were prevented from ending the shortage through a greater domestic production of physicians. This also allowed expressions of understanding of the question of health care priorities and the manner in which this is an expression of the treatment of medical care as a commodity.

Explaining the Russian situation is difficult for the average person due to a lack of specific information, but this was not essential to the question for which speculative reasons were called for. The point looked for here was if people were able to grasp the symbolic character of motivation and the way in which status or identity conceptions modified or replaced purely materialistic motivation. Another point that could be brought in was the fact that a majority of physicians in Russia are women and that training is paid for and the quantity regulated by the state on the basis of social needs. This entire discussion on the "nature of man" as expressed in the conflict between altruistic (healing) motives and desire for material gain as developed in radically different social-historical environments provided a valuable introduction to the range of issues in question.

(2) Do you think there is a relatively just distribution of wealth in Canada?

Comment: If the answer tended toward "yes," the further point raised by the interviewer was the justification for this feeling. This inevitably turned to a discussion of how functionally necessary uneven distribution was for motivating performances. This ties in with the first question. For those who answered "yes," the problem was posed in terms of how much material inequality was necessary given the symbolic nature of self-esteem.

If the answer tended toward "no," the question was raised by the interviewer as to how this might be changed. Responses to this question revealed a great deal about images of human nature which conflicted with value preferences as in the case of those who affirmed man's "natural greediness" but advocated the re-distribution of wealth.

(3) One of the great advances in our understanding of nature (the world of biological organisms) was Darwin's theory of evolution. He suggested that in nature one could see that evolutionary progress came about through processes of "natural selection" or what has also been called "survival of the fittest".

Do you think this notion of the "survival of the fittest" is a valuable way to describe human evolution as well?

Comment: Other than a more general capacity to handle evolutionary concepts, this question was designed to determine if there was an understanding of the group basis of competition -- that the ability to co-operate is at the same time the basis of competitive advantage. The failure to make such distinctions tends to result in a "social Darwinistic" individualistic conception of societal evolution in which every man is for himself.

(4) a. Do you think that so-called "social pathology" (drug abuse, murder, sexual deviation, crime, mental disorder, etc.) is largely an expression of human nature and/or biological errors? After all such phenomena are found in all modern societies.

Comment: If there was a tendency to agree with this question, it was pointed out that there were tremendous differences in the rates of such things within and between societies which contradicted the assumption that they were an immediate reflection of human nature or biological flaws.

If the answer tended toward no, as in the case of those who pointed to environmental sources of such behaviour, the question was raised whether one could continue to speak of "progress" when most of these rates were increasing.

b. Do you consider homosexuality a biological error or a problem of psychosocial development?

For those who suggested biological anomaly, it was pointed out that in societies where heterosexual activity begins with the onset of physiological maturation, homosexuality is virtually unknown.

For those who pointed to psychosocial development as most fundamental, further questioning sought to discover the degree of sophistication of understanding of the way in which learned, symbolically organized behaviour is the primary cause of the nature of an otherwise highly unspecific sexual drive whose objects are not given instinctively.

(5) Do you look forward to the future? Looking toward the year 2,000, what do you see as the basis for coping with the crises that have been predicted? How would you rate these four items in terms of importance in dealing with these crises: a. science and technology; b. values; c. structure of power; d. distribution of knowledge.

Comment: Other than eliciting images of the future and optimistic vs. pessimistic orientations, this question sought to gain a sense of the individual's explanation of the dynamics of social change.

4. Problems of Interviewing

Interview appointments were made by phone on the basis of a class registration list. Though some could not be reached for various reasons within the time period available for interviews (due to mispelled names or wrong phone numbers, etc.), everyone contacted agreed to meet with me though in two cases a mutually agreeable time could not be worked out that fit into my crowded schedule. As a consequence, only approximately 42 of the more than 60 people registered for the course were interviewed in-depth. The precise number of registrants was difficult to determine as attendance was irregular, some brought guests (usually spouses) as the programme developed,others dropped out, and a number of others attended as friends of the organizers or panelists (cf. table 1). The interviews were generally held in the class member's home and lasted from two to six hours. The energy outlay needed for these interviews quickly necessitated a slower interview time schedule than originally conceived. Notes based upon the interview were usually written up (typed) within a day or two, though when too closely spaced several days sometimes elapsed, a habit I quickly learned should be avoided as the difficulty of remembering and of attempting to write up several at once was overwhelming.

Carrying out the full objectives of the interview schedule was frequently inhibited by the lack of time as many individuals could only devote so much time to the interview. Yet with only two exceptions all the interviewers appeared relaxed and gave evidence of enjoying our meeting and the conversation. Several specifically noted that this was for them the most valuable contact of the course and invited me to return for for further discussions.

While the general sequence of questions (background, interest in course, intellectual biography, theoretical comprehension) was almost always followed, the specific questions within these topics varied and often took a direction stemming from the person being interviewed. This was of course necessary to fully explore the diversity of individual interests with the course.

That I was a female generally facilitated the arrangement and execution of the interview. That I was a young female tended to make males especially interested in explaining themselves. And that they

tended not to take me as seriously or as intellectually threatening as they might have with a male or a female with a different approach, they were very willing to express their opinions and beliefs without inhibition. As for women, the fact that I was a woman also had other advantages, especially with relation to motivational questions which often related to their previous status as a female. Only once did I experience any uneasiness brought about by the interviewing of a husband with his conservative wife who was offended by the expressed changes of attitudes which had characterized his life over the past several years.

C. PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION

A third source of data in addition to the simple questionnaires and the in-depth interviews was that of participant-observation. This was partially preserved as notes written down soon after the events in question. Otherwise they are based on memory.

My role as a participant-observer shifted significantly during the course of the series from that of an active to a passive orientation: from high to low participation in efforts to implement and/or modify the series. Initially, it was hoped that I could assist in the actual development of the series through suggestions based upon my contact with the audience. The Biologist in particular, given his high involvement in the goals of the series, found this role of providing a "feedback loop" valuable. However, this proved to be an unrealistic conception of my role and events necessitated a reappraisal. The inflexibility of the format as imposed by the imperative of video-taping and the lack of control over the content of guest presentations proved insurmountable. Given the unavailability of effective measures to alter the development of the series, such an activist role on my part was not possible.

A second difficulty in carrying out this objective came from my increasing awareness of the wide differences in levels of understanding within the audience, ranging from housewives with no university training to students in advanced graduate studies. This diversity of audience needs precluded any facile measures short of restructuring the entire series. In the circumstances it would have been most appropriate to ignore the live audience and concentrate on appealing to a broader section of the assumed TV public.

A third problem in implementing this active critical role arose from the need to gain the confidence of the class members (cf. gaining acceptance Glazer 1972:11-24). This involved an increasing shift of my loyalty and time to understanding their problems instead of focusing on the program itself. In this way, on a one-to-one basis, I was able to get an in-depth feeling for the way in which class members understood the programs. And this very sense of the immensity of the gap between the class and the panelists undermined completely any hopes of remedying the situation significantly in the given circumstances.

A final obstacle was that of maintaining the confidence of the chief program personnel and the natural defensiveness that emerged in the wake of disappointments as to the development of the series. In the literature of participant observation, this is described as the dilemma of "reciprocity" (cf. Glazer, 1972:125-181). In this situation more basic criticisms were a threat to their authority. As a consequence there was a tendency to deflect fundamental criticisms through a reformulation of expectations as to what the program was to have accomplished (cf. Text section III.B.2, where this point is developed more fully).

Further, the gradual shift to a more passive role as participant-observer created some confusion as to exactly what I was doing at all. My failure to communicate clearly my actual research strategy -- which partially reflected my changing conceptions -- contributed to this lack of understanding of what I was trying to do. This was complicated by the fear that if I revealed too many of the details of my plans, the defensiveness of the chief participants might distort even more their responses to me and even cut off valuable sources of information. This is, of course, one of the central dilemmas of participant-observation: the degree to which the researcher should outline precisely what he is doing. As it was, being a female and a graduate student who was known to and had worked with the chief panelists, I was in a relatively non-threatening position, once I gave up the role of public criticism and focused on the data necessary for a critical study. This very lack of status resulted in a tendency for people to confide in me comments which they could not say directly to others but perhaps would not mind me hearing "for the record". The flippancy with which this was often done served to increase the problem of interpreting their significance.

Retrospectively, I can see many points at which my participant-observation might have been improved. All too often I was plagued by working with my tape recorder and thus unable to pay full attention to the proceedings. More notes should have been taken to insure that details are not forgotten. More pre-series planning would have given me more time during the series to write up notes, carry out interviews, etc. Most importantly, I found that interviewing was extremely taxing and the results depended upon the level of my own energy and enthusiasm. Further, greater confidence would have facilitated the presentation of myself to the chief participants in such a way as to secure more cooperation with my project.

D. OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

Other primary sources included tapes of the individual sessions and such internal documents as memoranda and the position papers of the panelists.

E. TABLES

Sample:

1. Total Number: 77 (63 officially registered)

Interviews	42
Second Hand	19
Unknown	10
Withdrew	6
	77

2. Heard of Course:

Through participants	10
Friends	7
Brochure	39
UBC Information Service	5
Bookstore	1
Unknown	15
Total	77

a) Personal association or reading acquaintance with participants provided impetus to attend for: 15

3. Previous Courses:

Several (1 or 2)	21
Many	10
None	31
Unknown	15
Total	77

4. Age:

Youth 19-29 years	19
Middle 30-49	22
Late,middle and older 50-69	21
Uncertain or unknown	15
Total	77

Sex:

Male	27
Female	50
	77

5. Education:

Secondary (including grade 13)	15
Some univ. or training beyond secondary	15
Bachelor Deg.	21
Higher degree	9
Unknown	17
Total	77

6. Occupations:

Student	11
Traditional professions	6
Helping prof.	12
Technical/ commercial	13
Housewives	17
Miscellaneous	3
Unknown	15
Total	77

Traditional Professions:		6
Engineer	2	
Professor	1	
Dentist	2	
Architect	1	
Helping Professions:		12
Teacher	6	
Social Worker	3	
Nurse	1	
Physiotherapist	2	
Technical/Commercial:		13
Electrical technician	1	
Market analyst	1	
P.R. man	1	
Sales	1	
Secretarial	1	
B.C. Tel.	1	
Lab. technician	1	
Agronomist	1	
Real Estate	3	
Civil service	1	

Housewives:		17
Former:		
Clerical	2	
Nurse	1	
Teacher	3	
Social worker	1	
Technical	2	
Other or never worked	8	

Miscellaneous:

Farmer: 1 Handyman: 1 Laborer: 1

7. Motivational Typology:

Intellectually Curious	32
Therapeutic Experimenters	8
Happenstancers	9
Unknown or uncertain	28
Total	77

8. Level of Awareness Typology

Critical student	12
Critical Speculator	6
Aware Layman	18
Unaware Layman	9
Cultist and Eccentrics	4
Unknown or uncertain	28
Total	77

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