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With dreams of a White Chanukah now a reality, Chicago is impatient to give its inhabitants a taste of the sub-zero Fahrenheit temperatures we have been trying since last January to forget. It was -5°F this morning at O'Hare. So it goes.

Amidst all this, we had hoped to provide INNOVATOR readers with our "Roots" issue this time. Alas, several of the articles are still in preparation, so we shall try again in the New Year. Meanwhile, we just happened to have a substitute article in the wings--a paper Barbara Hursh, Associate Director of Program Development at UNI, and I presented on November 22 at the Third National Urban Education Conference in Norfolk, Virginia. This paper, "Building Community at an Urban Commuter University," is on a topic close to our hearts and high on our priority list. Building community anywhere these days must rank as an undertaking as difficult as it is desirable--the more so at a non-residential college or university in a large city!

In this context it is perhaps not out of place to recall that Christmas is, or should be, a holiday of hope--the festival par excellence of community--filled with the promise of lions peacefully co-existing with lambs and of swords becoming plowshares, as befits the Millennium. In this spirit, let me wish all of you happy holidays and best wishes for promises fulfilled, both professional and personal, in the new year.

And yes, thank you for being part of this community, readers all of the INNOVATOR. Bonne lecture! See you in 1978.

Reynold Feldman
Director of Program Development
Editor

* * *

BUILDING COMMUNITY AT AN URBAN COMMUTER UNIVERSITY

I. Statement of the Problem

Urban commuter institutions have a perennial problem: that of building a sense of community among faculty, students, and others affiliated with the institution.

The sense of community implicit in the terms college and uni-versity has special importance for, yet is especially difficult to achieve on, the urban campus. By "sense" of community" we are referring to the concept of Gemeinschaft, which Ferdinand Tönnies, the 19th-century Austrian sociologist, defined as starting from the assumption of "perfect unity of human wills."[1] In the now-classic dichotomy, Tönnies was distinguishing between Gemeinschaft, an ideal type of social interaction, and Gesellschaft, the social Darwinism which he saw prevailing in the competitive, industrializing society of his day.

Tönnies went on to identify Gemeinschaft with the rural village--according to Jessie Bernard, "the fatal flaw" in his schema.[2] Gesellschaft, of course, was his corresponding characterization of the city. Flaw or not, however, it is easy to see how a sense of community, or Gemeinshaft, might more easily exist in a self-contained rural residential setting, say, Amherst, Massachusetts, among a single age cohort of predominantly full-time students from rather similar socio-economic backgrounds, than in the more open-ended urban commuter setting--we need think only of our own institution, Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago--where the constituency is composed of chronologically, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse individuals, an increasing number of whom are part-time vs. full-time. If one further considers that these urban commuter students generally have extensive commitments to neighborhood, job, and family and are constantly tempted by the leisure-time attractions of the city, the difficulty of their identifying with, much less helping to create, a campus community (and related academic norms) becomes clear. To use an analogy, whereas the rural residential college resembles a covered pot, the urban commuter institution is like a lidless one. In short, building a sense of community in the urban context is more difficult because of the greater diversity of the student clientele and the lack of an intensive, intentional living-learning environment.

Thus far we have suggested what we mean by a sense of community and why it is especially difficult to achieve at an urban commuter college or university. But why is this sense especially important or desirable in the urban context? Let us return for a moment to our definition. The city represents both the zenith and nadir of western civilization: the zenith in terms of employment possibilities, cultural opportunities, architectural achievements, and economic power; the nadir in terms of environmental pollution, separation from nature, impersonality, violent crime, and mental illness. We do have to recognize that, rather than the personal integration, social solidarity, and attitude of give-and-take implicit in Gemeinschaft, life in a metropolis tends instead to reinforce personal and social fragmentation and the dog-eat-dog attitude characteristic of Gesellschaft. We would also observe, then, that to the extent that the urban university is just another impersonal big-city bureaucracy processing students in assembly-line fashion from admission to graduation, to that extent it is part of the problem, not part of the solution. If, on the other hand, urban institutions can find ways of overcoming the handicaps implicit in their situation--if, in short, they can learn how to develop and maintain a sense of community--some Gemeinschaft within Gesellschaft--perhaps they can become a significant factor in reversing urban blight and humanizing the city.

In this paper we shall attempt a theoretical analysis of such a solution, followed by some programmatic suggestions, stemming from our analysis, on how to build community at urban commuter universities.

II. Theoretical Solution

To observe that the urban university may be exacerbating the negative aspects of Gesellschaft is to call for an examination of some of our typical practices with

this paradigm in mind. We don't have to look far. First, the urban commuter institution is usually a physically self-contained campus, following the traditional assumption that a university should be a place removed from the hubbub of daily life to allow for undistracted examination of ideas by specialized scholars. It is generally true that urban universities have more vigorous outreach programs--such as continuing education and satellite centers--than do Yale, Miami of Ohio, or Notre Dame, but these probably command only a small proportion of the urban university's resources. The dominant mode is still one of separation and retreat, and on a daytime basis. This specialization of place and function, moreover, is characteristic of Gesellschaft.

Second, the university has evolved into a classic model of the division of labor and intense specialization, and these are probably the most definitive characteristics of Gesellschaft. Students quickly apprehend the division of scholars into disciplines and departments, the separation of faculty from one another, and from administrators, librarians, and student affairs personnel, just to mention a few of the gaps among members of the community of scholars. Students often hear phrases like "that's not my field," or "that's not my job," or "try another office."

Third, universities not only model Gesellschaft, but also design curricula which force students to conform to that mode. General-education requirements almost universally cause students to spend one or two years taking three to five unrelated courses per term, each pulling the student's mind in a separate, specialized direction. Seldom is any effort made, either through curriculum design or through adequate advisement, to provide any integration, synthesis, or even connection between the various elements in the general-education sequence. The term "distribution requirements" is particularly apt for this questionable state of affairs, as students' minds are quite literally "distributed" with no structured opportunity for accumulation of these general-education experiences in coherent intellectual meanings, processes, or structures. Add to that the possibility that a student might opt for involvement in student government or clubs, and the student has yet another distraction--even though the potential for serious learning through the extra- or co-curriculum probably rivals that of some of the student's courses.

One could continue at some length identifying characteristics of Gesellschaft in the urban university, but perhaps these are sufficient to make the point. The next step in the analysis then is to ask: What is so bad about that? There are those who say "Gesellschaft is everywhere and students might as well learn to function within it." We would agree that Gesellschaft is here to stay, but we hold that some of the elements of Gemeinschaft are (a) sufficiently desirable that they are worth re-capturing for their own sake, (b) possibly necessary for genuine learning to occur at all, and (c) achievable within conditions of Gesellschaft. Therefore, we will proceed to describe how Gemeinschaft is potentially necessary and probably achievable.

The desirability of Gemeinschaft may be understood not only intuitively but also in very pragmatic terms. If the urban university lacks a sense of community, its students will fail to develop a sense of identity with the institution. Their college experience then is only a small influence on their lives, they fail to represent it in positive terms to their friends, and they don't join the alumni association or maintain school contacts. Thus the urban university fails to capitalize on the tremendous potential it has for networking among alumni to to enhance institutional development, career placement and advancement, field experience education, career advising, recruitment of students, adult education,

and simple enjoyable collegiality. Some institutions do better than others in this regard, but few really capitalize on the fact that most of their alums continue to live in the same city, often within a few miles of the campus.

This theme probably needs little further explanation. In any case, there is an even more important argument in favor of Gemeinschaft--community--on urban campuses. That argument derives from social psychological theory, and in particular, role theory. If we analyze the experience of an urban commuter student using a role theory perspective, we find that the university, its curriculum, and its teaching methods all contribute to fragmenting the student. As mentioned above, no attention is given to integrating the student's four or five unrelated courses per term. Also, we send conflicting roles to students in terms of how assertive they should be. In classes, they are expected to be compliant, if not docile: they are expected to do what is assigned. Period. Meanwhile, we also want them to take the initiative, speak up, and generate contrary opinions if (and only if) they are well-founded or well-documented. Furthermore, in a bureaucratized urban university, students learn that they must be assertive if not aggressive in protecting themselves against the sins of computers if not the errors of humans in the academic support and/or business offices. (Incidentally, the problem of human error is compounded when the service employees also feel no sense of community.)

Thus, we expect the complete range of behaviors on the passive-active dimension, but we are often unclear as to which is appropriate when. Social psychologists would call the ensuing condition role ambiguity, aggravated by potential role conflict.

But this is simply the most obvious observation afforded by a role-theory analysis. It is well-known that urban universities nationwide are attracting older students who are more likely to be married, employed, and culturally heterogenious. We are thus accelerating into two additional role-related problems. One is role-discontinuity: many of these older/returning students have long since established for themselves an adult identity which is proactive, responsible, performance-oriented, post-idealistic, pragmatic, and possibly even authoritative, especially if they have children. They have operated with this role definition, whether successfully or not, for perhaps ten years. Upon returning to school, they encounter professors as authority figures, mandatory assignments and tests, externally imposed curriculum requirements, and a variety of personnel who habitually regard students as problematic, uninformed, or inexperienced. There is an abrupt change in the roles "sent" to them, and this is a classic instance of role discontinuity, which, according to Thomas, "exists for a transition between any two positions when (a) that which is learned in the first position does not provide an ordered bridge for performance in the second position, or (b) the performances required in the second position necessitate the unlearning of a portion or all of that which was learned in the prior position."[3] We are focusing here not so much on substantive knowledge, but on style of behaving, i.e., learned role behavior.

However, entering college as an adult is seldom a pure case of transition from one role to another. More likely, the adult continues to be married, continues to be a parent, continues to be employed, and continues to have social and functional connections in the neighborhood and city. Thus, there is a continuing conflict in the behaviors the adult must exhibit. According to Thomas, "Role conflict is said to exist for an individual when the role expectations placed upon him are incompatible, making it impossible (or difficult) for him to conform to both sets of expectations at the same time."[4] Role conflict can exist whether the role expectations are externally imposed, internally imposed, or mixed.

Therefore, to the extent that the university faculty, administrators, or other personnel expect students to be docile, compliant, receptive, submissive, or inexperienced, to that same extent will a great many students at urban universities experience role conflict.

Having said all this, we need not belabor the point that our urban students also experience role overload, which exists "when the role demands are in excess of the individual's capacity to meet such demands."[5] We also can be brief in stating that role incongruence--which is a mal-fit between the person and the role[6]--is likewise built into the experience of an adult (not to mention a college-age student) at an urban university. This last point could command a good bit of examination, since there are at least seven sources of person-role mal-fit[6A]; however, we need to move on to the implications of this analysis.

There are predictable correlates of such problems as role conflict, role discontinuity, role ambiguity, role overload, and role incongruence. Those correlates are: a high degree of tension, high levels of anxiety, "intensified internal conflicts, reduced satisfaction with [one's] job and its various components [true for both remunerated jobs and academic "jobs"] and decreased confidence in superiors and in the organization as a whole."[7]

According to Thomas, "the strain experience by those in conflict situations leads to various coping responses--<u>social and psychological withdrawal</u> (reduction in communication and attributed influence) among others."[8] Further, "the presence of conflict in one's role tends to undermine his relations with his role senders, to produce weaker bonds of trust, respect, and attraction" [underlining added].[9]

In extreme form, role problems can lead to serious difficulty, such as regression, aggression, hostility, attack, or even suicide. We do not argue that the urban university creates extreme forms of role problems. But we do think it creates mild to moderate role problems, and that the negative correlates of these problems--the anxiety, tension, confusion, mistrust, the tendency to withdraw or disaffiliate--all contribute to a decreased capacity in students to do what they supposedly came to do; that is, to learn. It has been documented that learning is more difficult under conditions of stress. The role problems we have described do indeed involve stress. Thus, our argument in favor of community at urban universities is based not so much on an intuitive notion that community is nice; rather, it is based on theoretical and empirical observations that if learning is to be maximized, stress must be reduced; and if stress is to be reduced, the university must be attentive to greater role congruence and greater harmony of its expectations for students relative to their expectations and backgrounds.

Thus, we observe that even though we live in a Gesellschaft society and even though we may take the position that students must learn to live and perform within such a society, students will not accomplish this or any other significant learning unless some elements of Gemeinschaft, some sense of community, some greater sense of role congruence are deliberately introduced into their college experience. By this analysis, conditions of Gesellschaft are simply not very compatible with conditions for liberal or abstract learning. The fact that some social critics observe that we are far from being a "learning society" may not be a coincidence.

Residential colleges serving 18-22-year-old, middle- and upper-middle-class youth may or may not have this problem. Urban universities <u>do</u>. Urban universities must alter their policies and practices so as to decrease role problems and

thus decrease the otherwise predictable tendency of students to defend against involvement with the university and its norms, its people, and its potential to enhance their lives.

Now, we are not arguing for reduced requirements, no tests, equality between faculty and students, or any other specific reform reminiscent of the 60's. Rather, we think that the answer to this problem lies in a consideration of ways in which role congruence (or overlap) might be accentuated, or ways in which more elements of a student's life, such as his/her marriage, work, ethnicity, or emotions, might become better integrated into his/her college experience. This perspective suggests that an urban university should pay curricular attention to ethnicity; should better integrate its core requirements around recognizable competencies; should involve students' spouses in courses and activities; should identify academic perspectives which integrate students' internships, employment, or other ongoing field experiences into creditable learning; should acknowledge the vast potential for learning through co- or extra-curricular involvement; and, in general, should make every effort to reduce fragmentation in the roles students have to meet.

That a similar set of observations may apply to the lives of faculty in urban commuter institutions goes without saying. Obviously, it is imperative that faculty be able to model role harmony and/or role synthesis for students.

Following this analysis, we shall turn now to an examination of what some of its implications might look like in practice.

III. Programmatic Solutions

The following list of programmatic solutions is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Some of them we have actually tried; others merely strike us as good ideas. The reality may prove otherwise. Implicit in all, however, is the notion that successful group undertakings in the common interest will bring about the integrating sense of both individual and social empowerment. Also, Willard Wirtz[10] and Richard Bolles,[11] among others, have pointed out how contemporary American life tends to be fragmented chronologically into education, work, and leisure (Bolles) or learning, earning, and obsolescence (Wirtz). Both authors advocate the blending of these three activities on a lifelong basis, much perhaps as the speaker wished to unite his avocation and his vocation in the final stanza of Robert Frost's "Two Tramps in Mud-Time":

> But yield who will to their separation,
> My object in life is to unite
> My avocation and my vocation
> As my two eyes make one in sight.
> Only where love and need are one,
> And the Work is play for mortal stakes,
> Is the deed ever really done
> For Heaven and the future's sakes.[12]

For purposes of clarity, we shall divide our list of university-based community-building activities into four categories: (1) joint-faculty curriculum development, (2) interdisciplinary/thematic programs, (3) academic integration of the "co-curriculum," and (4) field experience education.

(1) Joint-faculty curriculum development

Under the rubric of "professional development," Northeastern Illinois University received a two-year $97,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation in 1975. The

title of the ultimate program, now on internal (state) funding, was the W. K. Kellogg Faculty Fellowship Program in Nontraditional Teaching. The original objective was to reorient tenured senior faculty members, presumably of a traditional cast of mind, to the need for and techniques of various nontraditional programs. The point was that as our student clientele became increasingly nontraditional, our largely tenured faculty would have to adjust its approaches to teaching and learning accordingly.

In the course of the project's two externally funded years, during which some ten faculty members a year received released time to attend a special "seminar" and work on individual or team projects, we learned several things. First, the Fellows appreciated the opportunity to consider general educational issues in addition to particular matters related to their courses. Second, they enjoyed the opportunity of getting to know--on more than a greeting-in-the-hall basis--colleagues from other departments. Third, faculty (or professional) development seemed to proceed smoothly and without defensiveness so long as the object of development was defined as the curriculum (in the context of the institution as a whole) rather than the Fellows themselves.

A sense of community, or "common cause," was developed--and continues to be developed--on several levels. First, two Fellows during Year I and two others during Year II did joint rather than individual projects. It is worth noting, to be sure, that the Year I team members were both from the College of Education, albeit from different departments, while the two Year II Fellows were from Mathematics. During Year II, however, three other larger and more variegated team efforts took place. In one of these cases, one Fellow, from Secondary Education, took a leadership role along with a Year I Fellow and other non-project faculty in beginning to devise a non-teaching career-oriented educational studies program for the College of Education. Moreover, another Year II Fellow, from History, joined two non-project faculty (from History and English) in reviving the old faculty seminars, a series of luncheon or dinner socials combined with formal or informal faculty presentations on recent work or work in progress. The most diverse group, finally, included two Year II Fellows (from Educational Foundations and Spanish) and one Year I Fellow (the Chairperson of Political Science), who began a systematic attempt to create an Intercultural/International Studies program tailored to the context of our university. In short, through the vehicle of the Kellogg Program, faculty accustomed to working alone and in competition with one another for student credit hours, promotion, merit raises, etc.--working alone, that is, in the way endemic to American universities, big cities, and perhaps society in general--had begun to learn how to work together in harmony for a mutually beneficial cause.

On a different level, the revived faculty seminars may prove to be another method for achieving a greater sense of community among a 350-member full-time teaching faculty already fragmented by the political and intellectual differences symbolized and exacerbated by academic departments, not to mention personality differences, different degrees of commitment to the institution as a whole, and the siren-like lure of the big city on the one hand and suburban living on the other. Our faculty, we have heard, is not atypical of urban faculties in general which tend to come together and work cooperatively most often and most productively in job-related governance and personnel matters. In this context, the faculty seminars may help to bring about a sense of mutuality which is neither adversarial in focus nor self-serving in outcome but which is concerned with the development of a community of scholars, in Paul Goodman's terms, both for its own sake and the sake of the students we serve.

Perhaps the most significant community-building strategy forthcoming from the Kellogg project, however, is the Kellogg Faculty Fellows Association. (Please

note that we are maintaining the use of the name "Kellogg" wherever possible to help lend these activities and associations the kind of prestige implied in ACE, Neiman, Danforth, and Fulbright fellowships, among others.) Officially founded in December, 1977, the Fellows Association will help past Kellogg Fellows to retain and enhance the sense of collegiality built up during their fellowship year while continuing their corporate and individual concern for the overall development of the institution. We foresee this group as looking after both institutional interests and the progress of projects begun by former Fellows and thereby serving as an informal advisory body to the "official university."

(2) Interdisciplinary/thematic programs

Not all community-building attempts, to be sure, can begin with ten senior faculty members given release time through outside funding. As suggested above, community begins at home, through the harmonization and integration of each individual's personal self (Consider, for instance, Jung's integration of the self or Roberto Assagioli's "psycho-synthesis."). Beyond that, two persons in context from a society, say, any two professors at Northeastern. To bring them together in a joint academic venture is thus a basic step toward building community. Add to that the involvement of students as witnesses or partners to the process, and we have a powerful combination of community-relevant ingredients.

One of the oldest yet most difficult strategies in this regard is teamteaching, specifically, the collaborative efforts of two faculty members from different disciplines within the context of a single (and hopefully coherent) course. Two faculty names on a course registration slip, of course, do not make for a successful teamtaught course any more than rhetoric in a college catalogue makes for a successful undergraduate education. Some of the factors, in our experience, which seem to predispose the venture toward success include: (1) inspired matching of faculty, (2) joint faculty course planning, (3) early (pre-course) agreement on correction, feedback, and grading standards, (4) attendance and participation by both faculty members at all or most of the class sessions, (5) an equable division of labor, and (6) outside support in terms of problem- and strategy-sharing workshops on "how to teach effectively as a team." To this should be added that whatever makes a single-teacher class successful cannot be neglected or omitted in a team effort, for instance, the need to spell out clearly and early exact course objectives, methods, and expectations.

One experiment which we at Northeastern expect to launch in Fall, 1979, is an integrated core program for freshmen. Currently, Northeastern requires its undergraduates to take only 30 semester hours in basic distributional courses out of the 120 semester hours required for graduation. Further, these courses may be taken from a seemingly endless list, in any order, from any instructor. In loco professoris clearly went out with in loco parentis!

In an attempt to build community among a cohort of students and faculty, therefore, we are designing two semester-long thematically focused segments which will be undertaken by the same students--all freshmen--and the same faculty. Our experiment diverges from the more traditional (though still widely ignored) practice of block scheduling in that (1) a unifying theme like the future of the city, the future of work, the attempt to define life in a multidisciplinary fashion, etc. will be employed, (2) the courses will be planned jointly by the participating faculty, (3) the participating faculty will also serve as academic advisors, (4) there will be joint field trips as well as individual and small-group field experience opportunities, (5) there will be emphasis on basic skills acquisition and refinement, (6) there will also be emphasis on team and group projects, and (7) there will be a concurrent integrating seminar each term.

The object of the program will be, therefore, to develop and sharpen college-level skills (competencies); to explore a theme in a holistic, interdisciplinary manner; to gain a sense of the ultimate wholeness and integrity of knowledge; and, in the context of this paper, to generate among a small group within the framework of an impersonal urban university of 10,000 students the sense of a collegium, of communitas, of a group of individuals--students and faculty alike--who by working, learning, and playing together in relation to a single theme have come to understand that working, learning, and playing together are both possible and profitable within a diverse group of strangers.

(3) Academic integration of the co-curriculum

Thus far the various models we have been outlining fall within the academic program of the college or university. This point is in itself significant, since at urban commuter institutions especially, the job of developing "school spirit" is generally assigned to Student Affairs. Thanks to the 60's most administrators and faculty these days eschew the term extra-curriculum for the more compatible co-curriculum, yet it is clear that a free movie here, a job-counseling session there, and a student club or newspaper thrown in for good measure can in no way be considered truly equal or "co" with the student's academic load. Further, student activities at a commuter college, especially when "co" means separate as well as equal, cannot bear the full burden of developing a sense of Gemeinschaft. At best, they underscore the similarity to high school, where one also had movies, counselors, clubs, and newspapers.

Without denigrating student services, we wish to point out the need as well as the opportunity for joint venturing between the academic and the student service areas of urban commuter universities. For instance, it is not unusual for student heads of major activities--the student government, school newspaper, etc.--to receive academic credit and even a tuition waiver and/or a cash stipend. It may be less customary for academic areas, say, business and political science, to offer supportive coursework for such students, that is, courses especially designed for them. Even rarer are interdisciplinary teamtaught seminars offering theoretical and applied study in areas such as leadership, communication, decision-making, budgeting, organizational theory, power-authority relationships, etc.--seminars, that is, tailored to the special needs of those in organized student activities.

But what about students in general? At large universities, especially unevenly or inadequately staffed ones, setting up courses of this kind for everyone might be unfeasible. Yet courses on human and group development, life-planning workshops, seminars on the career search, and other personal-development courses are clearly a worthwhile pursuit for all students. Perhaps student peer leaders could be trained to increase the opportunity for more students. Perhaps too, creative ways could be found to involve alumni in courses and workshops of this nature. Finally, working with student activities and advisement specialists, tenured faculty from underutilized departments might be trained to serve as teachers or teamteachers, for clearly an ongoing need of most urban commuter students is for improved advisement on the one hand and self-empowerment skills and understanding on the other.

(4) Field experience education

Individual field experiences, be they short-term visits or lengthier internships, do not per se lead to a sense of Gemeinschaft even if they do increase the student's understanding of the relationship between the worlds of learning and work. Therefore, a primary requirement for building community at an urban

commuter institution through field experiences is the element of the cohort or team. One approach is to place at least two persons at the same agency so that they can give feedback and support to one another while bolstering each other's learning experience. Joint placements, to be sure, are not always possible; however, related (collateral) seminars for students in the field should be de rigueur. Indeed the most complete model would include a three-part seminar series, with part one preparing the students prior to their field placement, part two giving them the chance to discuss current experiences while in the field, and part three providing a time, after returning from the field, for reflection and the drawing of conclusions.

At many urban commuter universities, full-time students often work part- or even full-time. Aside from older returning students in special ("external") degree programs, undergraduates generally do not hold down middle- or high-level positions. Bagging at a supermarket or cooking quarterpounders at McDonald's tends to be more the rule. Yet these students can often not afford to quit even these modestly paying jobs for educationally enriching but non-paying internships sponsored by the university. As a result, we have come up with the idea to establish seminars that will help students to turn their current part- or full-time job into an academic field experience. The supportive theory is that all work consists of such universals as organization, discipline, planning, budgeting of resources, and human relations, among others. Normally, workers do not reflect systematically on what they experience or undergo on the job. The seminars we envision would provide the opportunity for fifteen to twenty-five student/workers to analyze and discuss aspects of their work experience as the object of group study. Seminars of this kind will help students to see themselves not simply as individuals in particular job environments for the sake of earning money, but also as associated worker-students trying collectively to make sense of their off-campus life. So, these seminars will be still another means of building community--one especially suited perhaps to the large number of urban students who have to work half-time or more to support themselves.

For the purposes of this paper, a final community-building activity, which has the advantage of building a sense of collegiality between faculty members and students, is the joint student-faculty research team. In the context of the urban university the projects undertaken might well involve applied research, projects that not only instill data-gathering, analysis, interviewing, and other research techniques, but also contribute in whatever measure to solving the congeries of crises known as urban. Indeed, if large cities are in as bad a shape as the national media suggest, it is inappropriate to keep students from working on "real problems" until after graduation.

One of the authors of this paper was involved in such a project in the late 60's at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. The course was intermediate composition; there were approximately eighteen students, all juniors and seniors. Since the University of Hawaii was just beginning to consider various curricular options beyond an Honors Program, and since the instructor had a special interest in innovation and program development, the class agreed to do a comparative study of general-education requirements, grading practices and options, and special programs at the university and 112 mainland colleges and universities. The class participants, including the instructor, planned the research strategy; divided the data analysis and writing up of the the results; and collectively edited the final report. Based on the recommendations, also arrived at together, the university liberalized its pass/fail grading system, introduced more interdisciplinary coursework, and permitted non-Honors Program students, for the first time, to take up to a semester of work via independent study. Further,

the report, circulated widely to faculty, administrators, Regents, and the local media, helped to create an atmosphere at the university where a variety of alternative programs could be launched with some chance of success.

By having a real job of work to do, the class participants became careful writers capable of working effectively on a team project. A genuine Gemeinschaft having something meaningful in common developed, and friendships formed in that one three-credit course continued in some cases long after the term was over.

The above are just a few examples of programs which find their justification in the idea that urban students (and faculty) should not be fragmented by their university experience. Students will learn better and faster when role-related stress is reduced. Faculty too will find that teaching at a commuter institution committed to developing Gemeinschaft will go more smoothly and will in all likelihood be more personally fulfilling. In short, a sense of community is not only desirable but achievable on the urban commuter campus and will produce benefits well in excess of the effort required to achieve it.

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-- originally delivered at the Third National Urban Education Conference, Holiday Inn-Scope, Norfolk, Virginia, on November 22, 1977.

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Notes

1. Tönnies, as quoted in Jessie Bernard. The Sociology of Community. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1973, p. 93.
2. Bernard, op cit, p. 92.
3. Edwin J. Thomas. "Role Theory, Personality, and the Individual," In Edgar F. Borgatta and William W. Lambert (eds.), Handbook of Personality Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1968, pp. 711-712.
4. Ibid., pp. 708-709.
5. Ibid., p. 711.
6. Ibid., p. 713.

6A. Ibid., pp. 713 ff.

7. Ibid., p. 709.
8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Willard Wirtz, from his keynote address at the 1977 National Conference of the American Association for Higher Education, Chicago, March 22, 1977. Please note that in the printed version of his speech Wirtz changes his terms slightly, but the intent remains the same. He writes: "...Life is divided into three time-traps--youth for education, maturity for work, and older age for the denial of both of these opportunities." Dyckman W. Vermilye, Ed., Relating Work and Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1977, p. 273.

11. Richard Bolles, from the featured workshop at the annual conference of the Society for Field Experience Education, Indianapolis, IN, October 27, 1977.

12. Robert Frost, "Two Tramps in Mud-Time," ll. 65-72.

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NEXT...

January/February: "Forum III: The Way We were--The Search for a Usable Institutional Past"

CENTER FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
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